

Implementation of Internationalization of Higher Education Policies in Japan:
Emergence of a *Humanistic Internationalization*

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Abstract

In recent years, the Japanese government has been encouraging Japanese universities to internationalize their institutions. In this process, stakeholders' workloads have become increasingly demanding; however, their voices are oftentimes unheard. The purpose of this research was to examine internationalization at Japanese universities through the perspectives of faculty and key administrators in expanding or maintaining internationalization. The main research question is:

How are Japan's internationalization policies interpreted, envisioned, and practiced by stakeholders within a university nationally recognized for leading internationalization efforts today, and as a result, how is the university implicated in Japanese government efforts to internationalize?

Relevant literatures (e.g., internationalization of higher education; administrator and faculty relations; internationalization of Japanese higher education) are presented thematically to inform the study. Guided by the sociocultural approach to policy studies (Levinson et al., 2009) and the cognitive framework of policy implementation (Spillane et al., 2002), the research was conducted using a case studies methodology with the focus on understanding the perspectives of the faculty members and key administrative leaders at my study site, Soka University, located in Tokyo, Japan. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 17 participants involved in the internationalization efforts.

Three major themes emerged as findings:

- 1) Institutional culture and capacity to promote internationalization;
- 2) Challenges of implementing internationalization initiatives; and
- 3) Growing focus on the importance of quality of internationalization.

Furthermore, three implications were made based on the findings:

- 1) Soka's institutional culture is shaping faculty understanding of the internationalization of higher education
- 2) Gap in ideal and reality becoming a burden but also a motivation for growth
- 3) Fostering students is not just about developing the skills but also about extending genuine care for their happiness and growth as a person

With this, I am framing my theoretical offering as *humanistic internationalization* that emerges from Japan and specifically the Soka University philosophy and context. I conclude that *humanistic internationalization* is internationalization—policies, processes, and practices—that embody and exude wisdom, courage, and compassion. I believe that this *humanistic internationalization* will contribute to successful internationalization beyond numerical measures in Japan and provide insights for international educators throughout the world.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Statement of the Problem: A Shrinking yet Globally Prepared Population?

In 2020, Japan hit a record low number of live births, totaling 872,683 (Nikkei Asia, 2021). The number of Japanese births has been declining in recent years, which has resulted in a shrinking youth and working age population. This shrinking population in the youth and ultimately, working age group, has brought up concerns among the government and the industry that this will negatively affect the Japanese economy and therefore, fostering the urgency of attracting capable human resources who can compete in the global market (Horie, 2015; Ota, 2018; Yonezawa, 2014). Beyond Japan, Sanders (2019) also observes that the internationalization of higher education in East Asia has been concerned with global competitiveness. This demographic and societal change, along with an Asian and international push for internationalization initiatives has pushed the Japanese government to call for Japanese universities to foster what they call “Global *Jinzai*,” or global human resources, through internationalizing their institutions (Horie, 2015; Shimomura, 2013; Yonezawa, 2014).

Global *Jinzai* and University Competitions

With the increasing focus on outbound mobility, the term “Global *Jinzai*” has become prevalent in literature that examines the Japanese workforce in relation to Japanese society, globalization, and national policy (West, 2015). This idea of Global *Jinzai* is commonly defined as an individual who possess three elements: 1) linguistic and communication skills; 2) independence, challenging spirit, flexibility and sense of responsibility; and 3) intercultural understanding and identity as Japanese (Council on Promotion of Human Resource for Globalization Development, 2011).

Yoshida (2017) conducted research in which she examined articles related to Global *Jinzai* that appeared in the Nikkei, one of the largest financial newspapers in Japan. The first article related to Global *Jinzai* was on the initiative taken by Toyota Motor Corporation to differentiate their employees by global human resources and local human resources. Articles in the 2000s also showed that the corporations were making efforts to develop global human resources by placing such departments within their organization. According to Yoshida (2017), the challenges facing the corporations to foster human resources were then translated into national policies, which eventually became the responsibilities of the universities. The number of articles on Global *Jinzai* in the Nikkei has dramatically increased since 2010, and among those, articles related to university initiatives grew as well.

In an effort to foster Global *Jinzai*, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) announced the Project for Promotion of Global Human Resource Development (GGJ), which is described as

a funding project that aims to overcome the Japanese younger generation's 'inward tendency' and to foster human resources who can positively meet the challenges and succeed in the global field, as the basis for improving Japan's global competitiveness and enhancing the ties between nations. (MEXT, n.d.c)

This funding project announced in 2012 was open to all universities throughout Japan, and applications were received from 129 universities with 42 of them selected for the project (MEXT, n.d.c). Each university submitted a plan in which they stated their ideal image of a Global *Jinzai*, followed by an outline of their anticipated work in the following areas:

- Internationalization of the curriculum
- Efforts to cultivate global human resources
- Improvement of foreign language competencies
- Faculty development for global education
- Support system to promote study abroad
- Specific competencies for graduates
- Indicative outputs of the total project (Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, n.d.).

For example, one of the national universities that competed identified their aims as fostering “global leaders who will be able to steer our unpredictable global society” through providing a “Global Leader Program” (JSPS, n.d., p. 3) in which students will acquire communicative competencies through various programs including overseas programs. Another private university that competed aimed to develop “global individuals who can: respond to global challenges appropriately; respond to different situations in which global individuals are needed; and respond to the rapid advancement of our global knowledge-based society,” through various initiatives including the development of new study abroad programs (JSPS, n.d., p. 13).

Additionally, fostering Global *Jinzai* remains part of the goals indicated in the Second Basic Plan for the Promotion of Education (MEXT, 2013), which states,

In order to facilitate the comprehensive and systematic implementation of measures for the promotion of education, the government shall formulate a basic plan covering basic principles, required measures, and other necessary items in relation to the promotion of education. It shall report this plan to the Diet and

make it public...Local governments, referring to the plan set forth in the preceding paragraph, shall endeavor to formulate a basic plan on measures to promote education corresponding to regional circumstances. (p. 1)

This plan laid out four policy directions, one of which directly relates to human resource development. Under the direction to develop “human resources for a brighter future” (MEXT, 2013, p.2), there is an achievement target to develop global human resources. Achievement indicators include English language skills, international reputation of universities, increase of study abroad participants, and increase of international students.

Based on the implementation of this plan, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications more recently published an evaluation report on the policies related to the promotion of Global Human Resources (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, 2017). The report focused on three points: 1) achievement of the indicators set forth in the plan referenced above, 2) perspectives of industries that are expanding globally, and 3) actions taken at the institutional level (university, junior high and high school).

Overall, there has been noticeably great improvement in the achievement of the indicators, and the benefits of the policies are evident. For example, one of the achievement indicators that the report highlighted was the number of Japanese students studying abroad. Based on the data taken from Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the number of Japanese students studying abroad as a degree seeking student has decreased. However, based on the data taken from the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO), which includes study abroad participants through university exchanges, the number has increased from 65,000 to 84,000 between 2012 to

2015. This is perhaps a result of the extensive support, mainly financial support, that the institutions receive from the Japanese government to send out students on study abroad programs, and we can attribute this to the awareness and initiatives promoted through Global *Jinzai*. Although the number of students has increased, the length of study abroad for those who participate through their universities is relatively short. About 80% of the study abroad experiences are less than six months, with most of them being less than one month.

The report also highlighted the perspectives of industries involved in these kinds of initiatives. About half of the respondents felt that there was an increase of graduates who met the criteria of Global *Jinzai*. Among the three elements of Global *Jinzai* as defined by the government, 60% of the respondents felt that the graduates' linguistic and communication skills improved, whereas only 50% felt that their intercultural competencies improved, and 30% believed that student spirit to take on challenges improved. When the industries were asked to suggest action plans to universities, ideas such as promoting study abroad programs as well as introducing courses related to intercultural understanding were mentioned. Additionally, about 80% of the respondents stated that a study abroad of *over six months* would be ideal, which is a considerable shift from the short-term experiences that most students attend.

Internationalization Policies in Japan

One of the characteristics of internationalization of Japanese higher education is that educational innovation efforts are usually initiated and driven by government incentives and national policies (Horie, 2002). The Japanese government has announced various national policies to promote internationalization of higher education as referred to

earlier in these introductory sections. Some of these include the Plan of 300,000 Foreign Students (MEXT, 2008), Project for Promotion of Global Human Resource Development (MEXT, n.d.c), and Top Global University Project (MEXT, n.d.e). These projects and plans initiated by the government are implemented and enacted at the institutional level. This process of “appropriation” of policies “highlights the way creative agents ‘take in’ elements of policy, thereby incorporating these discursive and institutional resources into their own schemes of interest, motivation, and action,” and where appropriation is “a kind of taking of policy and making it one’s own” (Sutton & Levinson, 2001, p.3).

As part of the internationalization efforts in Japanese higher education institutions, the national government more recently announced a project titled “Project for Promotion of Global Human Resource Development,” with a follow up project titled “Top Global University Project,” both of which are government-funded projects where universities throughout Japan apply to financially support their efforts to foster Global *Jinzai*, and clearly, the idea of Global *Jinzai* as both a goal and standard for Japanese students in higher education has taken off and will persist. Despite this persistence, it is also clear that although the Japanese government has a definition of what Global *Jinzai* constitutes (recall the three major criteria), it is unclear whether or not the higher education institutions throughout Japan pressured to meet Global *Jinzai* have a similar understanding.

This question is at the heart of my dissertation research. As an international educator, I have observed that the internationalization of Japanese universities has been widely promoted mainly through national policies and projects suggested by the Japanese government and that speak to the desired direction of the Japanese economy and

workforce. Furthermore, especially in the past ten years, there have been a number of national internationalization policies and programs that suggest concrete numerical goals, and these are also of interest to me and have helped shape my understanding of the issues surrounding Global *Jinzai*. For example, we can observe the trends over time where the Japanese government suggestion of internationalization aims for the population and related policies have paired with higher education in Japan (see Table 1 for the major policies introduced by the Japanese government to promote internationalization).

Table 1

Major Internationalization Policies in Japan

Year	Policy Name	Main Goal	Main Means
1954	Japanese Government Scholarship Program for Foreign Students	Promote a better understanding of Japanese culture	Scholarships for inbound mobility
1983	Plan to Accept 100,000 Foreign Students	Host 100,000 international students by 2000	Scholarship and subsidies for tuition reductions for international students
2005	Strategic Fund for Establishing International Headquarters in Universities	Develop internationalization strategies at selected higher education institutions	Grants to reform institutional governance and management of internationalization, qualitative evaluation
2008	300,000 International Students Plan	Host 300,000 international students by 2020	Scholarships, deregulation and streamlining of visa process, support for job placement of international students
2009	Global 30	Develop a core group of internationally focused universities in support of the 300,000 International Students Plan	Grants available for universities to develop degree-granting programs fully taught in English and to improve international student recruitment and admissions process; quantitative evaluation
2012	Re-Inventing Japan Project	Create collaborative networks between	Grants available for universities to develop

		Japanese universities and foreign universities	collaborative educational programs with partner institutions abroad
2012	Go Global Japan project	Increase the number of Japanese students studying abroad	Grants available for universities or schools/departments to develop study abroad programs
2014	Public-Private Partnership Student Study Abroad Program (<i>Tobitate!</i> Young Ambassador Program)	Foster intercultural competence of Japanese students through studying abroad	Providing scholarships for students who study abroad or engage in activities overseas
2014-2023	Top Global University Project	Improve the international competitiveness of Japanese universities and enhance the compatibility of Japanese higher education with global standards	37 universities are to receive funding for 10 years (total of JPY 7.7 billion, i.e., about USD 62 million)

Note. This table was adapted from de Gayardon, A., Shimmi, Y., and Ota, H. (2015, p.76-77).

Because many of the initiatives in the past decade (2010-2020) are funded by the government, universities apply for government-designed competitive funding projects, which either support their institutions' existing internationalization efforts or their desired aims in internationalizing their institutions. To be selected for funding, universities set goals that sometimes may seem beyond their reach (e.g. with regards to existing capacity to actually carry out the work), and these goals are typically set by a committee of university leaders and faculty members. In other words, other academic staff or faculty members are not involved in the process of goal settings, but they are the ones who are expected to make adjustments in their day-to-day work. Ota (2018) raises some concerns that because goals are often numerically measured/quantitatively assessed, entire projects end up becoming a “numbers game” (p. 98) when these goals should be functioning as a

means to achieving any given institution's greater long-term and broader vision of their internationalization initiatives.

Furthermore, numerical goals are based on the prescribed indicators set by the Japanese government which may prevent universities from setting their own unique institutional or local goals (Yonezawa & Shimmi, 2015). This is problematic because we need to be open to how achievements in internationalization might be weighted and understood differently by different institutions, their students, capacities, and contexts. In addition, a looming concern is that the majority of Japanese internationalization efforts are motivated by government funding, which only supports institutions for a limited period of time; thus, the sustainability of internationalization efforts is in question. Ota (2011) argues that internationalization of higher education in Japan tends to rely on almost exclusively on government funding, and once the funding ends, in many cases, programs and initiatives that began by using the funding also conclude (p. 7). This creates a pendulum of government support that is not consistent, and projects at institutions may not necessarily survive, even if they demonstrate promise. However, perhaps knowing that this is the case, institutions were asked by the government in their applications to submit a plan to secure the sustainability of their internationalization efforts, both financially and systematically, but this was not a guarantee of continuation of support post-project.

While the internationalization of Japanese universities is generally perceived as a positive initiative by proponents in government and within university systems, the voices of those at the front lines—meaning educators and administrators—are oftentimes unsolicited and therefore silenced by omission. It is this population that motivated me in

the work to understand how universities think about and practice internationalization in an era of Global *Jinzai*. As an international educator who is deeply interested in internationalization initiatives for the benefit of Japanese students and global exchanges and needs, I was concerned that university educators and administrators may be experiencing some degree of frustration with the internationalization process, which could result in negative repercussions for those engaged in internationalization work yet not consulted in the decisions and policies that drive that work.

Research Questions

My study thus aimed to pursue a line of inquiry that aimed to examine internationalization at Japanese universities and through the perspectives of faculty and key administrators as stakeholders in expanding or maintaining internationalization. Thus this study focused on the major interests and issues that have emerged as a result of Japan's internationalization push over the last decade in higher education and more specifically, using a case studies approach with Soka University. The driving question that undergirds this study is,

How are Japan's internationalization policies interpreted, envisioned, and practiced by stakeholders within a university nationally recognized for leading internationalization efforts today, and as a result, how is the university implicated in Japanese government efforts to internationalize?

Sub-questions were designed to help me to answer my primary research question and included the following,

- a. How are academic faculty and administrative leaders' understandings of "internationalization" related to their individual and institutional roles in promoting internationalization efforts?
- b. How do Japanese internationalization efforts align (or not) with university desires for successful students?
- c. What overall tensions and strengths within internationalization efforts do academic faculty and administrative leaders on the ground identify?

Conceptual Framework

In considering my research, I opted to look to two conceptual frameworks to understand the phenomenon of internationalization initiatives in Japan that revealed Japanese government and university desires for students vis-à-vis higher education. Both sociocultural and cognitive approaches have considerable overlap—the sociocultural approach to policy studies has a political dimension to its approach; whereas the cognitive approach focuses on individual understandings of policies in question.

Sociocultural Approach to Policy Studies

There are different approaches a scholar can take to study policies. Traditionally, the main goal of policy studies was to learn whether or not certain policies were effective, and to understand why either or became the case (Levinson et al., 2009). Later, critical approaches emerged in which scholars attempt to understand questions such as, "What *is* policy? And what does policy *do*?" (Levinson et al., 2009, p. 769). Another approach to policy research is to look at policy as sociocultural practice, attempting to answer questions such as, "Who can *do* policy? What can policy *do*?" (Levinson et al., 2009, p. 769). In other words, the "sociocultural approach understands policy as a deeply political

process of cultural production engaged in and shaped by social actors in disparate locations who exert incongruent amounts of influence over the design, implementation, and evaluation of policy” (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2016, pp. 1-2). In the context of Japanese higher education and for this particular study, policies announced by the Japanese government play a significant role in the internationalization of Japanese higher education. This is an undeniable fact—evidenced through projects and plans initiated by the government, competitive projects and supports, and the implementation and enactment of policy at the institutional level.

Goodman (2007) asserts that internationalization, *kokusaika* in Japanese, is a concept that is “multivocal.” This means that actors and stakeholders have different understandings that are articulated regarding the same concept. To understand how *kokusaika* policies are presently being understood by different actors and how they are being enacted on the ground in higher education institutions, I aimed to extend the sociocultural approach and to use a cognitive framework to understand this phenomenon, which I describe more in depth in the next section. This approach suggests that policies are appropriated, or “taken in” at different levels by actors who implement the policies, revealing how—who Sutton & Levinson (2001) refer to as creative agents—match their own interests, motivations, and actions with these policies. Thus, in my study, I was most interested in how faculty and administrative leaders appropriated the internationalization pushes suggested to them by the Japanese government and that their institutions participated in furthering through their acceptance of government funding in this era of Global *Jinzai*. At the same time, I was also open to the idea that university leaders and faculty members at Japanese universities, but especially at Soka University, might resist

or contest governmental or broader national suggestions and what this might mean for the enhancement of internationalization and Global *Jinzai*.

One might ask—What then is policy? How is it shaped and reshaped? To what effect? Ball (1993) states that the term policy is often not clearly defined in a study and could have multiple meanings within the same study. I found this idea to be critical for my research. For Ball (1993), “much rests on the meaning or possible meanings that we give to policy; it affects ‘how’ we research and how we interpret what we find” (p. 10). Furthermore, he conceptualizes policy as a complex entity or “textual interventions into practice” (p. 12), but the way in which readers and practitioners react to the policies cannot be predicted. Ball writes,

Policies do not normally tell you what to do; they create circumstances in which the range of options available in deciding what to do are narrowed or changed. A response must still be put together, constructed in context, off-set against other expectations. All of this involves creative social action not robotic reactivity. Thus, the enactment of texts relies on things like commitment, understanding, capability, resources, practical limitations, cooperation and (importantly) intertextual compatibility. (Ball, 1993, p. 13)

Another perspective on policy is suggested by Sutton and Levinson (2001), who define policy as “a complex social practice, an ongoing process of normative cultural production constituted by diverse actors across diverse social and institutional contexts” (p. 1). In their definition, policies are understood as statements that give the actors some expectations of how things ought to be done and as a result, the policies will define reality, order behavior, and allocate resources (Levinson et al., 2009, p. 770). These fluid

constructions of policy were critical to my research and to my ability to contest the notion of policy as something rigid but as rather something that internationalization actors might transform as they build their practice.

A Cognitive Framework for Researching Policy Implementation

Policy implementation has been studied by various scholars using different approaches, and many of them are based on principal-agent theory and rational choice theory (Spillane et al., 2002). These approaches assume that the policy is understood by the agents or the implementers who enact the policy, and based on their understandings, they either “implement the policy, ignore it, or work at sabotaging or circumventing it” (Spillane, 2000, p. 145). It is important to note that some scholars do account for the problems that arise in the implementation process due to the misunderstandings of the implementors (Berman & McLaughlin, 1977; Lipsky, 1980; Pressman & Wildavsky, 1973). Examples of factors that influence the implementation processes include lack of clarity and supervision (Pressman & Wildavsky, 1973), agendas of the individuals implementing the policy, attitudes of the community, and the availability of resources (Berman & McLaughlin, 1977; Elmore & McLaughlin, 1988; McLaughlin, 1987).

Although these approaches are relevant to my research, they did not fully explain how implementers made meaning out of the policies that they are addressing. From a constructivist perspective, Spillane et al. (2002) suggest a cognitive framework to understand policy implementation process. Their cognitive framework helps to understand how implementers construct their understandings of the policy and how they make changes to their practice based on their constructed understanding. Unlike the assumptions made in the conventional policy implementation scholarship,

policy messages are not inert, static ideas that are transmitted unaltered into local actors' minds to be accepted, rejected, or modified to fit local needs and conditions. Rather, the agents must first notice, then frame, interpret, and construct meaning for policy messages. (Spillane et al., 2002. P. 392)

This approach focuses on the understandings of the individuals in the front lines, or what Lipsky (1980) and Weatherley and Lipsky (1977) refer to as “street level bureaucrats,” who enact the policy: How a policy is implemented is greatly influenced by the implementers' understanding of the policy and to the extent of their understanding reinforce or alter the implementers' current practice (Spillane, 2006).

Drawing from diverse scholarship including cognitive science, sociology, social psychology, and psychology, Spillane et al. (2002) outlined an integrative framework of policy implementation process with three elements: “the individual implementing agent, the situation in which sense-making occurs, and the policy signals” (p. 392). The first element, the implementing agent, is referred to as the “sense-maker” who constructs understanding of the policy based on their knowledge, beliefs, and past experiences. Spillane (2006) states that “individuals must use their prior knowledge and experience to notice, make sense of, interpret, and react to incoming stimuli—all the while, actively constructing meaning from their interactions with the environment of which policy is part” (p. 49). Implications of this element are that the same message could be interpreted differently by different implementers; implementers could misunderstand an idea by assuming and overinterpreting it in relation to what they already know; and understanding of policy could result in superficial understanding and change, lacking a

deeper understanding. Additionally, motivations, goals, and affect could also influence the sense-making process of the implementers.

The second element is the situation or the social context that surrounds the implementers. This element is drawn from sociology and social psychology, which argue the importance of taking social context into consideration to understand the process of sense-making (Spillane et al., 2002). Spillane (2006) explains that these social contexts include organizational and community history (Lin, 2000; Yanow, 1996), organizational segmentation and professional expertise (Spillane, 1998), professional discourse (Hill, 2000), and formal and informal networks (Coburn, 2001). An example of social contexts influencing the process of policy implementation can be found in Coburn's (2005) study which documents how principals influenced the teachers' understanding and enactment of a reading policy. Through an in-depth analysis of the case studies of two elementary schools, the study showed that the principals' understanding of the policy influenced their leadership practice and enactment of the policy, which then influenced teachers' responses to reading policy and their classroom practice. For example, principals would only present or emphasize parts of the policy messages that were more familiar to them. In addition to the influence of principals, teachers would also construct meaning of policy messages by engaging in conversation with other teachers or by observing other teachers' practices.

The third element is the policy signals or design. Although policies alone cannot construct the implementers' understandings, the policy design including the organization of ideas could influence the implementers' sense-making process. In other words, the policy makers' intentions and messages are reflected in the policies as an external

representation. This is also explained in conventional policy implementation research which explains that inconsistency and ambiguity of a policy could influence the understanding of the implementers and the implementation process (Spillane et al., 2002). From the cognitive perspective, the inconsistency and ambiguity of a policy could influence the sense-making process of the implementing agents. Additionally, studies show that it is more challenging for the implementers to capture the deeper meaning and intention of the policy and as a result, only the superficial aspects are understood and reflected in the implementation process.

An example of this can be observed in Spillane's (2000) research which looked at how school districts responded to a mathematics reform. The focus of this study was the mathematics educational reform initiated by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics and the Michigan Department of Education and how this reform was implemented at the district level. Data were derived from a five-year research study on policymaking and mathematics/science teaching. Nine school districts including midsize city districts, suburban districts, and rural districts were part of the study in which 165 interviews were conducted and policy documents were collected. Interview transcripts were coded by themes and subthemes and they were then analyzed in depth by the researchers. Findings showed that district leaders tended to describe and associate the educational reform as implementing "hands-on mathematics" and "problem solving," which are ideas that the district leaders are more familiar with, as opposed to "mathematics as communication" or "mathematics as reasoning," which are some of the central and in-depth themes in the reform intended by the policymakers.

Lastly, it is important to note that policy implementation consists of multiple levels as seen in the examples described in this section. In the case of my research, the process was that the Japanese government policy was intended to first be “taken in” and appropriated at the university administration level, and administration would then create their university policy or programs that ostensibly trickled down to those on the ground. The central university policies or programs were expected to be appropriated and enacted by university leadership stakeholders as well as by each departmental head, and then on to the academic faculty members. However, there was also the expectation that at each of these layers, there could also be present some intervening to the policy implementation process to some degree (Colbeck, 2002).

Empirical Policy Studies

This section lays out empirical policy studies that draw on a cognitive framework in policy implementation. I took inspiration from these as both part of the literature that I engaged and as I planned to enter into my fieldwork.

In her ethnographic research in Mexico, Street (2001) examines how teachers appropriate educational policy, in particular the concept of autonomy that was developed in the process of executing decentralizing educational administration. Unlike the traditional approach where the focus is solely on whether teachers implement policy or how they react to it, Street (2001) views the teachers as social actors who are also producing policy based on their interpretation and understanding of the policy.

Autonomy, from the state policy perspective, is understood as a concept where more responsibilities are given to individual schools; however, within the context of Mexican society where teachers are striving to advance democratization, the concept of autonomy

is redefined as part of the democratization process. Through their struggles and efforts in the democratization process, the teachers are convinced that they have a voice and therefore they are able to enhance their autonomy.

In a more recent study, Koyama (2014) investigated how principals appropriated the national policy of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) mandate and the local mandates. The study focuses on how principals implement and adapt the NCLB's testing and data-monitoring directives. While the theoretical framework used in the study is actor-network theory (ANT), Koyama also used a sociological approach to understand how principals interact with policies. Data were collected from interviews conducted between 2005 and 2012 as part of a larger study, and additional interviews with 15 of the 45 principals and school administrators in New York City public schools who were part of the larger study. Surveys, documents and fieldnotes were also used for analysis. As part of the data-monitoring directives, a database called "Achievement Reporting and Innovation System" (ARIS) was implemented, and schools were encouraged to utilize this tool to analyze data and generate reports as well as to track student and school progress. However, multiple data sources showed that some principals were dissatisfied with the database and used alternative systems to complement ARIS. Koyama (2014) explains that the principals are creatively negotiating what they are responsible for doing and appropriating the database ARIS in ways that meet the school needs.

Using the cognitive framework of policy implementation (Spillane et al., 2002), Glasgow (2016) conducted a study at a Japanese high school to understand the perspectives of teachers of English language in response to a national policy on English language education that expected teachers to teach English in the English language.

Glasgow (2016) explains that there had been a growing emphasis on the communicative aspect of English language learning as seen in various policies, but whether or not these initiatives have been successfully implemented in classrooms was not clear. Seeking to understand the teachers' perspectives on the national language policy and how they interacted with it, Glasgow conducted semi-structured interviews with two high school teachers of English, Terumasa who is Japanese, and Earl, who is a native speaker of English.

The results of Glasgow's study show that the ambiguity of the policy allowed teachers to interpret the policy differently based on their own beliefs and experiences. In particular, the teachers responded differently to the expectation of teaching classes in English. Terumasa justified the use of the Japanese language in teaching English stating that it was necessary to fulfill his responsibilities to ensure students are prepared for the university entrance examination. At the same time, he was also supportive of the policy, sharing that this is needed for Japan to become more competitive globally. Earl saw the policy as having value but not necessarily beneficial for students if students are unable to understand the class content.

That study also looked at the context in which these teachers worked. Terumasa shared that unlike himself who is innovative and has a positive reaction to the new policy, his colleagues were not enthusiastic about making changes to their teaching despite the policy announcement. This school culture and his colleagues' attitudes made it challenging to implement the policies. Earl also commented on his challenges to connect with his Japanese colleagues in discussing the new initiative and shared that he felt frustrated not being able to communicate with his colleagues. Through the study,

Glasgow shows that the national policy and the institutional culture impacts teacher practices.

Methodology and Methods

In order to address my research questions, I was drawn to a comparative case study methodology that I hoped to employ in order to examine primarily the horizontal and vertical axes of internationalization in Japanese higher education, and specifically with a focus on the vertical axis that focuses on the appropriation of policies across different levels (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2014, 2016). I initially hoped to involve a number of higher education institutions that were competitive and successfully funded through Japanese government project funding. However, I opted to take an in-depth look at one institution and to closely examine the vertical axis that included those stakeholders and policy designers and their respective levels of involvement in internationalization.

Originally envisioned, the case studies methodology allowed me to understand how the intentions of the internationalization policies are understood by the actors and stakeholders involved in the implementation process at different levels, namely Japanese government, university administration, and academic faculty. For this research, as mentioned, two universities selected for the Top Global University Project were initially identified. Initially, an extreme or deviant case sampling (Patton, 2002) was used to select universities in two extreme cases: institutions that received high and low evaluations in the mid-term evaluation report conducted by the designated national committee. I later narrowed the research site and participants down to Soka University to observe the impact of the Japanese government national efforts to internationalize through universities like Soka.

Further, document analysis of various national and university policy documents helped me to better understand the phenomenon, and then in-depth interviews were conducted to collect qualitative data. Semi-formal interviews were ultimately conducted with administrative leaders who are involved in internationalization planning and with academic faculty members who work with and are affected by the internationalization efforts at Soka.

Top Global University Project and Implementation of Internationalization in Japanese Universities

At this point, it is important for me to discuss more in depth the Japanese Top Global University Project, which is currently a central part of the Japanese government's internationalization drivers in the country. As I have established earlier, internationalization of Japanese higher education has been heavily motivated by government policies. One of the most recent government policies and efforts to internationalize Japanese higher education is the Top Global University Project (TGU) which was launched in 2014 by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in Japan (MEXT). I only briefly described this earlier, but it is vital to gain a more in depth understanding of how this project is shaped. The project aims to promote comprehensive internationalization of Japanese universities and to enhance their international competitiveness and compatibility (MEXT, n.d.e). There are two types of initiatives within the project: Type A, or the Top Type, focuses on supporting the thirteen selected universities to be ranked among the top 100 in the world university rankings; Type B, or Global Traction Type, focuses on supporting the 24 selected universities to lead the internationalization of Japanese higher education. Based on the nature of this

study (to examine internationalization from administrative leader and faculty perspectives), prospective research sites were selected from Type B. I should also note that during the application process to receive the grant, each university had to submit a proposal covering 24 items, 16 of which were numeric performance indicators. These numeric performance indicators included items such as “increase the number of full-time foreign faculty and Japanese faculty who received their degrees from foreign universities,” “increase the number of subjects taught in foreign languages,” “increase the ratio of international students in the total student population,” and “develop English syllabi” to name a few (MEXT, n.d.e).

In terms of internationalization practices more broadly in Japan, Yonezawa et al. (2009) studied Japanese university leaders’ perspectives on internationalization efforts. Their study was based on a comprehensive questionnaire conducted by Tohoku University between 2007 and 2008. The survey was sent to 756 four-year universities, including national, local-public, and private universities in Japan. Due to the formal distribution of the surveys, there was a high response rate of 82.5% with 624 universities responding to the survey. The focus of the survey was to understand how institutions define internationalization, how they set goals for internationalization, what activities are implemented, and how institutions perceive internationalization. Results showed that about 60% of the institutions include internationalization as part of their institutional priorities, with 70% of national and public universities, and 50% of private universities setting institutional plans to implement internationalization. Additionally, universities were asked about the activities they have implemented to internationalize their institutions. Responses indicated that national universities implement activities related to

research and education, while private universities implement activities related to students, such as study abroad, and academic exchanges. The results also showed that both national and private universities make efforts to include assessment of the activities they implement, which the researchers suggest that it is motivated by governmental requirements.

Positionality and Value Premises

This qualitative study was informed by a constructivist paradigm which mainly relies on participants' views of the phenomenon that are being studied (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In addition, the qualitative research heavily involves the subjectivity, positionality, and values of the researchers themselves. Due to the nature of the qualitative research, it is inevitable that the qualitative data will be interpreted through the lenses of the researcher. According to Peshkin (1988), subjectivity is present throughout the research process and "one's subjectivity is like a garment that cannot be removed" (p. 17). The Swedish Nobel laureate Myrdal (1969) also speaks to the importance of allowing the audience to know our value premises that informs our research. He points out that we are all influenced to some degree by our personality and the tradition and environment in which we grew up and that surrounded us. By making explicit our value premises, questions can be answered with integrity of both parties intact. Therefore, this section is added to acknowledge the subjectivity and value that I brought into the investigation and provide explanation of what my values are.

My work experience as an assistant lecturer and administrative staff at the international affairs office at one of the universities selected for Top Global University (TGU) has motivated me to study this phenomenon. At the time I was employed at the

university, the institution had already been selected for an internationalization project preceding TGU. Soon after I started working at the international affairs office, TGU was announced by MEXT and the institution prepared for and submitted the application. Observing the process of applying for the project as well as being involved in the initial implementation phase, I started to question just how the project was being promoted. While the goals and objectives of the initiative sounded lofty and grand, there seemed to be some degree of stress and pressure created due to the seemingly unreachable goal set by a small group of individuals. Although I believe in the value of internationalization of higher education and the importance of promoting such efforts, I was also somewhat critical of how these efforts were being promoted at the institution. Ultimately, my hope is for these initiatives to benefit students who are the main audience of higher education. To ensure this, the way and attitudes in which academic faculty members enact and execute these initiatives are of primary concern as I believe that “the teacher is the most important element of the educational environment” (Ikeda, 2010, p. 118).

Significance of the Study

This study was designed to present a rich case of how national policies are appropriated by universities and by the faculty members who are charged with carrying out institutional policies. Internationalization of higher education has been studied by many researchers; however, the focus has thus far been the overview of national policies and the outcomes of various internationalization activities, such as study abroad programs, and there has not been a focus on how the academic faculty understand and operationalize internationalization. Furthermore, internationalization policies in Japanese higher education are still understudied with regard to understanding how these policies

are understood and appropriated by the actors involved. Studying through the actors will help us to understand the gap between the policies created at the government level and the responses by the faculty members in the front lines at universities. Even if the policies themselves are stating great ideals and goals, if the faculty members who are working directly with the students are not fully engaged or feeling overwhelmed with the increased workload, the impact of these policies may be diminished.

As Childress (2010) asserts, faculty members are important actors in implementing internationalization plans. Through understanding how the faculty members are responding to the internationalization efforts of an institution – faculty members who are expected to enact or put the initiatives into practice, or further expected to shift their practices to meet the demands of the leading figures – practitioners are able to shift or reflect on their approaches to make the internationalization process a more sustainable one. I hope by giving voice to faculty views on internationalization will lead to more realistic workloads or duties for faculty when institutional policy changes and that this will inform, to some degree, the government in their future policy formation.

A report (Helms et al., 2015) on national policies and programs for internationalizing higher education summarizes the implication of internationalization policies and its implementation very well as follows:

Ultimately, the effectiveness of internationalization policies seems to derive from a starting point that is unequivocally rooted in three key notions: clarity, commitment, and flexibility. A clear rationale and realistic vision provide the roadmap, outlining specific objectives in plausible terms. The stakeholders involved must possess the will to engage with the policy as implementers and

advocates. Commitment also implies the provision (or cultivation) of necessary resources (human and otherwise) to sustain the effort. And finally, as issues and challenges arise, the policy framework and the stakeholders who are implicated in the effort to advance it must prove themselves able to respond with some degree of agility to a range of unexpected developments. This is a complex set of dynamics, providing clear evidence that the process of developing, implementing, and carrying out policies for internationalization through to successful completion is delicate and difficult work. (p. 62)

The interview data collected for this study exhibited the three notions—clarity, commitment, and flexibility which I will further discuss in Chapters 4 and 5.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this chapter, I first provide an overview of the literature on the internationalization of higher education and its rationales followed by a specific focus on comprehensive internationalization which will provide the readers with a framework for better understanding the type of internationalization efforts that the Top Global University Project (TGU)—the Japanese national policy that this study was concerned with—currently promotes. I then review literature on the relationship between university administration and academic faculty, looking specifically at how faculty members play a role in implementing institutional policies. I then conclude this chapter with a review of the literature on the internationalization of Japanese higher education to provide a more localized context.

Conceptualization of the Internationalization of Higher Education and Its Rationales

Internationalization is often misunderstood as being synonymous with globalization (Altbach & Knight, 2007). Although the two concepts are closely related, they are not the same. Knight (2003) defines globalization as “the flow of technology, economy, knowledge, people, values and ideas ... across borders” (p. 3), and more specifically in the context of higher education, Altbach & Knight (2007) define globalization “as the economic, political, and societal forces pushing 21st century higher education toward greater international involvement” (p. 290). Furthermore, Altbach (2015) explains the difference between globalization and internationalization by referring to globalization as “trends in higher education that have cross-national implications” and internationalization as “specific policies and initiatives of countries and individual

academic institutions or systems to deal with global trends” (p. 6). This difference and the relationship between the two concepts is simply explained by Knight (2003) that “internationalization is changing the world of education and globalization is changing the world of internationalization” (p. 3). It is important to note that the focus of this study is the internationalization of higher education and not globalization.

Internationalization of higher education has been studied by many researchers and the concept of internationalization has been understood in various ways. de Wit (2002) states that

as the international dimension of higher education gains more attention and recognition, people tend to use it in the way that best suits their purpose. While one can easily understand this happening, it is not helpful for internationalization to become a catchall phrase for everything and anything international. A more focused definition is necessary if it is to be understood and treated with the importance that it deserves. Even if there is no agreement on a precise definition, internationalization needs to have parameters if it is to be assessed and to advance higher education. This is why the use of a working definition in combination with a conceptual framework for internationalization of higher education is relevant.

(pp. 114-115)

As de Wit (2002) explains, internationalization of higher education is a complex phenomenon to which we do not have a clear-cut definition and understanding of. To gain a better understanding of and show the complexity of the concept of internationalization of higher education, this section will explain the idea based on the

framework developed by Knight (2008), namely meanings or definitions, rationales, approaches, and strategies (p. 19).

Definitions of Internationalization of Higher Education

The definition of internationalization of higher education has developed in the past few decades. One of the earlier approaches was to conceptualize internationalization as types of activities involved. Arum and van de Water (1992) explain that international education “refers to the multiple activities, programs and services that fall within international studies, international educational exchange and technical cooperation” (p. 202). I would like to highlight here that although international education and internationalization of higher education are not necessarily the same, Jones and de Wit (2012) explain that there was a shift in the use of term from international education to the internationalization of higher education, reflecting the increasing importance of the different international dimensions observed in higher education and of “the gradual transfer of international activity from the margins of higher education to its core and thus to a more comprehensive process” (p. 36). With this shift, definitions of internationalization of higher education have started to focus more on the process.

One of the definitions that focuses on the process is that by Knight (1994) where she defines internationalization of higher education as:

the process of integrating an international dimension into the teaching/learning, research and service functions of a university or college. An international dimension means a perspective, activity or service which introduces or integrates an international/intercultural/global outlook into the major functions of an institution of higher education. (p. 3)

Similarly, van der Wende (1997) defines it as:

any systematic, sustained effort aimed at making higher education (more) responsive to the requirements and challenges related to the globalisation of societies, economy and labour markets. (p. 19)

Here, van der Wende also focuses on the external factors, namely globalization, that affect internationalization. Furthermore, Mestenhauser and Ellingboe (1998) defines internationalization of higher education as:

the process of integrating an international perspective into a college or university system. It is an ongoing, future-oriented, multidimensional, interdisciplinary, leadership-driven vision that involves many stakeholders working to change the internal dynamics of an institution to respond and adapt appropriately to an increasingly diverse, globally focused, ever-changing external environment. (p. 199)

In addition to the focus on the process, Mestenhauser and Ellingboe (1998) also emphasize the internal shift of an institution to create a culture of internationalization.

Today, the most commonly and widely known definition of internationalization of higher education is perhaps the one proposed by Knight (2003):

Internationalization at the national, sector, and institutional levels is defined as the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education. (p. 2)

This definition is most commonly used for its broadness which allows scholars and practitioners to apply it in different contexts. While this definition is useful and commonly used by various researchers, it is somewhat tautological in that

internationalization is explained as integrating an “international” dimension which could be interpreted in various ways. More recently, de Wit et al. (2015) updated Knight’s (2003) definition as

the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff and to make a meaningful contribution to society, (p. 29)

through which de Wit et al. (2015) emphasize that the internationalization of higher education in and of itself is not the end goal but rather the process to enhance the quality of education for a bigger purpose. While we see a shift in conceptualizing internationalization of higher education as a process, Jones and de Wit (2012) argue that in practice, this is not necessarily the case, and in fact, activity-oriented approach is still dominating the actual practice.

It is important here to note how internationalization, or *kokusaika* in its original language, is defined in the Japanese context. It was around the 1980s that the term *kokusaika* started to be used more widely in public discourse (Goodman, 2007). While the public was in favor of the idea of *kokusaika*, its definition was not clear. Goodman (2007) explains that some understood it as a concept based on the idea to promote and strengthen Japanese identity within the people, while others understood it as a more global concept (p. 72). Goodman (2007) makes an interesting observation that the differences between the two understanding is that the former understanding is that of a pragmatist, which includes individuals such as businessmen, and the latter of an idealist,

which includes individuals such as academics (p. 73). Similarly, Ebuchi (1989) breaks down *kokusaika* into three elements:

positive intake of other cultural elements from abroad – acculturation; spread of Japanese cultural elements, including the language, to overseas – Japanization; and contribution to the development of a global community order through participating in international cooperative projects of various kind – globalism. (p. 49)

However, more recently and centrally, out of a concern that there has not been a common understanding of *kokusaika* when the topic itself is discussed, MEXT (n.d.b) provided the following definition of *kokusaika*:

A process of incorporating international and intercultural aspects into higher education in response to globalization. This does not necessarily involve activities that cross borders such as student and faculty mobility or establishing international campuses, but rather includes incorporating international aspects within the nation, such as the development of English education and area studies. (Section 1)

We see from this definition that the internationalization of higher education in the Japanese context is now also shifting to be understood as a process.

From these definitions, it is important to note that internationalization is not an end point but a process of continual change within its organizational level. For the purpose of this study, I will use the definition proposed by de Wit (2015) which is broad enough to allow the definition to be used in the international context.

Rationales for Internationalization

How internationalization is implemented in higher education institutions also varies depending on their rationales. de Wit (2002) explains rationales as “motivations for integrating an international dimension into higher education” and “address the ‘why’ of internationalization” (p. 84). Rationales and motivations behind promoting internationalization has commonly been categorized into four rationales: political, economic, social-cultural, and academic (de Wit, 2002; Knight, 1997).

Examples of political rationale include institution and nations’ motivation to establish a peaceful relationship with other nations. Additionally, internationalization could also be motivated by the nation’s will to strengthen their national identity in the context of globalized era (Childress, 2010; Knight, 1997). Economic rationale has become increasingly important, especially in Europe (van der Wende, 2001) as well as in Asia (Knight, 1997). Examples of this include the need for workforce who can compete in the globalized society. Socio-cultural rationale motivates nations and institutions to prepare individuals with intercultural understanding. The importance of cultural diversity is implicated in this rationale. Finally, academic rationale is the motivation to improve the quality of education. Examples include the incorporation of international dimension to the institution’s research and teaching.

While this framework of rationales is helpful in understanding the motivations of international practitioners, there is no distinction between actors at different levels, namely national-level and institutional-level. Acknowledging the increasing importance of looking at both national and institutional levels in discussing internationalization, Knight (2008) outlines the rationales for internationalization at both the national and

institutional levels. This perspective is also relevant in this study as the focus is on how governmental policies (national level) are appropriated at universities and its actors (institutional level).

At the national-level, Knight (2008) identifies the following rationales as significant: human resources development; strategic alliances; commercial trade; nation building; and social and cultural development. Human resources development has become an important driving force with an increasing emphasis on enhancing human capital to enable a nation to compete in the international stage (Knight, 2008, p. 22). This could be observed in the emphasis on recruiting international students and scholars, as well as incorporating international aspects to teaching and various educational activities to increase students' intercultural understanding. Strategic alliances are also what motivates internationalization of higher education. Through the internationalization of higher education, nations can build stronger economic ties with other nations. Commercial trade is a relatively newer rationale in promoting internationalization of higher education. Some countries have started to put emphasis on making economic gains through providing international education. Examples of this includes satellite campuses and online courses. Lastly, nation building is another rationale which is more relevant to developing countries that are importing education programs to assist their nation-building agenda.

At the institutional-level, Knight (2008) defines the following emerging rationales: international profile and reputation; student and staff development; income generation; strategic alliances; and research and knowledge production. These rationales could be influenced by various factors including the institution's "mission, student

population, faculty profile, geographic location, funding sources, level of resources, and orientation to local, national, and international interests” (Knight, 2008, p. 25).

International profile and reputation refer to an institution’s motivation and drive to become an institution with great international reputation, which leads to attracting international students and scholars. Additionally, institutions are improving their academic quality for branding purposes in order for them to compete both domestically and globally. In her dissertation research, Jang (2009) systematically studied the relationship between the internationalization of higher education and the quality of higher education. Drawing upon data from past studies from Horn et al. (2007), Lombardi et al. (2003), and *U.S. News and World Report*, Jang (2009) conducted a quantitative analysis of the correlation of the variables that represents the dimensions of internationalization and the quality of higher education. This study showed that there was in fact a moderate positive correlation ($r = .66$) between the degree of internationalization and the quality of higher education with most variables positively correlated with each other. Interestingly, the study did not find any correlation between internationalized curriculum variable and any of the quality variables.

Student and staff development is another motivating factor for internationalization to happen. Emphasis has been given on improving the intercultural understanding of students and staff. Income generation is also a motivation as more institutions are now seeking ways to generate income from their internationalization efforts. Altbach and Knight (2007) explains that this is particularly true for for-profit sectors, but it is also a motive for nonprofit universities that are facing financial difficulties. Strategic alliances is a motivating factor that encourages institutions to establish academic agreements and

exchanges with other institutions. These agreements are not an end goal but are used to achieve the institutions' larger institutional objectives. Lastly, research and knowledge production are the motivation for institutions to continue with their efforts in fulfilling their role as higher education institution to produce knowledge and engage in research activities. Through internationalization, institutions will be able to collaborate internationally to contribute to resolving global issues.

As the variety and breadth of rationales demonstrate, each actor has different rationales that drives internationalization at their organizational level. Knight (2008) emphasizes that whomever the actor may be, it is important to have clear motivations and rationales as “policies, programs, strategies and outcomes are all linked and guided by explicit and even implicit rationales” (p. 28).

Approaches to Internationalization

Based on the motivations and rationales driving higher education internationalization, national governments and institutions have taken various approaches to promote internationalization. Knight (2004) makes the following insightful comment regarding approaches to internationalization:

An approach is different from a definition. Even though different countries or even institutions within a country may hold a common interpretation or definition of internationalization, the manner in which they address the implementation of internationalization is very different because of priorities, culture, history, politics, and resources. An approach to internationalization reflects or characterizes the values, priorities, and actions that are exhibited during the work toward implementing internationalization. (p. 18)

Studying closely the approaches that the actors, be it the national government or the institution, take to implement internationalization, we are able to understand the underlying value of the actors that may not be clearly reflected in their rationale. Knight (1997, 2004) identifies several approaches to internationalization at the national and institutional level respectively. In her earlier studies, Knight (1997) identified four approaches at the institutional level: activity approach, competency approach, ethos approach, and process approach (pp. 6-8). Knight explains that these four approaches are not mutually exclusive and that it is natural for institutions to utilize multiple approaches. Later, Knight (2004) updated the approaches at the institutional level as the following: activity approach, outcomes approach, rationales approach, process approach, at home approach, and abroad or cross-border approach (p. 20).

Activity approach, which appears in both categorizations, is an approach where institutions promote internationalization of higher education through various activities such as study abroad programs, projects with other institutions, and establishment of branch campuses. The outcomes approach, which was formerly referred to as the competency approach, focuses on the desired outcomes through internationalization. Examples include student competencies and the number of international agreements, although it is unclear how much of the international agreements that universities report are actually active. This approach was reframed from competency to outcomes due to the emphasis on having a more concrete result in higher education.

Rationales approach is a new category added by Knight (2004). As we saw in the previous section, rationales for internationalization are still evolving and are complex. This change could be observed on policy documents or statements made at the

institutional level which now put more emphasis on why they are making efforts towards internationalization. The process approach, which remains the same in both categorizations, is the process of integrating international dimension into the various aspects of the institution, such as their teaching practices and various services offered.

The internationalization at home (IaH) approach is an approach that broadened the ethos approach category. In the ethos approach, the focus was on creating an institutional culture or climate to support internationalization; whereas in the at home approach, the focus also includes promotion of campus-based activities to encourage internationalization on campus. Crowther et al. (2000) define this concept as “any internationally related activity with the exception of outbound student and staff mobility” (p. 8). Internationalization at home became a topic of discussion because scholars were concerned that internationalization of higher education was mainly focusing on student mobility which is only applicable to a small portion of student population (Teekens, 2013). Therefore, the focus of internationalization at home is to offer opportunities for all students, including those who are unable to study abroad, to develop their intercultural competences at their home institutions (Beelen & Jones, 2015). Finally, offering programs abroad approach is another important new category added by Knight (2004). This approach includes institutions’ efforts to provide education overseas in various ways such as by face-to-face teaching and distance teaching.

Strategies for the Internationalization of Higher Education

Based on their rationale and approach, the actors would employ internationalization strategies which can be categorized into two broad groups: program strategies and organizational strategies (Knight, 1997, 2004; Knight and de Wit, 1995).

Program strategies promote internationalization through various academic activities such as student exchange programs, accepting international students, visiting scholars, and joint research programs (Knight, 1997). Organizational strategies promote internationalization through institutionalizing international dimension in their university operation. Examples include ensuring university leaders, faculty, and staff commitment to internationalization efforts, stating goals for internationalization, and providing faculty and staff development opportunities (Knight, 1997, pp. 16-17).

Comprehensive Internationalization

More recently, the concept of comprehensive internationalization has emerged. This term also appears in the outline of TGU (MEXT, n.d.e). Hudzik (2011) provides a definition of comprehensive internationalization as follows:

Comprehensive Internationalization is a commitment, confirmed through action, to infuse international and comparative perspectives throughout the teaching, research, and service missions of higher education. It shapes institutional ethos and values and touches the entire higher education enterprise. It is essential that it is embraced by institutional leadership, governance, faculty, students, and all academic service and support units. It is an institutional imperative, not just a desirable possibility. Comprehensive internationalization not only impacts all of campus life but the institution's external frames of reference, partnerships, and relations. The global reconfiguration of economies, systems of trade, research, and communication, and the impact of global forces on local life, dramatically expand the need for comprehensive internationalization and the motivations and purposes driving it. (p.6)

One framework to understand comprehensive internationalization is one proposed by the Center for Internationalization & Global Engagement (CIGE) which defines comprehensive internationalization as “a strategic, coordinated process that seeks to align and integrate policies, programs, and initiatives to position colleges and universities as more globally oriented and internationally connected institutions” (American Council on Education, n.d.). There are 6 target areas that the CIGE model focuses on: articulated institutional commitment; administrative leadership, structure, and staffing; curriculum, co-curriculum, and learning outcomes; faculty policies and practices; student mobility; and collaboration and partnerships. Similarly, Hudzik (2015a) identifies eight strategies for strengthening comprehensive internationalization practices. These strategies are “define the meaning of success,” “reward success,” “build support through integration,” “extend the leadership team for Comprehensive Internationalization,” “challenge the status quo and encourage adaptive bureaucracy,” “recruit and develop human resources for internationalization,” “articulate a bold vision and goals,” and “allocate money and resources” (pp. 64-69). Although this framework was developed based on the U.S. higher education system, it provides a general understanding of what constitutes an institution to internationalize its institution comprehensively, and this is relevant to Japanese higher education.

Internationalization of the Curriculum

Based on the definition of internationalization and comprehensive internationalization, we understand that faculty or academic staff play a pivotal role in advancing internationalization of higher education. One of the major aspects of faculty involvement in the internationalization efforts is the internationalization of the

curriculum. Internationalization of the curriculum is an important aspect of comprehensive internationalization (Whitsed & Green, 2013). According to Leask (2009), internationalization of the curriculum is defined as follows:

Internationalization of the curriculum is the incorporation of an international and intercultural dimension into the content of the curriculum as well as the teaching and learning processes and support services of a program of study ... An internationalized curriculum will engage students with internationally informed research and cultural and linguistic diversity. It will purposefully develop their international and intercultural perspectives as global professionals and citizens. (p. 209)

Internationalization of the curriculum is expected to help students develop their international perspectives. This is echoed by Mok (2007) when he states that the “essence of internationalization of higher education is to promote cross-cultural understanding and to deepen international cooperation” (p. 449). However, some scholars question whether this is also the case with Japanese higher education (Hammond, 2012; Kinmonth, 2005; Whitsed & Wright, 2011). Internationalization of the curriculum in the Japanese context was initially driven by the need to serve international students, which was the major focus of the internationalization policies in Japan (Huang, 2006). These needs were met by offering English-language programs to allow a larger number of international students to study at Japanese institutions. From the 1980s to early 2000s, there was a significant increase in the number of courses that included international perspectives which were offered to both domestic and international students (Huang, 2006). Furthermore, there has also been an increase in the number of degree programs taught completely in English. In

fact, most of the universities selected for the Top Global University Project included the increase of courses taught in another language as one of their target goals. Hammond (2012, p. 17) sees this internationalization trend as a means for higher education institutions to simply attract more students to their institutions and citing Kreber (2009, p. 5) explains that the institutions are “superficially internationalized.” Kreber (2009) further states:

If internationalizing the curriculum is not understood to serve a more profound educational purpose, one that—while inclusive of aims to meet the needs of international students—goes well beyond this, then an important opportunity for higher education to play a pivotal role in fostering intercultural understanding, greater empathy and action towards those most in need, international cooperation on climate change, etc., is lost. (Kreber, 2009, p. 5)

This point is also echoed by Porntip and Chotima (2018) who caution that simply offering English language courses as part of internationalization is superficial and shallow. Phan (2013a; 2017) also argues that an overemphasis on providing English-medium programs could in fact negatively affect the quality of the content delivered in the courses. Additionally, Phan (2013b) asserts that “the superficial appearance of having English-medium programs in the curriculum as a selling point to attract students rather than the value of these programs is traded” (p. 171). This idea of deep versus shallow or superficial is also discussed in the empirical research on study abroad and global engagement conducted by Paige et al. (2010). The purpose of the study was to examine how college students’ study abroad experiences influence their global engagement in the subsequent years. Findings revealed that the depth of the study abroad programs was in

fact the most impactful on individuals' global engagement. This shows that simply providing a program does not create as much impact as when more consideration and thoughts are put into it.

Rather than simply placing emphasis on solely English-medium programs, Phan (2017) contends, in the case of Japanese higher education in particular, that "it is through the simultaneous promotion of and confidence in Japanese language and Japanese-medium programs that Japan would be able to meaningfully engage globally and be engaged with fully by both Japanese and non-Japanese" (pp. 111-112). With an increasing focus on providing courses in another language, mainly in English, challenges faced by academic faculty have been documented by some researchers. Some of these challenges include the increasing workload for the academic faculty and the difficulty of ensuring quality of instruction (Kuwamura, 2009; Tsuneyoshi, 2005).

In addition, faculty members are sometimes asked to teach courses where they are expected to encourage meaningful collaboration between international and domestic students. However, without being equipped with the knowledge and skills to facilitate such interaction, it could be quite challenging for the faculty members (Leask, 2009). Leask (2009) suggests that "academic staff must themselves be highly efficient and effective intercultural learners with the skill to engage with and utilize diversity to develop their own and their students' international perspectives" (p. 212). While the internationalization of the curriculum could work positively to improve the internationalization of the entire institution, challenges and struggles that come with it need to be addressed to facilitate smooth implementation. Regarding faculty support and development, Sanderson (2008, 2011) speaks to the importance of internationalization at

the individual level, the “academic self” (Sanderson, 2008, p. 276) through developing their authenticity (cf. Cranton, 2001) and cosmopolitanism which is explained as having “attitudes of openness, interconnectivity, interdependence, reciprocity, and plurality than necessarily knowing a lot about other cultures” (Sanderson, 2008, pp. 288-289). Working with an increasingly diverse population, scholars are recognizing the importance of promoting internationalization at the individual level as well to further promote the internationalization of the whole institution.

Administrator - Faculty Relations in Higher Education

When a higher education institution plans to implement a university-wide project, it is usually the administrators that lead the implementation of the plan. Of course, they alone cannot fully implement these plans and would require cooperation from various stakeholders and actors within the institution. Internationalization initiatives too require support from different actors which include faculty members. In her study, Childress (2009) identified faculty engagement as one of the factors that support the implementation of internationalization plans. Some of the factors that prevent the implementation of the plans are lack of funding and support, as well as faculty members’ resistance to being told what to do. Faculty could function as both positive and negative influence to the implementation process.

Childress (2010) identifies six levels of faculty engagement: champions, advocates, latent champions and advocates, uninterested, skeptics, and opponents (p. 28). These level ranges from those who are committed to the internationalization plans to those who disagree with the idea. Childress (2010) also identifies some barriers that prevent faculty from being more engaged in the internationalization efforts. These

barriers are categorized into institutional barriers and individual barriers. Institutional barriers include situations such as lack of financial resources and restrictive promotion opportunities for faculty; and individual barriers include situations such as faculty's attitude to internationalization and international learning, faculty's knowledge and skills. Mestenhauser (2011) also identifies the mindsets of individuals involved in the internationalization process as one of the major barriers to internationalization.

Studies have revealed the importance of faculty engagement in promoting internationalization in their respective institutions. Friesen (2012) conducted a study at a Canadian university to understand how internationalization is understood by faculty members, why they engage in international efforts, and how faculty positions influence their level of engagement in regard to internationalization. Five faculty members were interviewed in the course of six months. The study showed that there was a lack of consensus with how the institution and faculty members understand internationalization. Friesen (2012) identified that one of the major differences in the understanding of internationalization between the institutional documents and faculty perspective is that institutional documents tend to focus more on concrete, numerical goals while individual faculty members tend to see internationalization as more qualitative in nature.

Another case study investigates the impact of internationalization initiatives at a university in the U.K. on their academic staff (Turner & Robson, 2007). Research questions that guided the study were:

What were participants' experiences of internationalization within their working context?

How would participants characterize the institutional approach to internationalization within their work unit/faculty/university?

How would participants describe future impacts of internationalization for them and the institution?

What support did participants identify as necessary for them and their local community to respond to the university's strategic international objectives? (p. 73)

Data were gathered through group and individual interviews with academic staff and administrators at the institution over a period of four months. When participants were asked about their experiences with internationalization, many referred to the increasing number of international students with which they interacted. The impact of internationalization was particularly affecting the time academics were able to use for their own research. Turner and Robson (2007) observe that "participants universally experienced internationalization as something which was being imposed managerially, rather than a phenomenon in which they had initiated participation" (p. 76). Faculty members' experience in particular with internationalization was perceived negatively, "as frustrating and contradictory" (p. 78). Interviews with participants also identified that faculty members would appreciate being more involved in the discussion on how to implement internationalization strategies at their institution.

Similarly, Shaw et al. (2011) conducted a study in Ukraine to understand how the implementation of the Bologna Process is influencing the daily work of the academic staff at a university. The university studied was in the midst of a transition as a result of some transitions in the national context: enrollment declines, financial austerity,

implications of Bologna Process, and push for research (p. 78). Over a period of two weeks, interviews were conducted with 32 academic staff and seven senior administrators. The study shows that the academic staff perceived their situation as being “caught in a trap of multiple and sometimes irreconcilable demands” which comes from the various institutional and national pressure (p. 79). Findings show that faculty members are feeling pressured to do more research but that effort is not being recognized since their salaries are based on teaching loads. Furthermore, they are required to adapt their curriculum in response to the changes institutions are making. Interestingly, 85% of the respondents felt that this increased pressure was brought due to the institution adopting the Bologna Process. Shaw et al. (2011) concludes that this study illuminates “a university caught in a storm of pressures that pit well-established, widely understood and rather traditional institutional goals and procedures against a set of externally imposed changes and political pressures” (p. 86).

Academic faculty in Japanese higher education too are facing challenges in the process of internationalization of higher education. Whitsed and Wright (2011) conducted a qualitative study to understand the experiences of international academic staff who teach English at Japanese universities. The target population was teachers who were hired as part of the internationalization strategy of the respective institution. As part of the internationalization efforts, Japanese universities are expected to increase the number of international faculty as well as increase the number of courses taught in English. Whitsed and Wright (2011) state that:

participants felt exploited for their exoticism as foreigners and their utilitarian value. As such, they viewed their place within the university system as less to do

with developing students' linguistic and communication competencies, increasing students' intercultural and cross-cultural understanding, or enhancing global competencies, and more to do with maintaining a culture of "othering." (p. 38)

Furthermore, the study reveals the mismatch between what MEXT call for in their policy and the actual practice and experiences of the faculty members, in this case particularly by the international adjunct faculty members.

Internationalization of Japanese Higher Education

One of the major characteristics of internationalization of Japanese higher education is that the efforts are usually initiated and driven by government incentives and national policies (Horie, 2002; Umakoshi, 1997). Additionally, while higher education policies were mainly proposed by MEXT, these policies have started to be considered at the Prime Minister level (Yonezawa, 2011). This shows how internationalization of higher education has become a great focus not only within the educational sector but by the nation as a whole.

Since the 1980s, the Japanese government has started to put greater efforts into the internationalization of Japanese higher education as it can be observed in the major shifts and implementation of national policies. In 1983, initiated by the then Prime Minister Nakasone, the government announced a plan to invite 100,000 international students to Japanese universities. The purpose was "to contribute to the improvement of education and research, to promote mutual understanding and international cooperation with other countries, and to facilitate human resource development in developing countries" (Committee for International Student Policies Toward the 21st Century, 1983 as cited in Ninomiya et al., 2009). However, some scholars argue that this plan was more

concerned with revitalizing its own country rather than striving to develop international understanding (Ishii, 2003). To make this plan a reality, the government periodically issued reports to inform the public about the progress and suggested action plans based on the progress (Horie, 2002). The first two reports included specific items to encourage the universities to improve their quality of education and research. Although the number of international students continued to increase until 1995, the number started to decrease soon after. Facing this reality, the government again put emphasis on improving the quality of education and encouraged systematic reforms in higher education (Horie, 2002). In response to this call, national universities started to establish the Center for International Students with support of the national funding (Horie, 2002). Offering short-term study programs and financially supporting international students are some of the examples that encouraged international students to study in Japan.

While the major focus until the 2000s had been to increase the number of international students studying in Japan as promoted by the national initiatives, the focus shifted from the quantity to quality of international students, along with encouraging more Japanese students to study abroad. Not only did the selection of the Japanese government Scholarship Programs for international students become strict, but universities were also encouraged to monitor international students' attendance and their achievements in schools (Ninomiya et al., 2009). However, this did not mean that the government was no longer making efforts to increase the number of international students as we see in the national initiatives including Asia Gateway Initiatives in 2007 and the Plan of 300,000 Foreign Students in 2008 (Yonezawa, 2014). During this time, the government also started to put more focus on sending Japanese students overseas.

According to the report issued by the Central Council for Education (2003), the government decided to put more emphasis on fostering individuals who are successful in the globalized society to promote further international exchange. The government recognized the limited support for Japanese students who wish to study abroad and realized that support to increase the number of outbound student mobility was necessary (pp. 7-8). Although Japanese student mobility was not the focus of government discourse, the mobility rate had already increased from around 18,000 in 1983 to 76,000 in 2001 (Onishi, 2008).

With increased focus on sending more Japanese students abroad, the number of Japanese students studying abroad has continued to increase. Based on data collected by Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO), the number of students enrolled in Japanese universities and studied abroad has increased from 36,302 in 2009/2010 academic year to 105,301 in 2017/2018 academic year (MEXT, 2019). Important to note here is that approximately 60% of the study abroad experiences reported were less than one month in duration. Some scholars hold critical views on the impact and effectiveness of these short term study abroad experiences (Hammer, 2012; Lederman, 2007; Woolf, 2017) In his article, Woolf (2007) challenges some of the myths in study abroad, namely the quality of study abroad programs, increase of short-term programs, and expansion of programs in non-traditional locations. He asserts that immersing students into the culture of the host country itself does not directly lead to a quality program. Woolf (2007) also expresses his critical view on the growth of short-term programs, particularly the ones that are less than a semester or even less than fifteen weeks. He states that “this category

of programming blurs the distinction between education abroad and educational tourism” (Woolf, 2007, p. 503) and may not be academically credible.

Observing the trends, Yonezawa et al. (2009) argue that the internationalization efforts in Japan is becoming “an issue of ‘global competitiveness’ in research and human resource development” (p. 128). Similarly, Ninomiya et al. (2009) conclude that the internationalization initiative in Japan has shifted from “developing country capacity building through ODA” to “status building for global competitiveness” (p. 123).

Furthermore, Knight (2011) also identifies the recent trend that competition, rankings, and commercialization are what is motivating the internationalization of higher education. In addition to the scholars’ observation, similar discourse is found from the government level personnel. In the Japan Revitalization Strategy announced by the Abe administration (Prime Minister of Japan and his Cabinet, 2013), it states:

In order to cultivate human resources that can survive global competition, based on recommendation of the “Education Rebuilding Implementation Council,” the government will double the number of Japanese students who study abroad from 60 thousand students (2010) to 120 thousand students by the end of 2020 by utilizing international English examinations, providing opportunities to study abroad for all students who have the desires and talents and forming university groups that lead education responding to globalization. (p. 52)

Additionally, Japan’s Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology spoke about the rationale behind the internationalization of higher education considering the issues of declining birthrate and the aging population:

Faced with these issues, both global and domestic, Japan has no other course than to enhance the capabilities of each and every citizen through education if it wants to continue to grow as an affluent nation and keep its position within the world. For this, it is of paramount importance for Japan to ensure that its system of higher education, particularly through the internationalization of its universities, fosters highly capable people with a global perspective who can play active roles in many fields. This will be crucial for strengthening Japan's international competitiveness. (Shimomura, 2013)

Based on these national level discourses, we see that the internationalization efforts are driven by the motive for Japan to become globally competitive. Yonezawa (2014) explains that the societal factors, such as declining birth rate and the aging population, are also pushing the businesses to expand globally, which in turn requires the universities to send out graduates who have the competencies to compete in the global economy. Furthermore, the Japanese industries have started to require universities to ensure that students acquire generic skills necessary in the workforce. These generic skills include the abilities to step forward, think well, and work in teams (Yonezawa, 2014, p. 39). With the growing need of the cooperation between the industry and academia to foster Global *Jinzai*, the Global Human Resource Development Committee of the Industry-Academia Partnership for Human Resource Development was established in 2009 (METI, n.d.).

As these research and studies in this section reveal, a serious gap in perspectives and expectations among the national government, university administration, and the academic faculty in the process of implementing internationalization policies exists.

Furthermore, there is a lack of research on the process of how national policies are understood and appropriated by universities and by the faculty who are charged with carrying out institutional policy. Although the Japanese government could promote internationalization of higher education through their policies and offering funding, as Hudzik (2015b) asserts, “it is what happens within the higher education institution itself that is the decisive variable” (p. 6) that determines a successful internationalization. To enable universities to continue their efforts in internationalization, it is crucial for university leaders to take the initiative to ensure that the institution as a whole is united in their purpose and engage the academic faculty actively in the process. In a rapidly globalizing world, internationalization will continue to be of an interest and concern in higher education (Brandenburg & de Wit, 2011). I hope this study will give voice to faculty views on internationalization and enable a more in-depth and insightful approach to understand the realities of the internationalization of higher education in Japan.

Chapter 3: Methodology and Methods

Research Design

The purpose of this study was to understand how internationalization policies and initiatives introduced by the Japanese government were “taken in,” or appropriated, resisted, and reshaped at Japanese universities. In particular, I studied the perspectives and experiences of faculty members working at a Japanese university that is actively engaged in the internationalization efforts to understand the phenomenon. Faculty members are situated at the most local level of the implementation and enactment of these policies. To fully understand the process of policy implementation, it is important to understand the perspectives of individuals at the local level (McLaughlin, 1987).

The conceptual framework used in this study to facilitate our understanding of the phenomenon and to guide the study are the sociocultural approach to policy studies (Levinson et al., 2009) and the cognitive framework of policy implementation (Spillane et al., 2002) guided by the constructivist paradigm. These frameworks help understand how implementers construct their understanding of the policy and how they appropriate the policies based on their constructed understanding.

To reiterate, the major research question guiding this study was articulated in the following way:

How are Japan’s internationalization policies interpreted, envisioned, and practiced by stakeholders within a university nationally recognized for leading internationalization efforts today, and as a result, how is the university implicated in Japanese government efforts to internationalize?

As mentioned earlier in this dissertation, I also identified sub-questions that I believed would help me to answer my primary research question including—How are academic faculty and administrative leaders’ understandings of “internationalization” related to their individual and institutional roles in promoting internationalization efforts? How do Japanese internationalization efforts align (or not) with university desires for successful students? Last, what overall tensions and strengths within internationalization efforts do academic faculty and administrative leaders on the ground identify?

The paradigmatic approach that guided the research design of the study to answer the research questions was a constructivist paradigm. Guba (1990) describes paradigms as a “basic set of beliefs that guides action” (p. 17). The constructivist paradigm was the most appropriate way to answer my research questions that required an understanding of how the stakeholders involved in this study as participants construct meaning.

Constructivists believe that meanings are constructed and developed through their own experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Creswell and Creswell (2018) explain that,

these meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories or ideas. The goal of the research is to rely as much as possible on the participants’ views of the situation being studied. (p. 30)

Some of the assumptions which this paradigmatic approach hold are that we construct meanings by engaging with our environment and surroundings and that our past experiences and perspectives are the basis of how we make sense of our world (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Guided by this research design, I aimed to use qualitative methodology to answer the research questions.

The purpose of a qualitative research is to explore and understand how individuals make meaning out of and interpret certain phenomenon (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Marshall & Rossman, 1995; Merriam, 2002; Merriam & Grenier, 2019). Specifically, I was inspired by vertical or comparative case study methodology to provide insight into the perspectives of the faculty members engaged in enacting internationalization policies in a Japanese university (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2016; Vavrus & Bartlett, 2009). I explained earlier in this dissertation my interest in examining closely vertical and horizontal axes of comparison across different Japanese government project funded institutions. However, because I did not work with more than one institution, I opted to shift my study toward a simple case study approach, yet still inspired by the vertical axis of comparison by connecting Japanese government initiatives with educators “on the ground” at Soka University.

Ultimately, a simple case studies methodology was selected in order to help me to understand the perspectives of different key stakeholders, primarily faculty members, in the context of a Japanese university that is actively engaged in the internationalization of its institution. Case studies methodology has been discussed by various scholars (Merriam, 1998; Ragin & Becker, 1992; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018) and is generally explained as such,

the researcher develops an in-depth analysis of a case, often a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals. Cases are bounded by time and activity, and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time. (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p.40)

Stake (1995) defines case study as “the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances” (p. xi). Guided by the constructivist worldview, Stake’s focus is on qualitative research methods and explains that “the qualitative researcher emphasizes episodes of nuance, the sequentiality of happenings in context, the wholeness of the individual” (Stake, 1995, p. xii). It is also important to note that the emphasis is also placed on the necessity of bounding the case which is “a specific, a complex, functioning thing” (Stake, 1995, p. 2). Similarly, Merriam (1998) emphasizes that the researcher’s interest in striving to understand the study participants’ views is what drives the case study research to employ qualitative approach. In addition, having a bounded unit of analysis is what Merriam and Tisdell (2016) conclude as the most defining feature. They go so far as to claim that “if the phenomenon you are interested in studying is not intrinsically bounded, it is not a case” (p. 39).

One of the most influential scholars in case study research is Yin (2018) who defines a case study as:

an empirical method investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the “case”) in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident. (p. 15)

I believed this to be applicable to my study early on, where the boundaries between internationalization and higher education are increasingly blurred through Japanese government competitive projects linked with Global *Jinzai*. Thus, while Stake (1995) and Merriam (1998) primarily focus on qualitative data, Yin (2018) encourages the use of quantitative data as a way for case study research to go “beyond being a type of

qualitative research” (p. 18). Although my study does not employ a quantitative data set, this is an aspect of research design that I would recommend for a mixed-methods study in the future.

As mentioned, I was also inspired by comparative case study methodology, and I still found ways to consider some of the elements of this methodology as informative to my research, particularly in looking at the vertical axis of influence and policy shaping and implementation at Soka University. Unlike traditional case studies methodology that place emphasis on the boundedness of the cases (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018), comparative case studies (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2014, 2016; Vavrus & Bartlett, 2006, 2009) allows the researcher to follow the phenomenon itself without being restricted to a singular bounded case. This does not mean that the researcher cannot focus on a particular site. Instead, the study should have a principal site and “fully attend to the ways in which historical trends, social structures, and national and international forces shape local processes at this site. In other words, local understandings and social interactions should not be considered demographically or geographically bounded” (Vavrus & Bartlett, 2006, p. 96). Bartlett and Vavrus (2016) explain that the comparative case studies approach can be used for social research, in particular about practice and policy. They further elaborate as follows:

By practice, we mean to signal studies that consider how social actors, with diverse motives, intentions, and levels of influence, work in tandem with and/or in response to social forces to routinely produce the social and cultural worlds in which they live. Some practices are widely shared...others, such as the marking of a marriage or a death, can be quite specific to a place and time. Practices are

never isolated. Social actors adopt and develop practices in relation to other groups—sometimes to distinguish themselves, and sometimes to declare (or aspire to) group membership. Further, practices always develop in relation to broader political, social, cultural, and economic environments. (Bartlett and Vavrus, 2016, p. 1).

Comparative case studies methodology focuses on three axes: the horizontal axis which “compares how similar policies unfold in *distinct locations* that are *socially produced* and *complexly connected*,” the vertical axis which “insists on simultaneous attention *to and across scales*,” and the transversal axis which “*historically* situates the processes or relations under consideration” (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2016, p. 3). In my study, as emphasized, I primarily focused on the vertical axis, studying how different levels of stakeholders are engaged in the internationalization efforts at their institution, and how they are understanding and enacting the policy that they have been handed. Vavrus and Bartlett (2009) explain that a vertical case study is a “multisited, qualitative case study that traces the linkages among local, national, and international forces and institutions that together shape and are shaped by education in a particular locale” (p. 12). In this study, I traced the internationalization of higher education initiatives set forth by the Japanese government that shape, or not shape, the actual practices of academic faculty at Japanese universities. At the same time, although not looking conventionally across at a number of different institutions, in its own way, my study also focused on the horizontal axis at Soka University by studying across academic departments within a single university to understand how their faculty members are appropriating and enacting the same internationalization policies.

Research Site and Participant Selection

Initially, when I was considering a number of possible research sites, purposeful sampling (Patton, 2002) was used to select research sites and participants for this study to select “information-rich cases” (p. 230) which allowed the researcher to have an in-depth study of the phenomenon. Patton (2002) explains:

The logic and power of purposeful sampling lie in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry, thus the term *purposeful* sampling. Studying information-rich cases yields insights and in-depth understanding rather than empirical generalizations (Patton, 2002, p. 230, emphasis in original).

One of the strategies in purposeful sampling is deviant case sampling, and as mentioned earlier in this work, two universities were identified for this study. Both universities had been selected for the TGU and GGJ, which are grant-based projects initiated by MEXT. Being selected for both projects to me showed the commitment of the institution as a whole to actively engage in internationalization efforts. The two institutions had also received different evaluations based on the rubric provided by the assessment committee during the last interim evaluation report in 2017. The assessment was based on the selected universities’ progress from the start of the program until the end of 2016 academic year. Based on the rubric (JSPS, 2017), each institution was given a letter grade ranging from D (which refers to a status where it appears to be extremely difficult for the institution to achieve its goals based on the progress thus far, and therefore should

terminate the funding) to S (which refers to a status where there is excellent progress thus far and is highly likely that the institution will meet its goals).

Out of the 24 universities (10 national, two public, 12 private) selected for TGU Type B, four universities (one national, three private) received an evaluation of S, 15 universities (eight national, one public, six private) received an evaluation of A, and five universities (one national, one public, three private) received an evaluation of B (the institution will need to reflect on the suggestions and make revisions and efforts to achieve its goals). After approaching the two institutions, the institution which received a lower evaluation rejected participation in this study, and the other institution, Soka University, which received the highest evaluation of S accepted participation.

Within Soka University, research participants were selected from a slate of key stakeholders who are directly engaged or influenced by the internationalization efforts. These stakeholders include the leading figures in the international affairs office; leading figures in the global core center which is a newly established office that focuses on and take the lead with internationalization strategies; and faculty members in departments that are most influenced by the internationalization efforts. In particular, departments that have English tracks or have newly created English tracks, as well as departments that increased their “international faculty” were selected. “International faculty” in this context include faculty members who hold citizenship in countries outside of Japan, who earned a degree outside of Japan, who have research experience outside of Japan between one to three years, or who have research experience outside of Japan for over three years. These criteria were used because they are part of the prescribed indicators set forth by the project (MEXT, 2014), and they are most directly related to faculty practices.

From the selected Departments, faculty members were recruited after discussion with the departmental deans. For two of the departments, the departmental deans suggested a few faculty members and directly asked for their participation. For one of the departments, the researcher used her personal connections to ask for participation. For the purpose of bringing different perspectives to grasp full the range of experiences, faculty members consist of experienced/senior faculty, newer faculty, and international faculty.

I conducted one-on-one in-depth interview with six individuals from the Global Core Center, and 11 faculty members across three departments. Patton (2002) asserts that sample size in qualitative research “depends on what you want to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what’s at stake, what will be useful, what will have credibility, and what can be done with available time and resources” (p. 244). Although the sample size is relatively small, each in-depth interview provided rich qualitative data, and I was satisfied to have followed Wolcott’s (2009) encouragement for researchers: “Do less, more thoroughly!” (p. 95).

Data Collection Methods

Creswell (2018) defines qualitative research as follows,

Qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant’s setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data. The final written report has a flexible structure. Those who engage in this form of inquiry support a way of looking at research that honors an inductive

style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of reporting the complexity of a situation. (pp. 25-26)

Guided by the constructivist paradigm and the case studies methodology, I collected data through document analysis and in-depth interviews. The document analysis provided contextual knowledge of the phenomenon itself and the study site. Data gathered through document analysis helped refine topics and questions to be asked during in-depth interviews.

Document Analysis. Prior to conducting the interviews, I first conducted an analysis of documents relevant to the study. These documents could be categorized into broadly six types: public records, personal documents, popular culture documents, visual documents, physical material and artifacts, and researcher-generated documents and artifacts (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 163). Guest et al. (2013) outline four steps in conducting document analysis: identify what documents are produced that are related to the research questions; identify documents which inform the research questions; confirm the accessibility of the data sources; choose which data to use for analysis (pp. 252-253). For this study, I collected public records issued by the Japanese government and relevant documents generated by Soka University.

Government documents included TGU Guidelines and TGU main website; and the documents from the university included the university website, university catalogue, mission statement, submitted proposal for TGU, and interim evaluation reports. Analysis of these documents provided better understanding of the context and assisted in generating interview questions. Moreover, these documents provided some insights on how the national-level intentions are conveyed at the institutional level.

Interviews. The main purpose of conducting interviews is to understand the world and experiences of the interviewees through their perspectives (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015; Kvale, 1996; Siedman, 2006). Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) describe interviews as a place where “knowledge is constructed in the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee” (p. 4) and is also described as “attempts to understand the world from the subjects’ point of view, to unfurl the meaning of their experience, to uncover their lived world” (p. 3). Furthermore, Patton (2015) explains the purpose of an interview as the following:

We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe ... We cannot observe feelings, thoughts and intentions. We cannot observe behaviors that took place at some previous point in time. We cannot observe situations that preclude the presence of an observer. We cannot observe how people have organized the world and the meanings they attach to what goes on in the world. We have to ask people questions about those things. The purpose of interviewing, then, is to allow us to enter into the other person’s perspective.
(p. 426)

Interviews therefore help researchers to answer questions that explain how the interviewees experience the world.

This intention was in line with the purpose of this study to understand the experiences and perspectives of the faculty members in internationalization initiatives taking place currently at Soka. In particular, I employed naturalistic conversational interviews which allowed the study participants to have more voice and control over the conversation (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2016). The strength of this approach was that it offers

flexibility and the interview is not restricted to move forward in a certain direction, allowing both interviewer and interviewee to pursue relevant topics that emerge from their conversation (Patton, 2002). Following Rubin and Rubin's (2005) suggestions on conducting interviews, I conducted the interviews with main questions along with follow-up questions and probes to ensure the depth and details of the data gathered. As most interviewees speak Japanese, the interviews were conducted in Japanese, with an exception of any non-Japanese speaking faculty members in which the interviews were conducted in English. Because I speak both Japanese and English fluently, these language engagement options were both possible. Following Creswell and Poth's (2018) example, an interview protocol was developed to facilitate the interview process (see Appendices A and B).

Data Analysis

Data analysis in qualitative research generally consists of three phases of: preparing and organizing the data (i.e., text data as in transcripts, or image data as in photographs) for analysis; then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes; and finally representing the data in figures, tables, or a discussion. (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 338)

Miles and Huberman (2014) also encourage researcher to start data analysis at the same time we collect data. This process allows researcher to collect better data throughout the study. For this study, a computer software NVivo was used to organize and analyze data for its availability in both English and Japanese, the two languages used by the participants in this study.

Interviews were recorded and transcribed by the researcher in Japanese and English. Using the organized data, I coded the data in two cycles (Miles & Huberman, 2014; Saldana 2013). Miles and Huberman (2014) explains codes as:

labels that assign symbolic meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study. Codes usually are attached to data “chunks” of varying size and can take the form of a straightforward, descriptive label or a more evocative and complex one. (p. 71)

During the first cycle of coding, I utilized various coding approaches including descriptive coding, In Vivo coding, process coding, emotion coding, and evaluation coding approaches to summarize segments of the qualitative data collected (Miles & Huberman, 2014; Saldana, 2013). During the second cycle of coding, or pattern coding, I used the codes assigned during the first cycle of coding and grouped them into smaller categories and themes (Miles & Huberman, 2014). There are four key functions of pattern coding as described by Miles and Huberman (2014):

1. It condenses large amounts of data into a smaller number of analytic units.
2. It gets the researcher into analysis during data collection, so that later fieldwork can be more focused.
3. It helps the researcher elaborate a cognitive map—an evolving, more integrated schema for understanding local incidents and interactions.
4. For multicase studies, it lays the groundwork for cross-case analysis by surfacing common themes and directional processes. (p. 86)

Pattern coding generally are grouped into four types: categories or themes; causes or explanations; relationships among people; and theoretical constructs (p. 87). As I coded

the qualitative data, I noted down my own reflections and reaction to the data to document the shifts in my interpretation of the data. This was followed by analytic memoing which is a process of documenting the reflections and thoughts about the data in an extended narrative format (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Miles & Huberman, 2014). I then synthesized the codes to identify themes that emerged from the data.

Validity and Trustworthiness

It is important that the study results represent the researcher and the participants' perspectives accurately and truthfully (Creswell & Miller, 2000). To ensure that the validity issues are dealt with, Creswell and Creswell (2018) and Creswell and Poth (2018) suggest different validation strategies including triangulation of data, clarification of researcher bias, and generating a rich description. The first criteria I employed to enhance trustworthiness was to triangulate data by using multiple sources including document analysis and interviews. This allowed me to have a comprehensive understanding of the issue from different perspectives. Each data source complemented each other and made the argument stronger.

Being honest and clear about my personal biases that I bring to the study is another criteria that I employed. Constructivist researchers acknowledge that the interpretation of the data and findings are shaped by their own cultural background as well as their past experiences. Especially in a qualitative research where the data are always interpreted by the researcher, it is important to share with readers the filters through which the data is processed. This allows the readers to have a better understanding of how and why the qualitative data were interpreted in certain ways. Having the experience of working at Soka University and being involved in the

internationalization efforts, it is critical that I clearly articulated how I reached the conclusion. Additionally, as I share similar cultural background with the study participants and therefore assumptions could affect the interpretation, I elaborated on how I interpreted the data and thoroughly explained it in the findings.

Another criterion that I employed is to have a rich description with ample details and examples when writing up the findings. This allows the readers to understand more clearly the context of the study, which is one of the most important elements of qualitative studies. Constructivist worldview assumes that context has great influence on how individuals make meaning out of their experience; therefore providing sufficient description of the context strengthens the trustworthiness of the study.

Ethical Considerations

Anticipated ethical issues are addressed in this section to protect the participants and the integrity of the research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Miles & Huberman, 2014). I would like to emphasize here that the focus of the study is not to discuss whether or not the institution is successful, but rather to amplify the voices of the local level stakeholders and provide valuable insights to their future practices. Some strategies I used to address ethical issues were to ensure that any information that could potentially adversely affect the participants were not disclosed; to ensure participants' privacy, confidentiality and anonymity in the study; and to store all raw data until the study is complete to reference the original data if any analysis is questionable at any point.

Limitations

The major limitation to this study was the global novel coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic which greatly impacted the data collection phase of the study. The initial plan

was to physically visit the study site for one or two months to not only conduct interviews in person, but to observe the institution as well as to collect data that are not accessible online. However, with the pandemic starting right before the scheduled data collection phase, I was unable to physically travel internationally to conduct research in-person. This has forced me to transition all data collection virtually, which lost the natural interaction on site and in-person that I would have had with the participants. Additionally, the study participants also had to navigate through a major shift (the transition to dealing with Covid-19) in their own work, which made it difficult to access and communicate with the participants as regularly as I would have liked or as would have been possible had I been on site at the university.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I outlined and discussed the research methodology and methods which I used to conduct the study. Soka University was selected as the research site based on Patton's (2002) purposeful sampling, in particular, deviant case sampling approach. Although there may be ethical considerations in disclosing the names of the university that is being studied, the rich context strengthened the validity of the study and allowed deeper understanding of the phenomenon. Guided by a constructivist worldview, I first conducted document analysis to understand the national level discourse on internationalization of higher education and to educate myself with the context of the research site. This provided knowledge and insight on developing interview questions for the one-on-one in-depth interviews, which then provided insights on the key themes to be explored. These methods were used to collect data that primarily consists of participants' perspectives. Collected data was carefully analyzed through two phases of coding using

the computer software NVivo. Through collecting rich data and thoroughly analyzing the data, I strove to convey the authentic perspectives and feelings of the faculty members.

Chapter 4: Findings

My focus has been on understanding how faculty members are responding to the institutional changes that are influenced by the governmental initiatives to internationalize higher education specifically in the context of Japanese higher education. As discussed in Chapter 1, the international push for internationalization initiatives has driven the Japanese government to call for Japanese universities to foster Global *Jinzai* through internationalizing their institutions (Horie, 2015; Shimomura, 2013; Yonezawa, 2014). However, the voices of educators and administrators who implement these initiatives are oftentimes unheard. With a demanding workload, they may be experiencing some degree of frustration with the internationalization process, which may be affecting the quality of their experience. This, ultimately, may impact the quality of the education and service they provide to their students. I thus set out to understand how Japan's internationalization policies are being interpreted, envisioned, and practiced by administrative leaders and faculty impacted by internationalization suggested by the Japanese government and that have been taken up by their university. Referring back to my research question, I was also interested in how the university and others like it might be implicated in Japanese government efforts to internationalize. As described earlier in this dissertation, I also designed sub-questions that focused on eliciting definitions of internationalization through conversation with participants, and how those definitions of internationalization were related to the individual and institutional roles that participants held and how overall Japanese suggestions (i.e. internationalization efforts) aligned or did not align with what the university envisioned for itself. I was also most interested in the tensions and strengths that faculty and administrative leaders identified within the

university and as related to their internationalization efforts. All of these questions were aimed at highlighting the voices of those impacted by internationalization yet who may not necessarily be the drivers and primary shapers of internationalization policies introduced within Japanese higher education.

The findings that inform this chapter are based on the data collected through semi-structured interviews and the publicly available government and university documents through the processes that I described in Chapter 3. What is presented here helps us to understand how “the internationalization of Japanese higher education” is understood by different levels of stakeholders within Soka University. In order to connect context with what has been learned, I first provide an overview of the study site. I do this here in this chapter because I wish for the readers to gain a strong sense of the context and climate of Soka University and in order to connect these closely to what participants said from this space. I then provide an overview of the study participants before outlining the major themes that have been revealed through this research.

Overview of the Institution

Soka University is a private university founded in 1971 by Daisaku Ikeda and based on the notion of “Soka Education,” an educational philosophy introduced by Tsunesaburo Makiguchi. *Soka* means “value creation” in the Japanese language, and the mission statement of Soka University further explains that ideal:

To strive for good, toward peace; to persevere in the challenges to uphold and protect human dignity; to be undaunted by hardship—the essential ideals of Soka education exist in the effort to nurture such creative humanity. (Soka University, n.d.c)

Ikeda also set forth the following founding principles:

Be the highest seat of learning for humanistic education.

Be the cradle of a new culture.

Be a fortress for the peace of humankind. (Soka University, n.d.c).

As an alumna of Soka University, I still remember these founding principles by heart. I would study and deepen my understanding of the founding principles together with other students who were part of the student organizations I was part of at the university. We had a culture within the institution of holding dialogues when we would prepare for various university events, and the founding principles were something we would always refer back to—they were not just words but rather a part of our presence and character development at the university. Many of the current university stakeholders are also alumni of the university, and therefore have their own personal connections with the founding principles and their interpretations of what these mean in today's world.

Another important aspect of Soka University that informs the data is Soka's conceptualization of global citizenship—sans Japanese government influence or suggestiveness. While there are various definitions of global citizenship that exist in the literature on internationalization or other related initiatives and practices, Soka has its own definition and understanding of a global citizen:

A global citizen can be defined essentially as an individual of wisdom, courage and compassion—courage to respect and appreciate differences such as race, culture and ethnicity, and to make such differences a source of nourishment for one's own growth; compassion to feel empathy and a sense of identification with people in other parts of the world. Such courage and compassion are themselves a

limitless font of wisdom. Soka University aims to be a cradle for the creation of a global culture based on the solidarity of global citizens—a solidarity of creative humanity. (Soka University, n.d.b)

This definition is based on Ikeda's lecture on education for global citizenship which he delivered at Teachers College, Columbia University in 1996 (Ikeda, 2010). At that lecture, Ikeda shares the three elements of wisdom, courage, and compassion as essential to global citizenship. This idea certainly has been the foundation for how global citizenship is linked with internationalization when Soka applied to the Top Global University Project (TGU).

Soka University is located in a suburb of Tokyo and serves about 7400 students, including both graduate and undergraduate students, with approximately 700 international students coming from 52 countries and territories around the world (Soka University, n.d.d). The university has also established international exchange programs with 223 universities in 61 countries and territories globally. One of the major points of entry to my research and a catalyst for this study is that in 2012 and 2014, Soka University was selected as a recipient for the Japanese government competitive grant projects, Go Global Japan (GGJ) and TGU respectively, which have helped to accelerate the internationalization efforts on campus.

As part of TGU, Soka University has launched their initiatives under the project theme of "Global Initiative for Humanistic Education: Fostering Global Citizens for Building Peace and Sustainable Prosperity" aiming to "foster global citizens for building peace and sustainable prosperity" and undertaking "the development of humanistic education in global society to foster such individuals" (MEXT, n.d.f). Soka's targets

towards 2023, the concluding year of TGU, are to “foster Creative Global Citizens,” create “a campus enriched with diversity,” and spread “the message for world peace” (MEXT, n.d.f), and they strive to achieve their goals through the following four pillars: Global Mobility, Global Learning, Global Administration, and Global Core. Global Mobility refers to the mobility of students both inbound and outbound; Global Learning refers to language programs; Global Administration refers to the internationalization of faculty and staff; and Global Core refers to the establishment of offices to lead the internationalization initiatives (MEXT, n.d.d). The core aspect of Soka’s initiative, as stated on their website, is the focus on diversity and they state:

Diversity is essential in recognizing and understanding linguistic, cultural, and ethnic differences. The key to fostering global citizens is providing practical and relevant education, an education that strengthens “character.” By advancing diversity, Soka University will develop individuals with global skills. (MEXT, n.d.d)

With the above focus, Soka has made great progress in achieving its numerical goals as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Overview of Soka University’s Progress

	2013	2019
International Students	313	878
Study Abroad Participants	557	773
English Track (EMP)	1	11

Ratio of International Faculty	43.3%	55.7%
Ratio of International Staff	2.4%	12.5%

Note. Adapted from Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, 2020.

As a result of the efforts made through these competitive grant projects, Soka University has ranked fourth among the Japanese universities in THE University Impact Rankings 2019 (The World University Rankings, n.d.) and ranked sixth among the Japanese universities in THE Japan university rankings for the international educational environment indicator (Japan University Rankings, n.d.a). The criteria for the latter ranking include the percentages of international students, international faculty, Japanese students studying abroad, and classes offered in non-Japanese languages, which are also all part of the benchmarks included in the Top Global University Project (Japan University Rankings, n.d.b).

Overview of the Participants

Based on the research questions that I outlined and with the explicit purpose of learning how university stakeholders understand internationalization taking place at Soka as related to their own efforts and Japanese government funding, I conducted semi-structured interviews with 17 faculty and administrative leaders who are directly involved in the internationalization efforts to varying degrees. Faculty members were selected from three out of five faculties that offer an English Medium Program (EMP), which include faculties of Letters, International Liberal Arts, and Economics. Administrative leaders were selected based on their membership as part of the Global Core Center. As briefly described in Chapter 3, the Global Core Center is a newly established office as part of the TGU initiative and it is where proposals for any internationalization related

projects are discussed and approved. Table 3 below provides a summary of the participants of this study.

Table 3

Description of the Study Participants

Pseudonym	Admin/Faculty	Organization	Gender	Japanese/ International
Nancy	Faculty	Faculty with EMP	Female	International
Ethan	Faculty	Faculty with EMP	Male	International
Robin	Faculty	Faculty with EMP	Female	International
David	Faculty	Faculty with EMP	Male	International
Howard	Faculty	Faculty with EMP	Male	International
Ishimoto	Faculty	Faculty with EMP	Male	Japanese
Kurata	Faculty	Faculty with EMP	Male	Japanese
Hara	Faculty	Faculty with EMP	Male	Japanese
Niwa	Faculty	Faculty with EMP	Male	Japanese
Murata	Faculty	Faculty with EMP	Female	Japanese
Matsushita	Faculty	Faculty with EMP	Female	Japanese
Seta	Admin	Global Core Center	Male	Japanese
Nishida	Admin	Global Core Center	Male	Japanese
Tajima	Admin	Global Core Center	Male	Japanese
Kusumoto	Faculty/Admin	Global Core Center	Male	Japanese
Koizumi	Faculty/Admin	Global Core Center	Male	Japanese
Takayama	Faculty/Admin	Global Core Center	Male	Japanese

Note. To protect the confidentiality of the participants, names used in this study are pseudonyms.

I designed an interview protocol (see appendices A and B) that included 18 questions for faculty and 12 questions for the administrative leaders, and these questions

included probes that were intended to examine their understanding of the internationalization efforts put forth by the government and the university, as well as their experiences in implementing internationalization initiatives. Examples of these questions include the following,

1. What do you think are the purposes and intentions of the Japanese government/your institution to promote internationalization of higher education?
2. What are your thoughts and feelings on the internationalization of Japanese higher education?
3. What are your thoughts and feelings on the internationalization efforts made at your institution?
4. Is there anything you would like to see happen differently in promoting the internationalization of your institution?

The intention of the first question listed was to understand to what extent each stakeholder is aware of the internationalization efforts at both the national and institutional level. The second and third questions then attempted to understand their attitudes towards internationalization, again both at the national and institutional level. With the fourth question, my intention was to understand where the stakeholders were feeling uncomfortable with the internationalization process and hear what *they* would like to see.

Although the gender of my participants was not a focal point of this research, I would be remiss to not observe that the majority of the participants were males. The prevalence of males indicates a serious gender gap between male and female workers,

especially those in university leadership positions (OECD, 2015, 2017). In fact, all administrative leaders who participated in the interviews were male workers.

Research Themes

My research revealed three major themes that emerged as findings in this study, and I present them here:

- 1) Institutional culture and capacity to promote internationalization;
- 2) Challenges of implementing internationalization initiatives; and
- 3) Growing focus on the importance of quality of internationalization.

In this section, I flesh out these themes using evidence provided from participants, and I link the themes back to literature and discuss their significance. I would like to acknowledge here that while I am making an effort to protect the confidentiality of the participants to the best of my ability, it is also true that Soka University is a small university, and people know each other well. Everyone who shared their time and insights were generous and thoughtful. Each person had incredibly honorable intentions toward the larger national internationalization goals, the university's work, and so importantly, to the students and the world. Thus, I strive to do my best to likewise honor their words. I would like to acknowledge that any misrepresentations or incomplete interpretations of their words are my error and not theirs. I only hope that this work can be understood as a celebration of what educators at Soka and institutions like it can offer to the nation and to the world through their dedication and their practices.

Theme 1: Institutional Culture and Capacity to Promote Internationalization

It became evident from the interviews that the internationalization efforts at Soka have long been part of the institutional culture from its early years of establishment, even prior to the university's status as a grant recipient for internationalization. As mentioned, a private university, Soka was founded with clear principles to "be the highest seat of learning for humanistic education," "be the cradle of a new culture," and to "be a fortress for the peace of humankind" (Soka University, n.d.c). Thus, when asked about the purpose of Soka University's internationalization efforts, most participants in fact referred back to Ikeda's philosophy, these founding principles, and the institutional culture to foster global citizens or "creative individuals."

When multiple participants referred to the philosophy of the university founder, they also discussed his efforts to create global networks with various academic institutions across the world and his genuine care for students. Koizumi is a senior faculty member who also holds an administrative leadership role within the institution. He is also an alumnus of Soka and has had numerous encounters with Ikeda. He shared his observation of the founder's actions:

The founder himself wished to foster individuals who can contribute to peace for the sake of humankind, and in order to do that, he thought it is crucial to create ties with countries across the world. With that in mind, he himself traveled around the world to plant the seeds of cultural exchange.

Similarly, other faculty members shared their observations of the role of the founder in internationalization at Soka from its origins. Hara had been a faculty member at Soka for a little over a decade. He is also an alumnus and studied abroad in Asia as an

exchange student while a student. After graduating from Soka, he earned his PhD. overseas and taught there for a little over a decade. He shared:

I believe it is our benefit that the founder traveled and visited institutions abroad and developed student and academic exchanges with various institutions.

Another international faculty member, Robin shared:

He is seen as a role model for being that bridge or ambassador outside of Japan, to other people, other countries, other thought leaders.

Robin is a senior international faculty member who holds administrative leadership positions within the university. She has had extensive academic and leadership experiences overseas prior to coming to Soka a little less than a decade ago. These participants understood that the international exchanges that Soka University currently has are based on the foundation established by Ikeda. One specific example that was brought up by a few participants was that Soka University was the first university in Japan to officially welcome Chinese students funded by the Chinese government in 1975 after the normalization of the Sino-Japanese relations. Nancy and David referred to this history as an example of how Soka University had an international focus from the early days of its founding. Nancy, an international faculty member who is taking the lead with the English Medium Program within her faculty, has only been at Soka for a few years. Yet, she is well aware of Soka's history. David is also an international faculty member who assumes a leadership role with the English programs within his faculty.

Ishimoto is a senior faculty member who assumes a leadership role within his faculty. He is also an alumnus of Soka from its early years and has studied abroad while a student in the mid-1970s. All his graduate degrees have been at Soka and he has been

working there for several decades. During the interview he expressed his pride in Soka University being a pioneer in becoming an institution that strives to contribute to the world by creating these international ties. He shared:

After World War II, it was Soka University, it was the university founder who accepted Chinese students for the first time when other places were hesitant to accept them for economic and philosophical reasons. From that point onwards, the idea of welcoming the world to our campus emerged and spread, and we have been putting this into action. So this is kind of like our starting point, to welcome our first Chinese international students. And along with the founding principles of our institution, we welcomed students from all over the world. I feel like we have the motivation and pride to be the pioneer in establishing an institution that contributes to the world.

What is highlighted here is the great interest in fostering amicable relationships cross-nationally through educational exchange. This example of welcoming the first government funded Chinese students represents that commitment. One of these Chinese students, Cheng Yonghua, later became the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Japan serving from 2010 to 2019. He once shared in an interview (Min-On Concert Association, 2012) the warm welcome he received not only from students and faculty, but also from Ikeda personally. Ishimoto shares with confidence that these international friendships will ultimately contribute to world peace.

Ethan is an international faculty member who has been associated with the institution in the past few decades both as a student and a faculty member. He has been part of different faculty mainly taking part in English language education. He shared his

personal story with Ikeda explaining how his encounter with him has made a great impact on him as an educator. Ethan's story as well as Ishimoto's underscore the ways in which the founder and his philosophies not only shaped the original intentions of the institution and its international connections but also continue to inform how, what, and why Soka does what it does today. What Ethan shared is an observation of the ways in which the founding of the institution is not only about good international relations but also about the example that the founder set for his educators to learn how to genuinely care for each and every student.

When I was hired, the founder of this university, Daisaku Ikeda, just watching him, being an observer of what he did, what he said to students in different speeches, and the way he carried himself with students was often his full-arm care for students on campus all the time, let it be through messages, let it be through encouragement, and oftentimes when he did meet with students, students often maybe wrote to the founder to share what they are going through or issues academically, you know, it's just difficult being a student, there's just so many things that happen in life, but he would always encourage them. Now to staff and faculty, he was strict. He was our boss. And he would basically say, please take care of my students as best as you can.

This kind of philosophy deepens the way in which we understand internationalization—that this is not just a process in higher education that is related to international relations, even at its best. What Ethan exemplified throughout the interview was a genuine desire to care for students, just as he learned from the example of the university founder. He further shares:

I mean that deep care that he has for every individual student to do their best to become capable people, and to create value, which is the name of our university, create value in their lives and in society for others, so not just for oneself but for others, I think was inspiring. And I tried to convey that message to students and my motivation is there is always students that need encouragement or that need support. And so I would like to do my part.

As mentioned, the majority of the participants referred to the university's founding principles when they were asked about the university's purpose to internationalize its institution. What this underscores is a clear alignment between the founding philosophies of the institution and the way in which stakeholders understand internationalization as more than a nationally mandated, international relations, or political project but one of honoring students and working toward supporting their positive development as creative and vital humans in the world.

Niwa is a senior faculty member assuming a leadership role within his faculty. In the past, he has assumed a leadership role as a deputy dean of International Affairs and therefore has been engaged in international efforts in that capacity. He shared his thoughts on the ways in which the founding principles are linked with fostering student development as global citizens who can create value and contribute to world peace:

As an institution too, as you can see in the founding principles, the vision of the university was not limited to Japan but was striving to become an institution that contributes to world peace. In that sense, the university from its very beginning has had a global vision.

Similarly, Ishimoto shared how the founding principles have shaped his vision for the faculty:

I want to produce students who can understand different values and perspectives of those around the world. One of our principles encourages students to become global citizens, and I understand this as individuals who understand the feelings of people with different backgrounds and nationality. For that, you need to know the language. International students, too, may become isolated if the Japanese students are unable to understand their languages and try to understand them. In that respect, I want to create an environment where people coming from abroad can feel comfortable being here.

Here, Ishimoto is describing what global citizens ought to look like. He is emphasizing the importance of having a caring and open mind towards people who are different from one another. There is also a strong commitment to ensure that international students feel welcomed into the community and pointing out that language learning is one way to create such an environment. Language learning, or linguistic and communication skills, is in fact one of the factors which the government uses to define Global *Jinzai* (Council on Promotion of Human Resource for Globalization Development, 2011). While the focus of the government to develop these skills is “for Japan's economic and social advancement in the international arena in the future” (Council on Promotion of Human Resource for Globalization Development, 2011, p. 8), Ishimoto understands language learning to have a deeper significance, adding a humanistic element to its purpose.

As a more tangible and concrete representation of the founding principles, Soka University announced the “Soka University Grand Design Initiative” in 2010 (Soka University, 2010). This initiative or document was referenced by the members of the Global Core Center as a means to explain the purpose and initiatives of its internationalization. Setting their vision towards its 50th anniversary in 2020, the document lays out strategic goals and plans that will help to achieve their objective to become a university that can foster creative individuals and help their students manifest their fullest potential. The document further elaborates on what this individual potential consists of, and they are “Intellectual Capability and Strength of Character” (Soka University, 2010, p. 10). Intellectual capability is defined as the ability to analyze, integrate, and create based on the foundational skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking. Strength of character is defined as those who possess the capacity to create values in face of any circumstances and those who have the ability to work with others. Internationalization strategies come into place as a concrete plan to enhance students’ strength of character. Interview participants also referred to the document as a means to communicate the institutional goals, including the internationalization efforts. Expanding on the initial initiative, Soka recently announced their new “Soka University Grand Design 2021-2030” with the theme of “A University that Fosters ‘Global Citizens’ that can Create Value” (Soka University, n.d.d). The four pillars of this initiative are education, research, SDGs, and diversity.

In roughly 2010, the Japanese government started to announce various policies and projects which encouraged universities to internationalize their campuses. Takayama, a faculty member who also assumes administrative leadership, observed that the timing

was just right to create a clearer vision and goals toward its internationalization efforts. He further shared that when the Grand Design Initiative was created in 2010, interviews were conducted with faculty, staff, students, and alumni to get a better idea of what their images of their institution were and how they wanted the university to develop. Koizumi also mentioned that there was a great effort to share this initiative and vision with the entire faculty and staff.

The interviews also highlighted the institutional culture of student-centered education. When I asked Robin what her motivations were to continue her work, she shared that her students were her motivation. She shared, “while [my responsibilities as a faculty] may have brought me to Soka University, it’s the students who have kept me here.” She further shared an example of one of her students who shared with Robin how her class gave this student hope. Referring to this, Robin expressed:

When I hear these voices from my students, I think there’s no better place to be. There isn’t anything that I’d rather be doing right now. And I honestly believe, especially right now in 2020 because of the pandemic, this is so needed. So that’s why I do what I do ... At the end of the day, internationalization is about students. It’s not about administrative structures, it’s not about faculty experiences, it’s about the student experience.

Here, we see Robin’s strong desire to contribute to the better experiences of her students over her own faculty experience. Although she has expressed her challenges and concerns with regard to the internationalization efforts, her commitment to students overpowers the challenges and gives her great motivation. Hara, another faculty member,

shared that a part of him feels he is not particularly focused on the institutional goals for internationalization, but instead focused on what he does on a personal level. He shared:

I think it is most important as a faculty member in the front lines to care for the students in front of me, help them grow, and create an environment that enables that growth.

Similar to Ethan and Robin, Hara also places great importance on caring for his students. He is saying that it is the responsibility of faculty members to create an environment for their students that allows them to grow, which resonates with what Ikeda stresses when he shares that “the teacher is the most important element of the educational environment” (Ikeda, 2010, p. 118). It is clear that Soka’s philosophy of student-centered education is understood and embodied by these faculty members. At the same time, some faculty members shared that what they envision is beyond their capacity at the moment.

Niwa, a senior faculty member shared:

Faculty members are very busy, and I feel like they do not have extra time or energy to spare. It would be great to start new initiatives or programs, but we do not have the capacity to do so. We were able to start some projects, and that was only possible because we tried to be creative by hiring a TA or adjusting the course schedules. However, making these adjustments requires a lot of energy. It comes down to the motivation and energy of the administrator to realize various projects you want to start. If we have a leader who can take initiatives, [we can make things happen]. We already have capable individuals and we just need to gain their support. It is up to the administrators’ and leader’s capacity to organize and lead the initiative. For that, there needs to be a shared vision within the

faculty or department. If you ask me if I have that clear vision, I am not quite sure.

Here, Niwa who assumes a leadership role in his faculty recognizes that it is his lack of clear vision and capacity that prevents him from taking initiatives to start new projects that would further advance the internationalization efforts. He recognizes that there are faculty members with potential and capabilities to take on different projects, but because he himself is already overwhelmed with various responsibilities, he has been unable to delegate responsibilities. This tells me that the capacity exists but is not fully utilized or shared equally amongst the stakeholders.

Another aspect of student-centered education that was brought up was that the students themselves are self-motivated to study abroad and have genuine desires to contribute to the world, based on the participants' interactions with and observations of the students. Some faculty members and administrative leaders observed that Soka University students continued to stay motivated to study abroad when the national trend saw a decline in students wanting to go abroad due to them becoming more "inward looking" (Ota, 2014). Koizumi shared:

There are students who wish to contribute to the development of the Japanese society, but at the same time, there are so many students who ponder how they can contribute to people who are suffering on the other side of the earth, and want to live their life contributing to helping such people. This, I think, is one of Soka University's characteristics.

Koizumi further shared an example of an alumni who embodies this spirit. He shared:

There was a student who studied abroad in [a country in Africa], and through that experience, she started to feel that she wanted to contribute to people in Africa. She thought of how she can work for people, especially those who are physically challenged and are struggling with poverty. In the end, she came to a conclusion that the quickest way for her to contribute is to pursue a career in IT and ended up working for an IT company. When we just look at the result, I'm sure there are many people who pursue a career in IT, but what I want to emphasize here is her motivation behind pursuing this career. Based on her international experiences, she set a lofty goal for herself and as a result of that, she chose a career in IT. I thought the process of her choosing her career path was profound.

This example highlights an important aspect that is not always visible through reports which simply highlights the results. Simple results do not showcase the reasoning behind students' decisions to pursue a certain career path and the process through which they made the decision. Understanding how students have chosen their career paths and seeing how their experiences on campus have had a great impact on their perspectives and relation to the world gives the internationalization efforts all the more significance and purpose.

Students themselves have also been a great asset in advancing internationalization. In particular, the tradition of students supporting one another has been highlighted in the interviews by faculty members.

International students would come, then they graduate and return to their home country, and promote Soka University to encourage their juniors to attend Soka University. Some would stay in Japan, find a job, and contribute to the

internationalization [of Japanese society] in their respective places. Some would be hired as university staff at Soka University, and these graduates who received education at Soka University and are also fluent in English, would now support the students as a university staff.

What is highlighted here is that these international students are now giving back to the university and the community using their own capacity, including their own language ability, and are supporting the internationalization efforts of the institution.

Ethan, another international faculty member, shared:

What I do find in Japan that's very nice is this senior-junior kind of support. And you find that often in club activities, it's kind of hard to find that outside, but our university tends to have a strong senior-junior type relationship just in general as university students, and I find that very encouraging because then there is no one left behind, or the attempt is to have no one left behind.

Here, Ethan is emphasizing how students themselves are caring for one another and have a strong support system among students. Based on the care the older students have received from their senior students, they then do the same for their juniors. Just as how the faculty and administrative leaders learned from Ikeda's own actions to care for students, students themselves are learning from and embodying a similar spirit to care for others.

While this senior-junior relationship can become a positive support system, it could also be perceived somewhat negatively based on the cultural background of the students. Nancy, an international faculty member, shared her observations and thoughts on this.

In Japan there's a *jouge kankei* [senior-junior relationship], it's a hierarchical society still in many ways which stops open discussion because if you always have to be aware and concerned about saying something if you have a *sempai* [senior] in the room or where you are in the position, it closes down dialogue, it closes down discussion. So many students, young students also complain about this *jouge kankei* that they don't want it, they don't like it. So I think that probably in itself is a change ... that Japanese students are aware of it and they don't like it that they always have to adhere to what their *sempai* does. And so of course we know that there are many positive aspects to this *sempai kohai* system, right, absolutely. You have a much better taking care of younger members, younger students, and so it works well in its positive sense, but it can also work in a very negative sense as well and what kind of group it's in. So it's not possible to just have an open discussion, you know, because everyone is representing different interest or different groups or different group loyalties, and you also have to understand all those different cultural aspects ... which makes it very difficult I think.

While Nancy acknowledges that this senior-junior relationship has many positive aspects to it, she also brings to light how some cultural norms can be perceived quite differently by individuals brought up in a different cultural environment, in this case the culture of hierarchy. For students brought up in a Japanese school system, this senior-junior relationship is something almost all students experience, but it can be quite foreign to individuals from outside of Japan, especially from a non-Asian country. Nancy is also expressing her concern how the hierarchical culture may prevent open and honest

discussion with those in higher positions within an organization. She argues that there needs to be a cultural shift in order for a deeper and open dialogue to happen.

Having a sense of feeling that the government initiatives to internationalize higher education is in line with the university's goal of internationalizing its institution also contributes to the capacity of its institution. Fostering "creative individuals" has always been part of the institution's goal. Takayama is a faculty member who assumes a leadership role within the institution. He has also led the internationalization efforts at Soka as the dean of International Affairs in the past. He shared that with the announcement of the various government initiatives to internationalize Japanese higher education, Soka University reframed what this means in the context of a globalized society:

In the context of the current global society, in other words, when globalization is advancing, we, as an institution, started to think about the kind of skills and capabilities we want students to gain through university education and what outcomes we want to strive towards. And from there, we needed to come up with a concrete vision of an ideal human resource we wanted to foster, and that, for us, was "Creative Global Citizens." With this as a key phrase, we advanced our internationalization efforts.

"Creative Individuals" are defined as individuals who

can utilize their knowledge and sincerely address the individual issues faced by humanity. To this end, the university will work on humanistic education that can cultivate "intellectual capability" and "strength of character" and enable each

student to blossom and discover his or her “individual potential” (the potential of each student). (Soka University, n.d.e)

Whereas “Creative Global Citizens” is explained as individuals

with the abilities to analyze, integrate, and creatively pursue goals that are grounded in their intellectual capabilities; who can pursue their dreams tenaciously; who have a strength of character to cooperate with others; who can seriously ponder world issues as if they were personal; who can appreciate differences between people, philosophies, and cultures; and who can work on and across issues with various perspectives. (MEXT, n.d.d)

Here, the major addition to the definition of “Creative Global Citizens” is the explicit mentioning of the global aspect as well as the ability to work with individuals from different philosophical and cultural backgrounds, all the while focusing on empowering individual students. One of the purposes of TGU is

to develop human resources with a global mindset, who are tolerant and accepting of different cultures, who can contribute to solving global problems and opening up a bright future, who can play a leading role in international society, and who are willing to work for the wellbeing of communities with a global perspective.

(MEXT, n.d.a)

Here we see a close alignment with Soka University’s vision of “Creative Global Citizens.” What is unique about Soka is the focus on the students themselves, ensuring that each student can manifest their own unique potential.

Hara shared how Soka University already had some capacity or foundation to build on by the time the government started to announce various projects. He shared:

For a relatively young institution, I feel like our institution already had some international aspects reflected in things like the infrastructure and the number of international agreements ... In that sense, we already had a foundation from which we can expand our development in terms of internationalization, and the motivation Soka University had to contribute to the internationalization was well aligned with what the government was encouraging universities to do.

Hara also confirms the sentiment that Soka University had the capacity, both in terms of its motivation and infrastructure, to engage in the internationalization efforts in line with the government initiatives. While the basic idea aligned with the government initiatives, the process of winning the grant to promote internationalization was not simple. Ethan shared:

But in order to receive that grant, the reason why the ministry said, “oh, this sounds like a great idea,” is because of the high benchmarks we set on ourselves far beyond what we thought we could actually accomplish at that time. So I think that the change we see now in our university is extremely demanding on all of us ... Our university is also trying to do that in addition to blending in the culture of our university within that but having the funding to be able to implement all of these ideas. So it’s more to allow us to get the funding, we put these benchmarks set forth by the ministry in practical terms, very high benchmarks, but at the same time, mix in the color, the culture, the characteristics of our university to take advantage of that at the same time.

Here, Ethan argues that the goals the institution set were beyond the institution’s capacity at the time. However, the intention behind this was not simply to set and reach the goals

based on what the government wants to see, but to use this opportunity to advance Soka's internationalization in its own unique way. Ethan identifies this dilemma that on the one hand, this grant-based project would greatly support the internationalization initiatives at Soka, but on the other hand, Soka needs to set high benchmarks that would impress the government to win the grant. This lack of capacity or preparedness was evident in what other participants shared. Some common comments were regarding communication and signages not available in English. Some faculty members shared how they initially needed to translate some email communication for their international students when the implementation of the TGU initiatives initially started. Some others referred to a lack of preparedness in implementing EMP. For faculty members, this was represented in the lack of resources to support their teaching in EMP.

For international students, this was represented in the limited classes available offered through EMP. Ishimoto shared the challenges his faculty was facing.

When we started the EMP, it was a challenge to find faculty members who can teach courses in English. We were somehow able to start the program, but we currently have a limited number of courses that our faculty offers. This is not enough credits for students to graduate, so these students in the EMP program cannot graduate just by taking classes offered by our faculty. Therefore, we needed to cooperate with other faculties so that students can take enough credits to fulfill their requirements. Even within our faculty, for the classes offered through EMP, we have not been able to offer level-appropriate courses, so what we are offering right now is a bare minimum of what needs to be offered for the program to function.

Here, we see that although the EMP was launched, it is clear that they were lacking resources and support to make the most out of the program. It almost sounds as if the program started just for the sake of launching it on time. Ishimoto points out that due to the lack of courses offered, it is the students that are being impacted.

While international students come to Soka with a great expectation to be able to earn a degree without any language barrier, which may be true, their experiences may be limited due to the lack of courses available for them. Lack of capacity to support international students also included things such as career support and mental health support. With regard to mental health support, Robin strongly shared her feelings:

One specific example, our international students often come and one of their languages is English. And so they come with the anticipation that they will be able to take English medium courses ... around student support, we did not have an English-speaking counselor, mental health counselor on campus. And so international students that spoke English did not have a resource on campus for mental health needs. And so identifying that as a necessary support for students, advocating for that, it took three years before Soka University finally recruited and hired an English-speaking counselor. Those were a long three years ... I mean there was a lot of triage that was done because we did not have an English-speaking counselor on campus. And so those are the kinds of behind the scenes efforts that are also needed.

Here, what Robin conveys is that support for international students should not conclude within the classroom. It is critical to understand the magnitude of their student life in a country outside of their own and to identify what support is necessary. Koizumi also

shared the challenges he heard from the career support staff in supporting international students.

I sometimes receive feedback from the Career Support Office staff. There are international students who wish to find jobs in Japan since they have studied in Japan. However, if the [Career Support Office] wants to provide sufficient career education or career support, it would be challenging to support international students who are not sufficient in Japanese, for example international students enrolled in the EMP program. [Not being fluent in Japanese] limits their career path to international companies where they can work by using English. Still, they would need some Japanese language ability to work in such companies, so it is still challenging for these international students. In that sense, we could see how there are not much opportunities or sufficient work environments for international residents in Japan.

One of the initial intentions to provide EMP was to allow international students to be able to graduate from the institution without needing to acquire Japanese language ability. However, this situation sheds light to the unintended challenges international students would face in the long run when plans are not thought through and Japanese social and cultural norms are not fully considered.

Theme 2: Challenges of Implementing Internationalization Initiatives

The interviews also highlighted the challenges faced by the administrative leadership and the faculty members in the process of implementing various internationalization initiatives. While Soka University has always had an international outlook, both GGJ and the TGU projects have made a great impact on its

internationalization efforts by increasing the diversity within faculty, staff, and students as well as creating EMP to allow international students to obtain a degree without Japanese language skills. As part of these projects, demanding numerical goals (e.g., international students, students studying abroad, international faculty, number of foreign language classes) were decided, which then brought various challenges to the surface. One of the challenges is the increasing internationalization program and stakeholder workload with limited resources. Prior to these projects, most of the responsibilities related to anything international, such as taking care of international students, welcoming visiting scholars and delegation from overseas, and sending out students abroad, were all taken care of by certain administrative offices. To achieve the numerical goals in a relatively short span of time, the workload for individuals in these related offices naturally increased. Seta is a senior administrative leader responsible for university governance. He is also an alumnus of Soka and has been working for Soka for several decades. With regard to the administrative staff's workload, he shared the following,

There are so many things we need and want to do, but we still do not have enough resources to accommodate them. The number of administrative staff at Soka University is far smaller than that compared to national universities or universities in the US. If we try to advance globalization on campus when these administrative staff need to do this and that, then we end up having to centralize and concentrate most tasks to one office. We are now seeing the limit to that and we are realizing the need for a more diverse and capable staff. I believe the same could be said for the faculty members as well.

What Seta highlights is that there is no shortage of desires and visions, but the resources and human-power needed in order to fulfill them cannot be guaranteed with the existing infrastructure and supports. What he importantly points out is that Soka is a small institution in comparison to larger Japanese national universities or those in the U.S. that are staffed differently. However, what international programs and advocates know is that program support often waver based on university and national agendas. Seta also observes that when globalization initiatives are being advanced, these tend to get concentrated to one office, and this centralization, he notes, can also be problematic because of the need for, as he frames it, a “diverse and capable staff.”

Tajima is an administrative leader for one of these offices that requires a demanding workload. Prior to joining this office, he was with a different office that was not as demanding as the current office. He shared how he also felt the amount of work and meetings he needed to attend have dramatically increased since the university had taken on these internationalization projects. He shared that he is invited to all kinds of meetings where *anything* related to internationalization is discussed whether it falls under his purview or not.

This issue is not only affecting the administrative leaders but also faculty members who assume administrative responsibilities. Howard is an international faculty member who also holds leadership roles within the university, primarily in the humanities. He has a background in international education and therefore has some insight and feelings on the topic. Regarding his intense workload, Howard shared,

I know that I’m not going to do this forever, right ... if I knew that I [have this responsibility] and I would have to do this until I retired, I don’t know where I’d

be mentally. I know that “ok, I’ve got to do this for three more years,” and then I pass on the baton, then I can put my effort into it.

Howard shares that because he knows there is an end to his responsibility, he is able to continue what he does. Otherwise, him expressing not knowing where he will be mentally shows the intensity of his workload. These exemplify some concerns that heavy responsibilities are put on certain offices or individuals, which may hinder the sustainability of the internationalization efforts being made.

Another goal that may have had an impact on faculty members’ feeling burdened is the implementation of EMP. EMP have increased from one program in 2013 to eleven as of 2019 (JSPS, 2020). This has enabled international students to graduate by only taking classes offered in English. While this opened up opportunities for international students, some faculty members who teach classes in these programs have brought up concerns based on their experiences in class as well as feedback from students. One of the common concerns was that the number of students enrolled in the program was still very small with about three to five students per entering class. With such few students, the number of classes that the program can offer are also limited, which affects the students’ academic experiences. David shared,

I think one of the challenges that all universities might be facing is that they are trying to internationalize really quickly, but still, the number of courses available in English are still much fewer than the ones available in Japanese, obviously. So sometimes I hear our international students saying that they don’t have the selection of courses. So while it is possible to graduate, it is different from being able to take all the courses you want to graduate. So I think within our institution

and any institution in Japan that's really making a push for internationalization, I still think the number of courses offered in English, that's the one area that all institutions can improve.

Additionally, both senior faculty and newer faculty members brought up how the implementation of EMP has increased the workload of faculty members. These concerns were described in third person where the faculty members interviewed were referring to what they had seen or heard from other faculty members who struggled with teaching classes in English. Kurata is a younger faculty member who joined the university within the past few years. He is not an alumnus of Soka University but has received education from Soka schools and pursued graduate education overseas. He shared how he himself does not feel the burden, but has heard from his senior faculties how much of their workload had increased:

I think I'm not feeling the burden because of my background. I received training overseas for quite a long period of time, so I do not have any hesitation with teaching in English. But I do hear a lot from my seniors how challenging their work has become. I heard that it takes twice as much effort to teach a class in English, compared to teaching it in Japanese.

This sentiment also relates back to the capacity, particularly the capacity of individual faculty members. In this case, Kurata himself seems to have some capacity in teaching courses in English and thus does not feel burdened, while some other faculty members feel burdened due to their lack of capacity or training in the specific skills. Kurata also shared that he is trying not to put too much on his plate and is being very strategic about

his use of time. As one of his immediate goals is to get tenured, he chooses not to assume much administrative responsibilities and is focusing more on his own research.

Another challenge that emerged in internationalization envisioning and practice that was learned from the interviews was that some faculty members were feeling disengaged from the institutional initiatives or simply do not think about “the bigger picture,” in other words, they do not think about how their work relates to the advancement of the internationalization of Soka. This is because their daily work is already demanding, dealing with many things going on as part of their daily responsibilities. As Nancy stated,

What does it mean to connect up your teaching, for instance, the curriculum to global citizenship and these kinds of things. So there has been some discussion about it, but I think that could be done much more directly. So it’s not that people don’t want to do it, but there are so many things going on ... everyone is very busy, other committees and other discussion groups and these kinds of things, and then you have to implement it, how are you practically going to implement it.

Similarly, Howard also shared the following,

I mean if you asked a regular faculty member, if they know anything about the goals of the university related to internationalization, they probably wouldn’t be able to answer the question. Not that the information is not there, it’s online I think in fact, but they just don’t pay attention to it. They just do their jobs and as far as that other stuff goes, it’s somebody else’s responsibility ... so there are times and I’m like “why am I doing this?” because a lot of the daily stuff is not related to the bigger picture. It’s related to some students being upset with some

faculty members ... and so a lot of my time is occupied with that ... on a daily basis that's more prominent than any other bigger picture stuff that I deal with. Both Nancy and Howard point out that faculty daily activities are incredibly full. The kinds of issues that faculty deal with regularly are things like academic or interpersonal issues students bring up.

While there is not a clear designation of universities in Japan like in the U.S., Soka is considered to be a teaching-heavy institution, as opposed to a research institution, which means that faculty spend a lot of time on curriculum and course development and student mentorship and advisement. While faculty members are expected to carry out research, some faculty members struggle to secure time for their own research. What Hara shared is a typical example of this:

Perhaps it is Soka University's unique culture, but because we are not a research university, there is a heavy emphasis on education [or teaching]. And this is my own problem too, but I feel like I am putting 95% of my work to teaching or education. [Even though my intention is to put more time and effort in research], the reality is that it ends up being less than 5% of my time compared to teaching and education. This is a challenge I am facing ... we have incentives to conduct research, but because we have this culture of being a "student-centered" university, I have to be strict with myself to be able to secure more time for research. Perhaps I would need to ask to reduce some administrative tasks.

While Hara strives to secure more time for his own research, his commitment to helping his students is so strong that it prevents him from conducting research. This is not to say

that he is not engaged in research activities, but rather, the total amount of commitment he is making, both in teaching and research, inevitably increases.

Another example of a faculty member not feeling engaged in the internationalization efforts made as an institution is represented by Kurata who stated, “I am not at all aware of where my work fits into the bigger picture of the internationalization efforts at the institution. I am just doing what I am told to do, and I simply just teach my classes and do my best to offer quality content.” What Kurata does on a daily basis to teach courses in EMP is in fact directly related to the internationalization efforts, but here, he is explicitly sharing how he has no idea how his work is related to the internationalization efforts as an institution.

Takayama also shared from a slightly different perspective:

Generally speaking, there are those faculty, staff, and students whose work, research, or learning are globalized in line with the institution’s globalization or internationalization, and others who hear about all these efforts but their actual research, work, and learning remains within their local environment. I feel there is somewhat of a polarization happening in terms of people’s mindset and engagement, and the question is, how can we overcome this challenge.

Here, Takayama is emphasizing that even though the total environment is inevitably globalized, it is up to each individual’s mindset and motivation to actually make use of the environment. Some people are very engaged and seek every opportunity to take part in a global or international work, but others might not care and continue to stay within their comfort zone.

In fact, Mestenhauser (2011) identifies the mindsets of individuals involved in the internationalization process as one of the major barriers to internationalization. I could see the different levels of engagement of the faculty members and their understanding of their role in promoting internationalization. Some would be very engaged and would thoroughly read the university documents that explain the institutional efforts and also attend optional meetings where institution-wide plans are explained. Some others in their mind know that it is important to understand their role within the bigger picture, but they are simply overwhelmed or busy with daily tasks instead.

The goals also included increasing the ratio of international faculty. International faculty within the context of the TGU not only includes faculty who possess citizenship outside of Japan, but also Japanese faculty who obtained their degree at an institution outside of Japan (MEXT, 2014). Soka University has in fact increased the number of international faculty from 138 in 2013 to 196 in 2019, with a goal of reaching 227 in 2023 when the grant ends (Soka University, 2019). Based on the Top Global University Application Guidelines, increase of international faculty was encouraged in order to make the institution more diverse by bringing in individuals with different backgrounds (MEXT, 2014). Nancy, an international faculty member, also feels that bringing in individuals with different mindsets will advance the internationalization of the institution. She stated:

I think you [as an international faculty] just have to be there and it's a mindset, it's a different way of thinking. Once you actually invite people who have different experiences, then that itself is the process of internationalization. So it doesn't mean you are necessarily told to internationalize or something because

you do it automatically by being different, from not being Japanese, basically, and not doing things in just totally a Japanese way. And I think that process is really what internationalization is, and of course your subject, how you are teaching subjects, how I am teaching about Japan is, I'm sure, very different from a Japanese person who may have been educated very more rigidly within a Japanese education system without possibly having studied overseas or anything like that. Certainly if they don't speak English or another language, then it will be much more limited to a Japanese way of thinking. And so by having so many new people coming in, that I think is in itself is the internationalization basically.

Here, Nancy is saying that her existence on campus as an international faculty is itself contributing to the internationalization of the university. She emphasizes that international faculty brings in new perspectives which would then challenge the more conservative and traditional way of thinking. In the process of negotiating ideas amongst each other, opportunities for new ideas to emerge are created. Of course, this increase has brought new challenges to the institution as well as an awareness of such challenges at both individual and institutional levels. Robin shared regarding this point:

I think there were tremendous cultural differences, and tremendous differences in leadership perspectives. And so it was quite challenging. It was probably the most challenging, my first two years at Soka University were the most challenging of my professional career of thirty years ... Having more foreign faculty on campus, having more foreign students on campus, having foreign administrators on campus, brought in new norms and brought in new social perspectives that were contrary to what the Japanese norm, cultural norm was in higher education, and

there was a clash there, there was an absolute clash. It has taken time for some of these changes to be adopted.

Here, Robin shares how challenging it was for her to navigate the differences she had with her colleagues and leadership. With the recent internationalization projects such as GGJ and TGU, there has been a great increase in the ratio of international faculty and staff on campus, which has brought these challenges to light. At the same time, Robin has also self-reflected personally,

I'm totally a different person now. And I say that seriously. Before coming, or once I arrived, I realized how western-centric I was. In [my country], my field of expertise was around diversity and inclusion. I was doing national training on cultural competence, I mean this is what I was sought for, this is what I was known for. And then I came to Japan and then I realized, oh my gosh I am so western centric. Leadership is what I teach now, and I've been teaching for six years, and my perspective of leadership was very western-centric. And so for me, the change, I feel like my DNA has changed in the seven years I've been in Japan. My perspective of leadership absolutely has broadened.

What we see here is that through encountering differences with others, Robin was able to realize her western-centric mindset as related to the perhaps rather rigid work that she had engaged previously (e.g. competence and even leadership), which she might not have realized otherwise. Her own transformation professionally was also an epistemic and intellectual transformation. The key, I believe, is whether or not we can use these situations as an opportunity for growth, or simply see it as an obstacle and try to avoid it.

Some other faculty members shared that with more international faculty members who do not speak Japanese joining the institution, unique challenges have emerged.

Takayama described this challenge as the university having two worlds: Japanese Operating System (OS) and English OS. He shared that because Soka University is a Japanese university and is overseen by the Japanese government, it is natural that the university operates in Japanese, both in terms of language and culture. At the same time, with many faculty and departments starting to offer EMP which comes with hiring of many international faculty, part of the university operates in a different environment, most of which is an English language environment with a mix of different cultures.

Takayama explained,

Basically, there is a need to connect the two environments, the Japanese OS and English OS. This task can only be understood by those who actually do this, including the administrative staff. Those who operate only in the Japanese OS probably have no idea what is happening in the English OS environment, and to be quite frank, they do not need to feel responsible for what is going on in that environment, because they don't know what's going on. At the same time, we have seen an increase in the international faculty who operate only in the English OS. [When the ratio of the international faculty increases], they tend to only operate and understand what is going on in the English OS, and there has been an increase in the workload to bridge the two environments. While the workload is increasing, there is no formal structure to support that. All administrative tasks done in the Japanese OS concludes there, and the English OS has its own culture. Or maybe this is a better way to phrase it: for government documents, we need to

write them in Japanese, and of course the university administration is mainly done in Japanese. So for those who are not in or do not experience the English OS, they cannot imagine a university whose administrative tasks are done only in English. They probably think that it can be done by just translating everything into English, but in reality, there is more difference than that in terms of differences in culture and communication styles. Sometimes, for new international faculty members, if we communicate information just by translating the Japanese to English, it is difficult for them to understand. We need to add explanations and provide resources on how to navigate certain systems in a way that can be understood by the international faculty. Otherwise, they will just get confused ... In some cases, they may show distrust, and so I believe the task of connecting the Japanese world and the English world is becoming extremely important.

Here, Takayama points out an interesting phenomenon that has emerged as a result of internationalization. The only way for international faculty who cannot speak Japanese to receive information is through individuals who can communicate in both languages and the responsibility falls on these individuals. Since Takayama has the capacity to navigate the two “Operating Systems,” he has been taking on the unofficial responsibility of communicating between the two worlds. Additionally, Takayama emphasizes that it is not just about the language, but cultural background and communication style should also be taken into consideration when information needs to be conveyed. As he points out, there is no system established to navigate this barrier and these responsibilities often end up falling on a small group of individuals.

Similarly, Ethan shared how, because of his own nature and character, he has been functioning as that mediator between parties with differing views.

We know that there are complications between foreign faculty and their ideas of what education should be in their country and in Japan. And I think that the expectations of me, include of being basically a filter between these two worlds, trying to help information or ideas, I mentioned to you this miscommunication, etc., to go right smack in the middle between these two flames of ideas and try to make sure that it flows like a river, smooth river across both ways, let it be through the higher administration, the top people and us, or let it be across our own faculty, across our administration, between teachers, faculty and staff, ... maybe it's faculty and students that have issues, maybe students and students. I tend to be somewhere in the middle of all of these and expectations of me often include being put in positions where hopefully I can soften something in the middle between whatever is going on and help resolve issues, or convey information clearly to different parties, knowing that I'm not actually adding to this fire or adding to the conflict that may be brewing in some areas between [individuals] ... Because of my experience on campus, I believe that I've worked with many different administrative offices, so I am familiar, that's not my job, but I'm familiar with what they do, and so communication lines there are open. I think that I'm also familiar with many faculties on campus which allows me to be able to communicate well with the different offices and their deans or vice deans. Because Ethan has the capacity and willingness to navigate challenging situations such as conflicts or misunderstandings among faculty members or with administrative leaders, he

has been unofficially functioning as a mediator, not because he is told to but because he cares. Since he has been with the university for a number of years, he has built that relationship with individuals over the years and is using that capacity to help other faculty, staff, and students. These responsibilities are taken on by individuals who have the language ability and willingness to navigate through these challenges.

Similarly, when it comes to generating documents to submit to the Japanese government, these responsibilities come down to those who can read and write in proficient Japanese. Howard shared his frustrations with how the government is strongly encouraging institutions to hire international faculty when he feels that it is not necessarily the best option.

[International faculty] don't speak Japanese, they can't do committee work, so the bulk of the administrative work ... I mean they teach, they care, and I don't want to be negative about them, I'm being much more negative about the system that almost forces me and pushes me to hire a foreign faculty, rather than Japanese faculty who are educated overseas, who speak fluent English, who can teach in English, and who can do the administrative work, because they can't. So what it does is it puts this additional burden on [faculty who can speak both English and Japanese] ... And so the pressure from the Ministry of Education which comes down to the university and then goes to the faculty, to hire a foreign faculty should change. I don't think it's productive, and I think it's potentially damaging in the long run. I mean it will be taken care of because the Japanese will do their job, but the amount of pressure and the amount of extra work placed on them [is a lot].

Here, what Howard emphasizes is the potential consequences of increasing international faculty just for the sake of increasing its numbers. It is important here to note that while the government encourages institutions to increase the number and ratio of international faculty, they do not specify any numerical goals and the universities were required to set numerical goals at the time of applying to TGU. While it was not technically forced by the government to target a specific number, the impression Howard is getting is that they are being pressured.

Hara, a faculty member who had assumed a responsibility to write up a report to submit to the government as part of TGU shared his thoughts:

At the end of the day, work that comes down from the government needs to be submitted in Japanese. These types of documents are in Japanese, but the program itself is run in English and so while we are encouraged to promote internationalization and make various services available in English, I have realized that we still need to deal with government bureaucracy when it comes to these kinds of documentations.

This is another example of the kind of frustration faculty members are experiencing. Hara feels that there is some kind of contradiction between what the government is proposing and how they themselves are functioning.

While Soka University has been successful in reaching their goals and building momentum, there are still areas where the support is needed. One of these was brought up by a few faculty members who teach courses in EMP. They referred to the lack of resources and support available at the time EMP were rolling out. This has caused some stress in the faculty members. Robin shared:

There wasn't a lot of participatory engagement of the actual faculty, of students, and part of that I think is defined by Japanese tradition in higher education, it is very hierarchical, it's very top-down. And so that's how it was launched. But when you launch initiatives that way, there are some individuals who become disgruntled, or frustrated because they are being asked to, for example teach in English, but haven't been given the resources to do this new work, and it is new work. Facility and a language does not equate into competencies in teaching skills.

Here, Robin highlights two aspects of policy implementation that she feels are necessary: engagement of the stakeholders who ultimately carry out the initiatives, and sufficient resources to successfully implement the initiatives. When these two aspects are neglected, possibilities of frontline stakeholders becoming frustrated become high. However, while there are various challenges and frustrations that have emerged as a result of the implementation of the internationalization projects, faculty members do understand that this is a process and that they are moving forward in a positive direction. Ethan shared the following:

Because at the ground floor, I believe all of us who have to implement, there can be a lot of grumbling regarding "what is this, why do we have to do all of this," and over the years, that's kind of where we are at, but at the same time, while we are implementing, I think that there is this negotiation between "yes we need to get to this point, and here's where we are now, how in the world..." I mean some of us maybe could not envision the process of how we would achieve that, but I think that's where we also bring out our own innate creativity and the fact that we

are capable of finding ways to make this possible, once we have that goal set, I think if we're discussing what is the goal, it will never start because people will discuss the possibility of this goal within their current state of mind of what is possible and not. But I think whatever vision that our university has of, let's get here, it seems impossible if you asked me at the time, but because they said it and because we grumble, then we work towards achieving it, which is one of the strengths of our university, I think. And we find ways to make it move in that direction.

Similarly, Robin's thoughts add to this understanding:

I'm appreciative of the leadership provided by the Ministry of Education, because I think the Super Global University initiative, for whatever intentions it had, I can see how ... I mean we were fortunate enough at Soka to be one of 11 private universities to receive this, and I can see how much it has both challenged but also created opportunities on campus ... That particular project then really has allowed Soka University to expand its capacity, its capability, it's not perfect, and there are still many details, nuances, policies that have to catch up with providing the best experiences for students, but if we at least don't have an opening, then we will never even get on the bridge to go across. So I find that it's been an amazing opportunity for the university. I think it's also enhanced the university's legitimacy and credibility. And as a small liberal arts university, doing very innovative initiatives, I think this has been important to inform not only Japan but to inform the world. And so on those levels, I think it's been a tremendous benefit ... It's survival and so for me, globalization at Soka University has allowed us to

begin to transform in ways that we were very excited about and in ways that have been very painful. I think that we can do better, we can and we need to introduce deeper connections to students. Students should not just be a number that we count, how many came and how many went, but how the student experiences are deepening because we are globalizing as a university. This is their future and I think we have to take that very seriously. But we do and how we support faculty, staff and students in attaining that vision of becoming a global university I think is very important. Soka University has definitely taken some tremendous steps on this path, and change is difficult. And I think the learning has been slow, honestly, but it's happening.

David also shared the following:

I think there are just always going to be challenges when you try to make such a massive change, internationalize, it's kind of a big thing. But those types of small challenges or things that come up, I think our university, I don't know if it's the same at other universities, they've been pretty good in terms of listening to faculty feedback from our faculty meetings. And usually if the professors voice something, they address it ... I think we have a way to communicate our concerns and they are heard. So I have no complaints there. But just making such a big change like internationalization is always going to be small problems that pop up just because how you envision something and how it actually turns out, there's always a gap there. And it is just a matter of how smoothly can you bridge that gap.

Collectively, the major points that these faculty members emphasize is that yes, there are various challenges that come with promoting internationalization of the university, and they may feel impatient or frustrated at times, but overall, they are confident that Soka is advancing forward, and despite the challenges or tensions, they remain hopeful of its future—perhaps even more so now that they have been working on these initiatives, which demonstrate their own capacity for optimism.

Theme 3: Growing Focus on the Importance of Quality of Internationalization

The final theme that emerged from the interviews was the need to focus more on the quality of the internationalization efforts. Up until now, Soka University has been mostly meeting their numerical targets, making exponential growth in the numbers of international students, students going on study abroad, international faculty, and English medium courses. One of the outcomes that the institution identified was that the increase in international students and faculty have accelerated the campus internationalization or globalization, which also motivated domestic students to further develop their intercultural understanding and to study abroad (JSPS, 2020). Observing the expansion Soka University was able to accomplish, Takayama shared his thoughts on where the institution should be headed. He stated:

Soka University has made great achievements in terms of its numerical goals, such as the number of students studying abroad, and the increase has almost come to a peak or plateau where it has become a challenge to expand further numerically. We are currently in the process of creating our second Grand Design (as of October 2020), and during our discussion, we acknowledged the diligent efforts everyone put in to achieve our numerical goals. It is possible to set a

higher numerical goal within the new Grand Design, but it is difficult to find joy in that process ... I believe now is the time to think beyond the numerical goals, and to advance globalization in terms of its quality.

Takayama is seeing the limit to simply striving for numerical goals and in order to further advance internationalization, focusing on the quality of the undertakings becomes crucial. Faculty members have also expressed some levels of concerns around the numerical targets the institution strives to achieve. Ishimoto shared how his faculty and the institution as a whole has been making great progress in sending out students for study abroad thanks to the additional short-term study programs. However, he questions its purpose and impact:

Even if we send students abroad for just a few weeks, we can still meet the quota of students who have international experience. But I wonder if that would truly help these students become global citizens. That is my honest feeling.

What Ishimoto brings up here is his concerns on whether these short-term study abroad programs are actually serving as an opportunity to help students develop into global citizens, or whether they exist simply to meet the numerical targets. This relates to what Woolf (2007) criticizes about short-term study abroad potentially being “educational tourism” (p. 503) which lack academic credibility. Kusumoto, a faculty member who also serves in the administrative leadership team, referred to the increase of international students on campus and expressed his concerns on whether the institution can maintain the quality of services provided to international students while still increasing their number.

Efforts to increase the number of international students also brought concerns to some faculty members. Ethan shared how student motivation can impact the quality of the courses both positively and negatively. He stated:

As part of this influx, many of the international students who are coming, depending on their socio-economic status, are actually funded. They receive funding to attend our university. Because they do, some students who are here, sometimes I wonder their actual purpose of being here beyond the fact that they are being funded to be here ... But it's a bit artificial I think because to some degree, we are bringing, in our case, I know we are bringing in many international students, and that's wonderful, we're fulfilling quotas etc., but I think in terms of funding, once this grant ends, there is no actual funding to fund many of their scholarships, so I wonder what's going to happen after that, because if they are not being funded to come anymore, would they make that choice to really come to Japan to study, and I don't think so.

Ethan is pointing out that there may be some international students who choose to attend Soka University simply because of the funding that they receive. That in and of itself does not indicate students are not motivated to study, but based on his observations of some students, there may be a lack of motivation to study at Soka which could potentially impact the quality of classes, such as through lack of participation during class.

The importance of quality was also brought up by administrative leaders. Tajima also shared what he understands as important in promoting internationalization:

We will definitely reach a deadlock if we try to simply increase numbers just because it is a goal we set as part of the Top Global University Project. That is

why I think it is important to have a greater vision, to foster creative global citizens as part of the internationalization efforts. That is our motivation. And internationalization, for me, means to foster that kind of individuals.

Here, Tajima highlights the importance of having a deeper purpose behind promoting internationalization, which is to “foster creative global citizens.” As an administrative staff member who works closely with the internationalization initiatives, Tajima feels that numerical goals will not continue to motivate faculty and staff, but what will truly motivate them is for them to understand the clear purpose behind promoting the internationalization.

Further, Seta shared how it is important to have a firm understanding of what it means to foster global citizens which has been a popular term used in higher education discourse in Japan:

I believe this is more of a conceptual question, but when we talk about global citizens or *Global Jinzai*, in the current discourse, we tend to assess them in terms of their English language ability or their study abroad experiences. However, I believe what is more important is to think about how we can provide the kind of education that will help foster students who can lead lives based on multicultural coexistence. In that sense, whatever career a student chooses, to have a foundation in their life to have respect and tolerance towards individuals with different cultures and religious backgrounds, I think, will be important. We need to offer the kind of education that is based on a solid ideal or concept. Otherwise, in the current education system, those who have exceptional language ability are being highly acknowledged, but are they really meeting societal expectations when they

go out into the workforce? That may not necessarily be the case. There may also be those who have a solid academic foundation but are rather inward looking and are limiting their own progress, and we do not want that either. I feel there could be more discussion and research done, including the government, on how our education system as a whole should look like. I feel like there has not been much opportunity to discuss such issues. Japan, I believe, has a *yokonarabi* culture, a culture where people want to do the same things or be the same, and because of that, when we started talking about “global” something, everyone started talking about making things “global.” Before we had the “global” discourse, “liberal education” was the buzzword. In that sense, it also depends on how the government announces its grant projects. Japan is a small society so it doesn’t take much time for everyone to start striving for the same thing. I think after the “global” discourse, we will be talking about SDGs. Therefore, we need to think about what our foundation is that will not be swayed by societal discourse, and make that as the strength of each university.

Here, Seta first underscores that the purpose of internationalization and global citizenship are really the practice of what he refers to as “multicultural coexistence.” This is such a foundational philosophical idea to contribute to what it means to being a human in this world and how education plays a role in shaping the kinds of people who can “coexist multiculturally.” More technically speaking, Seta is being critical about how students’ English language ability and their study abroad experiences are heavily used to measure how global they are. He is stating that English language ability itself does not translate into them being global citizens and rather, having tolerance and respect towards others

with different backgrounds are more important. Seta also brings up a unique Japanese culture where people tend to follow the current trend. The focus on SDGs have already been prevalent in the interviews too where a number of participants referred to the SDG initiatives that Soka has been involved in. While it is natural to follow the national or global trend in education, what Seta emphasizes is that it is important to have a firm foundation so that Soka is not simply swayed by the trend.

Similarly, Hara also stressed the importance of having a solid pillar so as not to be swayed by social discourse. He shared:

History has shown that there will always be people who have critical views about various government initiatives promoted at the time. Things are always changing and therefore it is important for us to have something unique to our institution that will become a pillar.

This leads to the discussion on how the Japanese society or government lacks the conversation on what internationalization really means, and that there is still a narrow understanding of what it means. While the government does refer to various aspects of internationalization of higher education in the policy documents, what faculty members understand and feel are different. They feel that the focus still is heavily put on English language education when we talk about internationalization of higher education. While acknowledging that this is in fact an important aspect of the internationalization process, having a broader focus is necessary. Relatedly, David shared:

I think in terms of the Ministry of Education, when you look at a lot of their materials and what they are writing, in terms of their goal, it seems like what they mean by internationalization is English language programs ... For them, for

MEXT, internationalization is English language. It's a great starting point I think, but hopefully in the future they can kind of broaden the scope of that and maybe make what they define as a global university. You know they say it's a global university project, but if you read all of their literature, it's all English language programs.

David is pointing out that the government's definition of internationalization or a global university seems to be narrow and limited to English language education programs.

Other faculty members referred to how the internationalization efforts, at the end of the day, are still focused on fostering individuals who can become immediate work forces instead of offering education that focuses on fostering them as global citizens.

Niwa adds to this:

When we think about internationalization of Japanese universities, English language ability is emphasized, but the focus is still more on TOEIC (see: <https://www.ets.org/toEIC>), which, as you know, is used mainly for job search. English for business purposes is what is being encouraged in Japanese higher education. I don't know if we can call that internationalization. Japanese corporations are not internationalized, in the first place, right? So when they try to internationalize their corporations, they look for the skills in students, and the skills they look for are practical English. That is my understanding. It is skill-based, and university education is leaning towards fostering individuals who can contribute to the companies and business world. I understand that MEXT is making all kinds of statements, but in the end, I feel like they are asking for the kind of university education that companies are demanding. I don't think we are

asked to offer educational programs that truly concern internationalization and contribution to international society.

Niwa feels that the government is contradicting itself. While the government encourages universities to internationalize its institutions and foster Global *Jinzai*, the impression he is getting from the government initiatives is that he is asked to produce graduates who can become immediate workforce at companies. His understanding of what internationalization should look like differs from what he thinks the government is promoting.

Murata is a newer faculty member who joined Soka within the past few years. Similar to Kurata, she has also received education from Soka schools but pursued her higher education degrees abroad. She has worked in various fields including NGOs and international organizations. Murata shared a similar concern to Niwa's:

When I came back to Japan, I was surprised to learn that students start job searches in their junior year. Unless they decide to continue their education in graduate school, their main focus during their junior and senior year is their job search and not their experiences at the university. The government encourages the universities to internationalize and I believe education itself should be important, but in reality, once students enter their second half of their junior year, I feel like students in Japanese universities in general put less effort in their studies. Of course, they are doing their best, but I feel like they are missing out on some great experiences and opportunities. We say internationalization, but I feel academic study become more interesting starting from their junior year when students can take advanced courses more specific to their interests. However, students tend to

take fewer classes in their junior year and focus on their job search. I wish to see a change in this conflict between students' academic life and job search. I feel like this needs to change at the national level, this is not something we can change at the institutional level.

Having received higher education overseas, Murata was surprised at the time commitment that students need to make on their job search. This is where the timing for workforce viability is in tension with what it means to experience being a student intellectually and being fully present as such on campus during that junior year. She is concerned that students are unable to fully enjoy their academic experiences on campus when the institution is striving to internationalize and offer education that aims to foster global citizens. Additionally, Robin shared:

Grant programs such as TGU from MEXT, speaks to changes in numbers. Are you increasing the number of foreign students on campus, are you increasing the number that are going away ... you are just counting bodies. You're not talking about quality of instruction, you're assuming that if you have more staff or more faculty that have some kind of a foreign experience, that that increases quality. And I think that's a false assumption, I think that's magical thinking. Just because you speak English does not mean that you have the competencies to provide quality interaction, quality instruction for a diverse student population, because foreign students do not take classes in isolation ... So I would say that in the field of internationalization, we have to go deeper than just curriculum, bodies that go study abroad, or faculty that happen to speak a foreign language.

Again, the impression Robin is getting is that what the government cares for are numbers and she argues that there needs to be more focus on the quality of students' experiences. She also points out that increasing numbers of international faculty, international students, or English classes do not automatically translate into internationalization. The big assumption she is observing is that having foreign language ability and experiences abroad would automatically contribute to a quality education.

During the interviews, administrative leaders were asked who they think the key figures would be in further promoting the internationalization of the institution, and from the responses, the importance of the university leadership was highlighted. Some administrative leaders who have worked closely with the internationalization efforts acknowledged the current leadership on how they have been making efforts to maintain the quality of support, particularly for international students, as well as the leaders' proactive initiatives to continue making efforts in internationalization. Takayama shared that without university leadership, the internationalization efforts would merely become cosmetic:

When we try to promote international exchange with universities without the president's leadership, the exchange can end up becoming superficial. In other words, even if each exchange, each educational or research exchange moves forward, it is important to have a common understanding as a university of the kind of students we want to foster, and what kind of skills we want them to have. Furthermore, in the process of creating a curriculum and when the international office takes the lead in promoting and starting international exchange programs, we need to understand the demands and needs of each faculty, including language

programs or internship programs. And to have a common understanding, it is crucial to have leadership that oversees the entire university. Therefore, I believe the president's leadership is what advances international exchange, and without the leadership, international exchange can become cosmetic.

Here, Takayama emphasizes the importance of the stakeholders to unite around a common goal and the role of the university leadership team becomes crucial in leading the entire university together towards that common goal.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the findings derived from data collected through semi-structured interviews with administrative leaders and faculty members at Soka University to understand how Japan's internationalization policies are interpreted, envisioned, and practiced by the stakeholders. My research identified three major themes: Institutional culture and capacity to promote internationalization; challenges of implementing internationalization initiatives; and growing focus on the importance of quality of internationalization. These themes indicate that the institutional culture and its capacity plays a significant role in how internationalization policies are interpreted and practiced. Soka University has a unique institutional culture which already implicates an international view from its founding. Most of the participants referred to the founding principles and the university founder's examples when they were asked about the internationalization efforts put forth on campus. It is clear how they see a connection between what their institution strives to achieve and the national discourse around internationalization of higher education. I could easily imagine that the internationalization efforts would be made regardless of the government policies and

grants, and the policies and grants were used to accelerate the process. However, the interviews suggest how the lack of preparedness brought about different challenges. This leads into the second theme of the challenges that emerged as a result of the implementation process.

Implementation of the internationalization policies involved various numerical goals, including international students, students studying abroad, international faculty, and EMP. In the process of achieving these goals, workload and responsibilities of both faculty and administrative leaders and staff have increased, which led to a feeling of burden and frustration among some faculty members. Based on how the organization is structured, there has been an unbalanced workload amongst stakeholders where a few offices or few individuals within a department or office would take on more responsibilities than the other. Particularly for faculty members, these responsibilities were oftentimes not official but something that they had taken on either because it had to be taken care of or simply from their own will.

Finally, the findings suggest that a greater emphasis on the quality of the internationalization process is needed for it to be more sustainable. Based on the interviews, it was clear that they are seeing the limit to the advancement of the internationalization efforts by simply striving to reach their numerical goals. The administrative leaders emphasized the importance of university leadership to ensure that the internationalization efforts do not simply become a numbers game but rather have a clear purpose and understanding of what it is that they are trying to achieve through this process.

Chapter 5: *Humanistic Internationalization*

The purpose of this study was to understand the phenomenon of the internationalization of Japanese universities, particularly focusing on the faculty perspectives on the internationalization efforts put forth by the government and implemented by the institution. As described in Chapter 1, the Japanese government has felt the urgency of attracting and fostering capable human resources who can contribute to the Japanese society in becoming competitive in the global market (Horie, 2015; Ota, 2018; Yonezawa, 2014). This has led the government to introduce various national policies to encourage universities to internationalize its institution in an effort to produce *Global Jinzai*, or what the government defines as individuals who possess linguistic and communication skills; independence, challenging spirit, flexibility and sense of responsibility; and intercultural understanding and identity as Japanese (Council on Promotion of Human Resource for Globalization Development, 2011).

In Chapter 2, I thematically reviewed relevant literature that informed my study. I started by providing an overview of the internationalization of higher education, specifically focusing on the definition, rationales, approaches, and strategies, following the framework developed by Knight (2008). I then elaborated on some recent frameworks of understanding the internationalization of higher education, namely comprehensive internationalization (Hudzik, 2011) and the internationalization of the curriculum (Leask, 2009). This was followed by literature on the relationship between university administration and academic faculty to understand better the role faculty members play in implementing institutional policies. Studies by Childress (2009, 2010) particularly influenced my expectations on the kinds of responses I would hear from the faculty

members based on the levels of faculty engagement laid out in her study. I then concluded the chapter with literature on the internationalization of Japanese higher education to provide a more localized context.

This study ultimately aimed to present a rich case of how national policies are “taken in” or appropriated by universities and by the faculty members who are responsible for carrying out institutional policies. However, I was also interested in how stakeholders at the university redefine, reshape, resist, and transform how we understand internationalization at a place like Soka University. While there have been numerous studies on the internationalization of higher education, the dominant focus has thus far been the overview of national policies and the outcomes of various internationalization activities, such as study abroad programs, without much focus on how the academic faculty and administrative leaders involved in internationalization on the ground understand and operationalize internationalization. I aimed to bridge the gap in knowledge between the policies created at the government level and the responses by the faculty members in the front lines at universities. Childress (2010) asserts that faculty members are important actors in implementing internationalization plans and as such, through understanding how the faculty members are responding to the internationalization efforts of an institution, practitioners are able to shift or reflect on their approaches to make the internationalization process a more sustainable one. I hoped that by giving voice to faculty views on internationalization, this process will lead to on the one hand, increased support for the thoughtful and persistent work that university stakeholders are doing to advance internationalization initiatives at their institutions, and on the other hand, that more realistic workloads and duties for faculty could result from

conscientious and collaborative government and on-the-ground university stakeholders in future policy formation, project developments, and research.

Early on, I approached this study using two conceptual frameworks: sociocultural approach to policy studies to understand the political dimension of the policy appropriation (Levinson et al., 2009) and cognitive approach (Spillane et al., 2002) to understand the individual's understanding of policies. Guided by these conceptual frameworks, I started the research with a primary research question: *How are Japan's internationalization policies interpreted, envisioned, and practiced by stakeholders within a university nationally recognized for leading internationalization efforts today, and as a result, how is the university implicated in Japanese government efforts to internationalize?* The questions that I developed and this research that was subsequently designed are close to my own interests as a researcher and scholar invested in internationalization of higher education processes in Japan and elsewhere that lean toward re-humanizing or humanizing global interactions. As a Soka University graduate myself and having professional and personal connections with many of the study participants, I was able to engage in in-depth conversations with them. This research is important to me as I see the value in the internationalization of higher education, particularly the way in which Soka's value shaped my view of being a global citizen. The process of policy implementation could easily become bureaucratic, especially in a Japanese society where education is very much structured. However, this research brings hope in that we see *humanistic approaches* in implementing government policies, and toward some really important goals such as *developing creative global citizens* who will

both help to shape and strive for a *multicultural coexistence*, to borrow the words from my participants.

In the following sections, I will elaborate and expand on three major take-aways that I have gathered that are based on the findings from my research described in Chapter 4, which then lead to the theoretical offering that I make through this dissertation. I am framing my theoretical offering as *humanistic internationalization* that emerges from Japan and specifically the Soka University philosophy and context. It is important here to mention other scholars who refer to humanistic internationalization or humanistic views of internationalization (McAllister-Grande, 2018; Sanderson, 2008). For example, Sanderson (2008) writes about a humanistic view of internationalization through the lens of the international educator. He stresses the importance of the educators' internationalization at the individual level in both their personal and professional perspectives. Sanderson (2008) concludes that this is done through educators developing their authenticity through self-reflection and adding the notion of cosmopolitanism. Although *humanistic internationalization* that emerged from this study is specific to Soka's philosophy and context, other scholars' studies provide deep insight in further expanding the understanding of what *humanistic internationalization* can entail.

Implications of Findings

Take-away 1: Soka's Institutional Culture is Shaping Faculty Understanding of the Internationalization of Higher Education

In Chapter 2, I discussed the concept of internationalization as a complex one that has developed and evolved throughout the years (de Wit, 2002). In the early days when the concept of internationalization of higher education emerged, it was mostly associated

with international activities and programs such as student exchanges (Arum & van de Water, 1992). With time, the concept has come to be understood as a process rather than an end goal. One of the recent definitions is that of de Wit et al. (2015) which defines internationalization as

the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff and to make a meaningful contribution to society. (de Wit et al., 2015, p. 29)

This definition highlights that internationalization is a process and that the integration should happen in various aspects of the institution. Similarly, internationalization, or *kokusaika* in Japanese, has recently started to be understood as a process as we see in MEXT's definition. MEXT (n.d.b) defines internationalization as:

a process of incorporating international and intercultural aspects into higher education in response to globalization. This does not necessarily involve activities that cross borders such as student and faculty mobility or establishing international campuses, but rather includes incorporating international aspects within the nation, such as the development of English education and area studies.

(Section 1)

Although, in theory, internationalization is understood as a process, Jones and de Wit (2012) argue that in practice, the activity-oriented approach is still dominating the actual practice.

My research findings show that the faculty and administrative leaders' understandings of "internationalization" were based on what they understand as the

institutional culture and the examples that the university founder, Ikeda, has set forth. It is true that they referred to various indicators, such as the number of international students on campus and students studying abroad, when they described their institutional internationalization efforts, but their understanding of internationalization went beyond just that. As described in Chapter 4, there was a consistent referencing of the university's founding principles and Ikeda's examples. As represented in the founding principles and the mission statement, the purpose of education at Soka is to foster creative humanity who can contribute to world peace and happiness of all humanity. Ikeda's actions to build amicable relationships cross-nationally through educational exchange and his deep care that he extends to the students have also made lasting impacts on some faculty and administrative leaders. These are in fact the rationales behind Soka's internationalization efforts which go beyond the categories that Knight (2008) describes in her study: international profile and reputation; student and staff development; income generation; strategic alliances; and research and knowledge production. While one may argue that this could be categorized as a political rationale that refers to an institution or nation's wish to establish a peaceful relationship with other nations (Childress, 2010; Knight, 1997), Soka's rationale is slightly different in that the relationships they are creating are not based on any political agenda, but are based on their wish to contribute to world peace through engaging in educational exchange at the grass roots level.

Take-away 2: Gap in Ideal and Reality becoming a Burden but also a Motivation for Growth

In Chapter 2, I presented studies and literature that describe the challenges academic faculty are facing in the process of implementing internationalization as well as

the importance of their engagement in the process, particularly in the process of internationalizing the curriculum. Leask (2009) identifies that one of the challenges for the faculty members is to facilitate meaningful interaction between domestic and international students to help them to develop international perspectives when faculty members themselves are not trained with the knowledge and skills to do so. In a study more specific to a Japanese context, Kuwamura (2009) and Tsuneyoshi (2005) also refer to the faculty's increasing workload and the challenge in ensuring the quality of their instruction. These challenges also emerged from the interview data collected in my research where it was shared that for some faculty members who were all of a sudden expected to teach in English, it required almost double the amount of time to prepare for their classes compared to teaching in Japanese. Some also expressed concerns of how it is assumed that being able to speak another language translates into their ability to teach in that language. This speaks to what Leask (2009) states about the expectations put on faculty members when they themselves are not necessarily trained.

Interestingly, what was highlighted even more in my interview data was the burden administrative leaders and faculty members were facing not specifically related to their teachings per se, but with their administrative responsibilities and interactions they have with their colleagues. As I discussed in Chapter 4, administrative leaders shared that the internationalization process has increased their workload and furthermore the responsibilities have been concentrated in a few offices, resulting in high pressure and burden on certain individuals. This is highlighted in what Seta, an administrative leader, shared: "There are so many things we need and want to do, but we still do not have enough resources to accommodate them." Here, you see a gap in what they want to

achieve and the reality. In addition, faculty members who assume some level of leadership responsibilities are also asked to take on administrative tasks, such as preparing lengthy documents for the government to report on their internationalization efforts, on top of their daily responsibilities as instructors dealing with issues students bring up.

Another aspect of the faculty members' challenges is their interactions with their colleagues, in particular, with those who share a different culture. As described in Chapter 4, Soka puts great emphasis on creating diversity within its campus. In fact, the number of international students has increased from 313 in 2013 to 878 in 2019, and the ratio of international faculty increased from 43.3% in 2013 to 55.7% in 2019 (JSPS, 2020). While this creates an atmosphere and environment of diversity, how students, faculty, and staff navigate through and make the most value out of this do not come automatically. This is not to negate the benefits of having diversity and in fact, this has brought many positive changes to campus. Some of this includes the broadening of perspectives with decision making by including international faculty in different committees; students having the opportunity to hear diverse perspectives from students with different cultural background in class; or students being able to learn concepts and ideas through an international perspective from international faculty members. This was highlighted in a response from an international faculty member, Nancy, when she shared:

I think you just have to be there and it's a mindset, it's a different way of thinking. Once you actually invite people who've got different experiences, then that itself is the process of internationalization. So it doesn't mean you are necessarily told to internationalize or something because you do it automatically

by being different, from not being Japanese, basically, and not doing things in a just totally Japanese way.

At the same time, Robin, another international faculty member, highlighted the challenges that arise with diversity:

Having more foreign faculty on campus, having more foreign students on campus, having foreign administrators on campus, brought in new norms and brought in new social perspectives that were contrary to what the Japanese norm, cultural norm was in higher education, and there was a clash there, there was an absolute clash. It has taken time for some of these changes to be adopted

She further shared the assumptions being made in relation to diversity:

you're assuming that if you have more staff or more faculty that have some kind of a foreign experience, that increases quality.

These challenges underscore the need for individual faculty and administrative leaders to understand how to best create value out of the diversity Soka successfully continues to create. Leask (2009) asserts that "academic staff must themselves be highly efficient and effective intercultural learners with the skill to engage with and utilize diversity to develop their own and their students' international perspectives" (p. 212). Similarly, Sanderson (2008, 2011) also highlights the importance of internationalization at the individual level.

Soka certainly has its grand vision and goals it strives to achieve, but the burden and challenges its stakeholders are facing in reality are also real. However, what I feel hopeful for about Soka is that the faculty members themselves are hopeful and believe that they are moving in the right direction to achieve institutional goals that ultimately

serve their students as global citizens of the world, and this is a uniquely Soka and Japanese contextual offering to how we can expand our understandings of internationalization.

Take-away 3: Fostering Students is not just about Developing the Skills but also about Extending Genuine Care for their Happiness and Growth as a Person

One aspect of promoting internationalization of higher education in Japan is to foster Global *Jinzai*. Based on the government policies and studies on the concept, Global *Jinzai* is often understood as an individual who possess the three elements of linguistic and communication skills; independence, challenging spirit, flexibility and sense of responsibility; and intercultural understanding and identity as Japanese (Council on Promotion of Human Resource for Globalization Development, 2011). The purpose behind this initiative, based on the government documents, ultimately is to improve Japan's global competitiveness and strengthen its ties with other nations (MEXT, n.d.c), which is driven mainly by political and economic rationale.

Soka too has made efforts to develop students' skills, language ability in particular, in line with the indicators set forth by the government in the Top Global Project Application Guideline (MEXT, 2014, p. 5). This is evident in the increasing number of classes offered in non-Japanese languages as well as the EMP. However, for Soka, fostering students' into Global *Jinzai*, or into "Creative Global Citizens" in their language, is not just about developing students' skills. Soka's faculty, staff, and administrative leaders' responses exemplified great care for the students and the rationale behind learning international languages that were shared in their responses showed their concerns on the purpose of language education. We see here how Soka is appropriating

the idea of Global *Jinzai* by adding the humanistic elements to what the government suggests.

Throughout the interviews, both faculty and administrative leaders expressed their care for students. I would like to reiterate the responses that highlights their care for students:

I mean that deep care that he has for every individual student to do their best to become capable people, and create value, which is the name of our university, create value in their lives and in society for others, so not just for oneself but for others, I think was inspiring. And I try to convey that message to students and my motivation is there's always students that need encouragement or that need support.

While [my responsibilities as a faculty] may have brought me to Soka University, it's the students who have kept me here.

I think it is most important as a faculty member in the front lines to care for the students in front of me, help them grow, and create an environment that enables that growth.

Childress (2010) identified six levels of faculty engagement in the implementation process of internationalization of higher education, ranging from those who are committed to the internationalization plans to those who disagree with the idea. While some faculty members at Soka only appeared to be perhaps disengaged from the institution-wide initiatives, their commitments to student growth were clearly evident.

Theoretical Contribution

Based on my research with Soka and what was shared with me by educators who are working on internationalization initiatives within the institution's system and in Japan specifically, I offer the notion of *humanistic internationalization*. This concept is based on Soka's own language and educational vision of being the "highest seat of learning for humanistic education," which is explained as follows:

The primary mission of Soka University is value creation, to nurture the creative, life-enhancing potential of each student and to inspire students to employ that potential for the greater benefit of humanity. This is the founder's call.

University education should not be limited to the teaching and acquisition of specialized knowledge. The lack of distinction between knowledge and wisdom is a prime source of the crisis that modern society faces. What society requires are individuals who are able to freely employ knowledge in order to bring forth the wisdom to creatively confront the challenges of our ever-changing reality. Soka University strives to provide humanistic education that will foster individuals who, exercising wisdom rooted in a rich humanity, can fulfill that requirement.

(Soka University, n.d.c)

My task has been to expand the definition or rationale of *humanistic internationalization* of higher education. I aim to offer why we might refer to a particular type of internationalization as *humanistic internationalization*, which challenges us to understand what is humanistic about internationalization processes, what are the qualities of being or developing the humanistic, how does "being human" or "becoming human" translate from Soka and Japanese language. Addressing these questions may help us to learn how

humanistic internationalization enhances what ought to be multiple definitions of internationalization based on the many contexts from which internationalization is envisioned and practiced while furthering our collective understandings of internationalization.

Because I myself am from the Soka system, for us, there is a certain way of understanding “humanistic education.” We talk about being a whole human being which Takamura (2005) succinctly explains as an individual who possess the elements of wisdom and passion; who has great ideals but also can see the reality; and who has deep thoughts but also can take action. In other words, these are individuals who are well balanced and as such, the objective of “humanistic education” is about nurturing a student who has the wholeness of human being (being as a verb here). This idea may be difficult for those outside of the Soka education system to comprehend or make sense of, and I do not assume that all students themselves would understand “humanistic education,” even if they are a part of it because it takes time to learn and embody. When we expand this notion of humanistic beingness to internationalization, there is actually a closeness between humanistic education and global citizenship as the kinds of students that Soka would like to raise. Global citizenship is dependent upon several characteristics that Soka has explicitly identified and based on a speech that Ikeda made at Teachers College, Columbia University in 1996 (which is referred to in Chapter 4): Wisdom, courage, and compassion. In his speech, Ikeda defines global citizenship as follows:

The wisdom to perceive the interconnectedness of all life and living.

The courage not to fear or deny difference; but to respect and strive to understand people of different cultures, and to grow from encounters with them.

The compassion to maintain an imaginative empathy that reaches beyond one's immediate surroundings and extends to those suffering in distant places. (Ikeda, 2010, pp. 112-113)

In my experience and interpretation, wisdom refers to our understanding that all living beings are interconnected in one way or another. Furthermore, the importance of having the wisdom to use our abilities and skills for the happiness of humanity is underscored. Courage, in my view, is to not fear things or people who are different from you or outside of your own comfort. Students who embody courage do not run away from challenges that may arise; encountering differences requires courage toward understanding, toward dialogue, and toward overcoming obstacles to connectedness. Compassion refers to having empathy toward others—this means feeling for the people around you but also extending your thoughts to people around the world who are suffering whether or not you have met them or been to their places. This is not about you going out into the world physically or geographically in order to become a global citizen but more deeply, having compassion for others outside of your own nation. This concept is similar to what Appiah refers to as cosmopolitan ethics (see Appiah 2006, 2008).

Thus, *humanistic internationalization* is internationalization—policies, processes, and practices—that embody and exude wisdom, courage, and compassion. Going back to the definition of the internationalization of higher education by de Wit et al. (2015), there is synergy with global scholarship on the more humane purposes of internationalization, the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education,

in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff and *to make a meaningful contribution to society*. (p. 29)

My research has revealed the challenges faculty and administrative leaders face in the process of internationalization, but they are striving to move forward in the best direction possible not only for themselves, but for the sake of their students. This exemplifies their own courage—their courage to face the challenges and to not give in—and compassion—their compassion towards their students. With their courage and compassion, they are wracking their brains and hearts to pull forth wisdom to determine the best course of action. Viewed from the sociocultural framework of policy studies (Sutton & Levinson, 2001), Soka has taken in the elements of the internationalization policies put forth by the Japanese government and made it their own *humanistic internationalization*. Furthermore, viewed from the cognitive framework of policy studies (Spillane et al., 2002), the institutional culture and the individual stakeholder's background and experiences have contributed in shaping their understanding of internationalization, which I see as *humanistic internationalization*. *Humanistic internationalization*, I believe, will help international educators to make the internationalization process more sustainable and meaningful.

Recommendation for Future Research

The world is now facing the unprecedented challenges of the covid-19 pandemic. Without a doubt, this has influenced the field of international education, and such global pandemic or crises could happen unexpectedly at any time. For future research, I would like to see how Soka will navigate this Covid-devastated world with its *humanistic internationalization* approach, which I believe will inform how international educators

can confront unprecedented challenges that may arise in the course of their internationalization efforts and what we need to do from now forward to heal the world. In an informal conversation with one of the research participants, he was asking himself how best they can support the students so that their international experience, in this particular case study abroad experience that was cancelled due to Covid-19, is not minimized. What value can we create given the situation? It will be of great value to see what concrete steps Soka will take, using their wisdom, courage, and compassion.

In addition, through this study, there seemed to be somewhat of differences in the perspectives between the Japanese and international faculty members. It would be interesting to see how they differ in their perspectives with regards to internationalization, and how their experiences are similar or different. Furthermore, it would be valuable to understand the Soka students' experiences and perspectives because ultimately, they are the receiving end of the internationalization efforts made at the institution. This could be followed up by tracer studies (see Pang, 1982) to observe what happens to the graduates of international programs as a way to examine the impact of these programs and to show more accountability.

Lastly, future research on understanding the Japanese government's intent on advancing the internationalization of higher education will also be significant. As Spillane et al. (2002) explains, the ambiguity of a policy could influence the understanding of the implementing agents. While it is possible to do an extensive discourse analysis and document analysis on the government policies and documents, interviews with the government officials may reveal some unknown intentions, which

could be both negative and positive, to bridge the gap between the government and institutions.

Concluding Reflections

I started out this research expecting to hear some frustrations and challenges faculty members are experiencing on the front lines of internationalization in an era of Global *Jinzai*. However, what was uncovered from the interviews was that yes, although there are many challenges stakeholders face and there are areas where improvements need to be made, the courageous attitude of educators towards these challenges, and their compassionate commitment to serve their students were the driving force for them to build the process of Soka's *humanistic internationalization*.

Hudzik (2015b) asserts that “it is what happens within the higher education institution itself that is the decisive variable” (p. 6), and this is what determines a successful internationalization. I believe that the *humanistic internationalization* at Soka will contribute to successful internationalization beyond simplistic numerical measures in Japan, and I hope that this research will provide insights for international educators throughout the world.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol for Administrative Leaders

Project: Internationalization of Japanese Higher Education

Time of interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Position of interviewee:

Description of the project:

Questions:

1. Please describe your responsibilities at your institution.
2. How much are you familiar with the internationalization efforts put forth by the Japanese government?
3. What do you think are the purposes and intentions of the Japanese government to promote internationalization of higher education?
4. What do you believe are the purposes of your institution to internationalize?
5. How have you and your leadership team communicated about the internationalization plan?
6. How were you involved in the planning and implementation of the internationalization strategies of your institution?
7. Since the implementation of the internationalization strategies by your institution, has the nature of your work changed? If so, how has it changed?
8. Who do you identify as the key actors in successfully promoting internationalization?
9. How much are the faculty involved in the internationalization process?
10. How do you think the faculty members are responding to the internationalization efforts?
11. What are your thoughts and feelings on the internationalization of higher education?
12. Any other thoughts or comments that you would like to share?

Thank you individual for participating in this interview. Assure him or her of confidentiality of responses and potential future interviews.

Format adapted from Creswell and Poth (2018, p. 312)

Appendix B: Interview Protocol for Faculty Members

Project: Internationalization of Japanese Higher Education

Time of interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Position of interviewee:

Description of the project:

Questions:

1. Please describe your responsibilities at your institution.
2. Please describe any international work that you do (broadly defined)
3. How much are you familiar with the internationalization efforts put forth by the Japanese government?
4. What do you know about the Top Global University Project?
5. What do you think are the purposes and intentions of the Japanese government to promote internationalization of higher education?
6. How much are you familiar with the internationalization efforts put forth by your institution?
7. What do you think are the purposes and intentions of your institution to promote internationalization of your institution?
8. How were the internationalization strategies and plans of your institution communicated to you?
9. Do you think your opinion was heard when the internationalization plan was implemented at your institution? Why do you feel that way?
10. In what ways does your institutional plan align with or conflict with your expertise?
11. Since the implementation of the internationalization strategies by your institution, has the nature of your work changed? If so, how has it changed? Has it influenced the way you teach or what you teach? How has it influenced your research?
12. What do you think you are expected to do in promoting internationalization of your institution?
13. Can you share concrete examples of what you are doing to promote the internationalization of your institution?
14. How have the internationalization efforts at your institution made an impact on you?
15. What are your thoughts and feelings on the internationalization of Japanese higher education?
16. What are your thoughts and feelings on the internationalization efforts made at your institution?
17. Is there anything you would like to see happen differently in promoting the internationalization of your institution?
18. Any other thoughts or comments that you would like to share?

Thank them for taking their precious time to participate in this interview. Assure them of confidentiality of responses and potential future interviews.

Format adapted from Creswell and Poth (2018, p. 312)