

選抜制度	日 程	研究科	専 攻	科 目
一般	Ⅱ期	国際学研究科	国際学専攻	外国語(英語)
受験番号		氏 名		採 点

Read the following passage and answer the questions.

The centralized national education system ensures children's access to quality education in Japanese schools, but is not designed for immigrant students. The Article 1 of School Education Law defines the schools, and the Constitution and the Fundamental Law of Education set education as the one provided by the schools. The minimum standards for setting up schools are based on the standards of the Central Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) Ordinance No.14 (29 March 2002) for elementary and Ordinance No.15 (29 March 2002) for lower secondary school. The standards also cover class arrangements, the number of teachers, equipment, and facilities. The curriculum is regulated by the implementation rules of School Education Law by MEXT Ordinance No.19.

The formal sector and legal framework are not enough to respond to the various educational needs among immigrants in Japan. The country sets compulsory education from elementary school, grades 1 to 6, and lower secondary school, 7 to 9, for its nationals, but not for non-Japanese citizens. Okano (2011) points out the potential misunderstandings regarding the right to school education expressed in the law:

The Japanese constitution, in employing the term *kokumin* (literally, Japanese citizens) refers exclusively to Japanese citizens in relation to education (Article 26)¹, which has led to an interpretation that foreign nationals are not entitled to education and that the government has no duty of provision. Such an interpretation is not, however, conveyed in the English language version of the Constitution provided on the government homepage. This translated version is misleading, in particular in light of recent civil movements that have demanded that the term *kokumin* be replaced with *nanibito* (people) in order to ensure every child's entitlement to education, regardless of his or her nationality. (p.40)

¹ <http://www.japaneselawtranslation.go.jp/law/detail/?id=174>

Article 26. All people shall have the right to receive an equal education correspondent to their ability, as provided by law. All people shall be obligated to have all boys and girls under their protection receive ordinary education as provided for by law. Such compulsory education shall be free.

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When non-Japanese families come to Japan with compulsory-school-age children and wish to send them to schools, they must submit a request to the local education board because they do not receive official information about the school system,² whereas Japanese parents receive official notice from their city office as their child turns seven years old, based on the database of birth records. The information about non-Japanese residents is not always shared with the education sector within local governments.

All newborn babies in Japan must be registered with the government within 14 days of birth, according to the Japanese nationality law. If the parents are international, these children must choose one of the parents' nationalities at age of 22 with the right of 'Paused Nationality [*Kokuseki Ryuuhō*] until that age. This registration system, however, allows them to apply for Japanese nationality after choosing the other nationality. Japanese couples living outside Japan must register the birth at their embassy within three months, otherwise, the baby loses Japanese nationality. These children can, however, 're-apply' for Japanese nationality even though the parents did not register within three months.³

The immigrant children whose parents both are non-Japanese or 'newcomers' need to wait to be accepted by the local education board and compulsory education school. Although they can start schooling, supports for the medium of instruction are not always ready at the initial stage of the academic year, especially when they apply to the board and school after the school year calendar is set up. The Japanese school academic year starts in April and ends in March, and schools generally plan and fix their events and ceremonies in February at the latest. Schools can much more easily arrange for extra supports for immigrant children with the education board, because they all have time to coordinate the available resources, than school and the board set up the next year's plan. The academic calendar in different countries, however, starts at different times and immigrant families may come to Japan on a different calendar. This raises additional

² This is not the case for residents from South Korea and other Koreans with permanent visas. They receive the same treatment as the Japanese, based on the announcement from MEXT Secretary in 1965.

³ This is because Article 2 of the Nationality Law defines Japanese nationals as people with one or more following conditions: i) one parent who is Japanese by birth, ii) father was the Japanese when he died, and iii) both parents are unknown or they have no nationalities as the child at birth.

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questions as to whether the child should be accepted into a grade with Japanese children of the same age, or enroll in a different grade based on language proficiency. When immigrant children are officially accepted at school, they are provided with free school textbooks just as Japanese students are.

Compared with the U.S., which has adopted a multicultural framework at the national level, the Japanese education system has shown relatively little interest in addressing the needs of a diverse student population at the national level. It is the local governments, education boards, individual schools, and communities that have taken initiatives to manage and benefit from diverse communities, particularly in the areas where large minority/foreign populations live. Prefectural, metropolitan, and municipal government policies for the education of minority groups attest to this (Tsuneyoshi & Okano 2011:14).

Source: Maruyama, H. (2018). Challenges for immigrants in formal and informal education settings in Japan. Global Education Monitoring Report-Background Paper.

https://www.jica.go.jp/jica-ri/publication/other/175nbg000010mg5u-att/Background_Maruyama.pdf

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⟨Questions⟩

1. Write a summary of the passage in English.

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2. After reading the passage, what do you think of the topic education and immigration?

Write your thoughts in English.