



## The incentives of international mobility, recognition of foreign society and culture through trade and international aid

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### ABSTRACT

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This research provides empirical evidence of the influence of trade and international aid on migration. Using data on Japanese trading with African countries and the international aid provided by the Japanese government to African countries, the regression results show that higher trade and international aid both increase the attractiveness of Japanese society and attract more migrants from African countries to settle down in Japan. The phenomenon is significant after splitting the migrants into students and employees. Furthermore, the effects of trade and international aid are compared using quantile regressions. International aid better explains migration behavior when the number of migrants from the country is low, but trade better explains migration behavior when the number of migrants from the country is high. Such differences contribute to the literature by showing the recognition mechanism differences under different levels of social networks and foreign connections on a personal level. More people moving to Japan could lead other local residents to follow, making the social network effect stronger and individuals more connected to Japan. In such a case, the economic indicator, trade, could better explain the motivation of migration behavior. This finding could help the Japanese government develop better policies to attract highly-skilled employees and potential students to settle in Japan to alleviate the Japanese aged society problem.

**Contribution/Originality:** This research shows that international aid has a significant social and cultural impact on migration behaviour. International aid is a better full-picture measure of social and cultural acceptance than trade when explaining international mobilities. Trade is a good indicator only when the scale of migration is enormous.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

International migration and demographic mobility are often well connected with culture, social value recognition, and welfare expectations in development and international relations studies. Many migrants leave their home country and move to more economically developed countries since a more developed society could provide better social welfare and a stable environment with a higher income (Handlos, Kristiansen, & Norredam, 2016; Quibria, 1990). Many factors influence migrants' decisions about destination countries, and they typically have well-

planned migration with clear mobility destinations (Epstein & Gang, 2006). One key factor is how easily they believe they can fit in the new environment and the likelihood of successful job hunting to make sufficient income to support their families (De Haas et al., 2019; Salt, 1992).

Social recognition begins in a known foreign culture through some mediums and media (Zhang, 1996). Such mediums are products imported from international trade, cultural products such as movies delivered in different local media, or products realized by international aid. Cultural differences may reduce the aid effect, but cultural acceptance and understanding could increase recipients' development (Chang, 2009; Minasyan, 2016). Residents first recognize and then evaluate foreign social value. If the foreign goods and aid that meet local demand have a good reputation, they could attract more visitors and migrants to foreign countries because local residents' awareness will increase, and if residents have strong positive feelings toward and accept foreign social and cultural values, they will be more likely to go abroad (Harvey, Groutsis, & van den Broek, 2018).

This research focuses on Japanese and African relations to understand what incentives and evaluations attract African residents to move to and settle in Japan. The focus is on the social value and culture delivered by trading activities and international aid from Japan to Africa. Japan has emphasized a special focus on increasing its recognition in African countries and providing aid in many different ways to help develop African countries (Kato, 2017). The number of immigrants from Africa has significantly increased in Japan in recent years, drawn there by Japanese social values and other cultural acceptance. Many migrants from Africa first learn the language and study in Japanese universities to try their best to fit into Japanese society and contribute by providing their skills and services (Capobianco, 2018). This extra foreign labor supply alleviates the Japanese aged society problem and makes the society more inclusive (Shinkawa, 2012). This study contributes to the current literature by providing empirical evidence connecting cultural recognition and international mobility. Most current research on culture and social recognition is qualitative and based on development, social, and political study fields. We provide further analysis to understand the recognition mechanisms and show that perceptions of foreign culture and familiarity with foreign society in local communities encourage international migration. Furthermore, we argue that aid would trigger higher recognition mechanisms than trade, and self-selected migration mobilities confirm it.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows: This section introduces the general concepts of and incentives for migration and Japanese-African policies. The next section reviews the literature and proposes hypotheses. The data collection information and empirical methodology follow. The empirical results are analyzed in Section 4. Finally, Section 5 concludes the paper.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

Migration and international mobility are long-term plans with complicated incentives and high uncertainty (Tjaden, Auer, & Laczko, 2019). When migrants make their migration plan and decision, the most important factor they consider is the economic aspect and future income in the destination country (Mohamed & Abdul-Talib, 2020). If they have any foreign connections or relatives living overseas, such a factor could be an important consideration when they choose the destination country (Migali & Scipioni, 2019). The migrants also consider social factors, including culture, religious diversity, and other social values, when making migration decisions (Mayda, 2022; Mianabadi, Davary, Kolahi, & Fisher, 2022; Vicente Torrado & Urrutia Asua, 2023). Migrants have significant concerns; most want to melt quickly into the new environment after their arrival. Their past careers and career adaptability could facilitate their fitting better into the new society (Ocampo, Restubog, Wang, Garcia, & Tang, 2022).

### 2.1. Impact from Trade

The higher economic activities between different nations could increase their mutual understanding in many different social aspects. For example, for countries with similar religious beliefs, the religious network effect could

increase trading activities (Lewer & Van den Berg, 2007). More social connections and cultural proximity also increase trading volume (Bailey et al., 2021; Lee, 2015). From the aspect of education connections, high-level student mobility is associated with higher trading activities (Murat, 2014; Wei, 2013).

The medium is the message that delivers a country's culture, preferences, and social value, and it is propagated through trading between Japan and African countries. Some typical products that deliver Japanese value to African countries may include automobiles and electronic products. The high efficiency and reliability of the product earn a positive image of Japanese-made products in Africa, and this positive image increases the reputation of Japanese-made products (Cagé & Rouzet, 2015; Hudson & Jones, 2003; Velez-Ocampo & Gonzalez-Perez, 2019), introduces the Japanese society and firm to residents in African countries, and shows the value of working and learning in Japan (Jain & Winner, 2013; Mahroum, 2000).

Since trading is always associated with improved understanding, the first hypothesis argues that expanding understanding would attract African residents to actually move to Japan to study and work.

*Hypothesis H. Higher exports from Japan increase social recognition, attracting more migrants to move to Japan.*

## 2.2. Impact of International Aid

Aid policies and donation amounts are related to the culture and social values of donor countries (Ball, 2010). International aid and assistance are expected to influence and resonate with the recipient culture's change (Narozhna, 2004). Such donor-dominated considerations sometimes fail to successfully capture the true needs of the recipient country, resulting in frustratingly poor aid administration outcomes (Curtis, 2004). Some international aid can be more political and strategic interest-driven (Nelson, 2012). The high influence of donor countries can lead to cultural hegemony (Hattori, 2003), and to avoid such donor interests becoming more dominant, distribution methods and population needs are important (Hoeffler & Outram, 2011). The Japanese government offers scholarships to help meet the needs of local social and economic development in African countries. It prioritizes scholarship applications for African students if they express their willingness to study in Japan (Agyeman, 2015). According to Beine, Noël, and Ragot (2014) student mobility has a network effect, which means that the number of immigrants from the country of origin determines how attractive the destination country is. The high social stability, economic performance, and aged society seeking a highly skilled labor force are other attractions for young Africans to study and settle in Japan (Iredale, 1999; Oishi, 2021).

From the aspect of providing international aid and scholarship, we make the second hypothesis that such a Japanese international aid policy would increase the number of migrants from African countries coming to Japan.

*Hypothesis H. Higher economic and financial aid received from Japan increases social recognition, attracting more migrants to move to Japan.*

The push-pull-mooring framework could also support the aforementioned two aspects. The effects that push people away from Africa include political reasons, lower local economic activities, and civil instability. The pull that attracts people to move includes the good image of Japanese products, the safe social environment, and the potential working opportunities in Japan. The mooring obstacles include policy, Japanese connections, funds needed, and the settlement plan in Japan. The Japanese government's scholarships to African students perfectly solve the financial obstacles that prevent talented migrants from studying and working in Japan.

## 3. DATA AND METHODOLOGIES

### 3.1. Data

This research collects data from a variety of sources. The observation samples cover all African countries from 2018 to 2022. The number of residents staying in Japan from African countries is collected from Japanese government statistics disclosed on e-Stat, a website operated by the Japanese government to disclose statistics. The visa types of the residents further categorize them as employees and students. The data on exports from Japan to

different African countries are also from the e-state. The international aid data from Japan to African countries are collected from the statistics disclosed by Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The local GDP per capita and the education investment in African countries data are collected from the World Bank indicator. The distances between Tokyo and the capital cities of different African countries are collected from Google. Then, all the data are merged by country name and observation year to form balanced panel data. Table 1 shows the variables and the treatment of the variables. Table 2 briefly shows the descriptive statistics.

Table 1. Variable definitions.

Variable	Units	Symbol	Variable treatment
Number of residents	Number of people	RES	Number of residents in Japan from different African countries
Number of students	Number of people	STU	Number of students in Japan from different African countries
Number of employees	Number of people	EMP	Number of employees in Japan from different African countries
Export from Japan	Thousands Japanese Yen, LN treated	EXP	The export from Japan to each African country
International aid	Million USD	ODA	The international aid from Japan in different African countries
Distance	Kilometers	DIS	Distance from Tokyo to different capital cities in different African countries
Education investment	Percentage	EDU	The education investment in percentage of local GDP
GDP per capita	USD, LN treated	GDP	GDP per capita in different African countries
Sea accessible	Dummy	SEA	The country is accessible by sea shipping
The Sub-Saharan countries	Dummy	SUB	The Sub-Saharan region countries

Table 2. Descriptive statistics.

Statistic	N	Mean	St. dev.	Min.	Pctl(25)	Pctl(75)	Max.
RES	270	352.885	643.726	1	26.2	436.2	3,672
STU	270	45.359	65.389	0	7	58	408
EMP	270	28.881	50.022	0	1	26	319
EXP	270	14.860	1.966	8.731	13.689	16.128	19.669
ODA	213	36.443	62.255	0.062	6.451	41.683	369.158
EDU	183	15.809	5.520	3.002	12.375	18.747	35.006
DIS	270	14,740.420	16,387.590	9,568.860	11,344.610	13,723.820	133,367.000
GDP	260	7.382	0.958	5.379	6.646	8.119	9.732
SEA	270	0.759	0.428	0	1	1	1
SUB	270	0.907	0.290	0	1	1	1

### 3.2. Methodologies

The regression method explores the causal relationship between the migration movement from African countries to Japan and international aid. The migration movements triggered by trading influence and the cultural impact influenced by Japanese products in African countries are also considered. The association between trade and migration movements is discussed in that such association is based on new migrants' demand for products from their original countries. In this study, the trade happens to be more like the export from Japan to African countries than bilateral trading activities. The trade works as a mediation indicator of the latent variable of Japanese reputation, or the factor that affects the residents' acceptance of Japanese value in Africa. Further, such a value acceptance concept is extended to connect with international aid. International aid would be even more direct and influential than trade to make residents appreciate the help they receive. If the aid meets the needs of residents, it directly increases their positive image and attracts migration movements. From the Japanese perspective, there is a need to attract foreigners to Japan because of the problem of an ageing society. Highly skilled labourers and

someone willing to learn the Japanese language and accept and understand the Japanese culture are especially welcome. Such donations would be a great instrument to improve the local development and humanitarian situation and serve as a self-selection process, offering opportunities to those who prefer Japan and are willing to melt into Japanese society. The Japanese government combines the aid with university tuition waivers and other scholarships, attracting many African students to study and contribute their skills to Japanese society. To understand the heterogeneity, the total sample is classified into student and employee groups. Furthermore, the quantile regression compares the marginal effects of international aid and trade. The trade may experience income level bias. For example, higher-income countries may have more residents migrating to Japan since they can afford the trip. Then, the trade may have a higher marginal effect for the higher percentile groups because trade volume is also larger in the higher-income countries. Compared with trade, international aid is expected to be a more general factor that contributes to almost all different percentile groups when explaining migration's incentive.

### 3.2.1. The Impact of Trading

The first test involves understanding whether trading activities would increase the attractiveness of Japanese society and attract migration mobility. Equation 1 tests such a causal relationship. Suppose the residents of African countries are impressed by products from Japan. In that case, the positive image is expected to increase trust and willingness to move to Japan.

$$RES_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 EXP_{i,t} + \beta_2 DIS_{i,t} + \beta_3 GDP_{i,t} + \sum YEAR + \varepsilon_{i,t} \quad (1)$$

### 3.2.2. The Impact of International Aid

Equation 2 measures the causality of how international aid contributes to the number of migrants who go to Japan. Residents in the area might respect international aid that satisfies local needs and contribute to local development. Such respect, in turn, could attract residents, contributing positively to the number of migrants moving to Japan.

$$RES_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ODA_{i,t} + \beta_2 DIS_{i,t} + \beta_3 GDP_{i,t} + \sum YEAR + \varepsilon_{i,t} \quad (2)$$

### 3.2.3. Heterogeneity

The age group and the purposes of migration to Japan may be different. Many young migrants prefer to study at a university and learn Japanese to better settle in Japan. More experienced migrants may have a family burden and need to seek work opportunities immediately. Equations 3 to 6 split the residents of Japan by their status as students and employees to understand what impact trade and international aid may have on the two groups.

$$STU_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 EXP_{i,t} + \beta_2 DIS_{i,t} + \beta_3 GDP_{i,t} + \beta_4 DIS_{i,t} + \beta_5 SEA_{i,t} + \beta_6 SUB_{i,t} + \sum YEAR + \varepsilon_{i,t} \quad (3)$$

$$EMP_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 EXP_{i,t} + \beta_2 DIS_{i,t} + \beta_3 GDP_{i,t} + \beta_4 DIS_{i,t} + \beta_5 SEA_{i,t} + \beta_6 SUB_{i,t} + \sum YEAR + \varepsilon_{i,t} \quad (4)$$

$$STU_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ODA_{i,t} + \beta_2 DIS_{i,t} + \beta_3 GDP_{i,t} + \beta_4 DIS_{i,t} + \beta_5 SEA_{i,t} + \beta_6 SUB_{i,t} + \sum YEAR + \varepsilon_{i,t} \quad (5)$$

$$EMP_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ODA_{i,t} + \beta_2 DIS_{i,t} + \beta_3 GDP_{i,t} + \beta_4 DIS_{i,t} + \beta_5 SEA_{i,t} + \beta_6 SUB_{i,t} + \sum YEAR + \varepsilon_{i,t} \quad (6)$$

### 3.2.4. Education Effect

The original education level may affect migrants' status in the destination country. Higher past education and better learning ability may help migrants settle down quicker and encourage them to take on the role of a student when they first arrive, if their economic status allows or if they have enough scholarships. The learning experience in Japan could increase the likelihood of a higher future income. Equations 7 to 10 involve such causality tests.

$$STU_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 EXP_{i,t} + \beta_2 EDU_{i,t} + \beta_3 DIS_{i,t} + \beta_4 GDP_{i,t} + \beta_5 SEA_{i,t} + \beta_6 SUB_{i,t} + \sum YEAR + \varepsilon_{i,t} \quad (7)$$

$$EMP_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 EXP_{i,t} + \beta_2 EDU_{i,t} + \beta_3 DIS_{i,t} + \beta_4 GDP_{i,t} + \beta_5 SEA_{i,t} + \beta_6 SUB_{i,t} + \sum YEAR + \varepsilon_{i,t} \quad (8)$$

$$STU_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ODA_{i,t} + \beta_2 EDU_{i,t} + \beta_3 DIS_{i,t} + \beta_4 GDP_{i,t} + \beta_5 SEA_{i,t} + \beta_6 SUB_{i,t} + \sum YEAR + \varepsilon_{i,t} \quad (9)$$

$$EMP_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ODA_{i,t} + \beta_2 EDU_{i,t} + \beta_3 DIS_{i,t} + \beta_4 GDP_{i,t} + \beta_5 SEA_{i,t} + \beta_6 SUB_{i,t} + \sum YEAR + \varepsilon_{i,t} \quad (10)$$

3.2.5. Robustness and Understanding

The quantile regression regresses Equations 7 to 10 help understand the different impact factors for different amounts of migration of students and employees to Japan. Such evidence would extend and allow us to analyze the different impacts of trade and aid to attract people from countries with different amounts of migrants. International aid is expected to have a larger effect on the lower and middle quantiles. Trade is expected to have a larger network bias effect. This may explain incentives in higher quantiles. Since trade is a more important economic indicator, higher trade usually indicates a better local economy. When more people are moving to Japan from their original country, the economic condition of the local families must allow the trade to explain the incentive better. For fewer migrants, international aid is expected to explain more than trade to capture the effect significantly.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Impacts from Trade and International Aid

Table 3 shows the results of Equations 1 and 2. Columns (1) and (3) show the relationships between trade and migrants. Columns (2) and (4) show the effect of international aid on migrants. Both trade and international aid positively and significantly impact the number of migrants from African countries to Japan. The results support Hypotheses H1 and H2. Japanese social and cultural values are delivered through the export of products and by helping residents meet their development needs. The local people moving to Japan show that such influence is successful, and the local recognition of such influence is positive. The results align with the past literature reviews that value acceptance is essential for the uncertain decision-making of migration behaviour (Segal, 2019). The products present such value through trade. The results also confirm that the economic factor is one of the pull factors that lead to migration behaviour (Arif, 2020). From the aspect of international aid, the results differ from the early studies, which focused on the more macro-political and economic levels and mentioned that higher aid leads to negative migration flows (Lanati & Thiele, 2018). One of the reasons that led to such different results is that the sample of this research focuses on African countries. Many other factors, including social instability and civil conflicts in some African countries, urge people to seek better opportunities in other countries.

Table 3. Export and international aid.

	Dependent variable			
	RES			
	-1	-2	-3	-4
EXP	170.081*** (17.227)		170.921*** (18.719)	
ODA		4.125*** (0.646)		3.931*** (0.658)
DIS			0.001 (0.002)	-0.001 (0.002)
GDP			37.821 (37.959)	105.659** (45.245)
Constant	-2,213.231*** (266.270)	172.540** (83.292)	-2,518.870*** (370.134)	-581.165* (349.121)
Year control	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	270	213	260	205
R <sup>2</sup>	0.271	0.165	0.273	0.187
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.257	0.149	0.253	0.163
Residual std. error	554.771 (df = 264)	584.678 (df = 208)	564.655 (df = 252)	588.630 (df = 198)
F statistic	19.636*** (df = 5; 264)	10.295*** (df = 4; 208)	13.508*** (df = 7; 252)	7.602*** (df = 6; 198)

Note: \*\*\*, \*\*, and \* denote the statistical significance at the 1%, 5% and 10% levels; standard errors are shown in parentheses.

4.2. Heterogeneity between Students and Employees

Table 4 shows the heterogeneity studies if the students and employees in the total number of migrants are separately studied. The results show that both trade and international aid have positive and significant contributions to the number of students and employees who come to Japan. The marginal effect of trade and international aid is stronger for students' movement than for employees' movement. Younger people are more likely to move and seek their future in Japan. The other possibility is that younger students may find it easier to settle in Japan because the learning experience makes it easier to find a job in a foreign environment.

Table 4. Students and employees.

	Dependent variable			
	STU	EMP	STU	EMP
	-1	-2	-3	-4
EXP			18.478*** (1.881)	14.640*** (1.345)
ODA	0.728*** (0.055)	0.335*** (0.047)		
DIS	-0.0001 (0.0002)	-0.00004 (0.0002)	-0.0001 (0.0002)	0.0001 (0.0002)
GDP	2.898 (4.095)	10.387*** (3.535)	-5.335 (4.220)	5.773* (3.017)
SEA	4.592 (8.422)	6.676 (7.271)	0.651 (9.222)	0.282 (6.594)
SUB	4.430 (12.305)	-14.165 (10.624)	-32.277** (12.498)	-23.298*** (8.936)
Constant	-2.022 (34.885)	-56.676* (30.120)	-156.757*** (45.454)	-218.790*** (32.499)
Year control	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	205	205	260	260
R <sup>2</sup>	0.528	0.345	0.350	0.431
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.509	0.318	0.327	0.411
Residual std. error	44.913 (df = 196)	38.777 (df = 196)	54.434 (df = 250)	38.920 (df = 250)
F statistic	27.430*** (df = 8; 196)	12.905*** (df = 8; 196)	14.959*** (df = 9; 250)	21.045*** (df = 9; 250)

Note: \*\*\*, \*\*, and \* denote the statistical significance at the 1%, 5% and 10% levels; standard errors are shown in parentheses.

4.3. Education Investment and the Income Impact

The local investment in education has been added to Table 5. The coefficient of education investment is positive in Columns (1) and (3) but marginally significant in Column (3). This shows that higher investment in education could encourage students to move to Japan, but the effect is not strong. After controlling for local education investment, trade has a more significant marginal effect on employees than on students. The GDP per capita is positively significant for employees' movements but not for those of students. The more economically developed countries have more migrants to settle down and work in Japan, but the higher local family income gives students more choices.

4.4. Robustness and Quantile Analysis

Figures 1 to 4 show the quantile analysis of the impact of international aid and trade on students and employees. The horizontal dotted lines are the ordinary least square coefficients in Table 5. The international aid in Figures 1 and 2 has a significant effect in the mid-quantiles compared with ordinary least squares, but trade has a much larger effect in the higher quantiles. The understanding is that the network effect, which happens when people follow what others do, becomes more significant if economics and income allow them to follow. The

international aid effect becomes weaker when income is high, and behavior depends more on economic consequences than on value and perceived relationships.

Table 5. Education and migrants.

	Dependent variable			
	STU	EMP	STU	EMP
	-1	-2	-3	-4
EXP			13.037*** (1.766)	16.264*** (1.880)
ODA	0.406*** (0.080)	0.190** (0.089)		
EDU	0.697 (0.576)	0.267 (0.641)	0.871* (0.511)	0.502 (0.544)
DIS	-0.0002 (0.0002)	-0.0001 (0.0002)	-0.0001 (0.0001)	0.0002 (0.0002)
GDP	4.093 (4.029)	15.649*** (4.488)	-1.628 (3.411)	10.620*** (3.631)
SEA	5.484 (7.943)	7.949 (8.849)	-4.373 (7.231)	-6.700 (7.696)
SUB	8.356 (14.569)	-13.857 (16.231)	13.340 (12.629)	3.769 (13.442)
Constant	-19.237 (36.247)	-92.780** (40.384)	-166.564*** (39.663)	-311.230*** (42.215)
Year control	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	143	143	178	178
R <sup>2</sup>	0.222	0.196	0.299	0.413
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.170	0.141	0.257	0.377
Residual std. error	37.885 (df = 133)	42.208 (df = 133)	36.499 (df = 167)	38.848 (df = 167)
F statistic	4.224*** (df = 9; 133)	3.597*** (df = 9; 133)	7.109*** (df = 10; 167)	11.733*** (df = 10; 167)

Note: \*\*\*, \*\*, and \* denote the statistical significance at the 1%, 5% and 10% levels; standard errors are shown in parentheses.

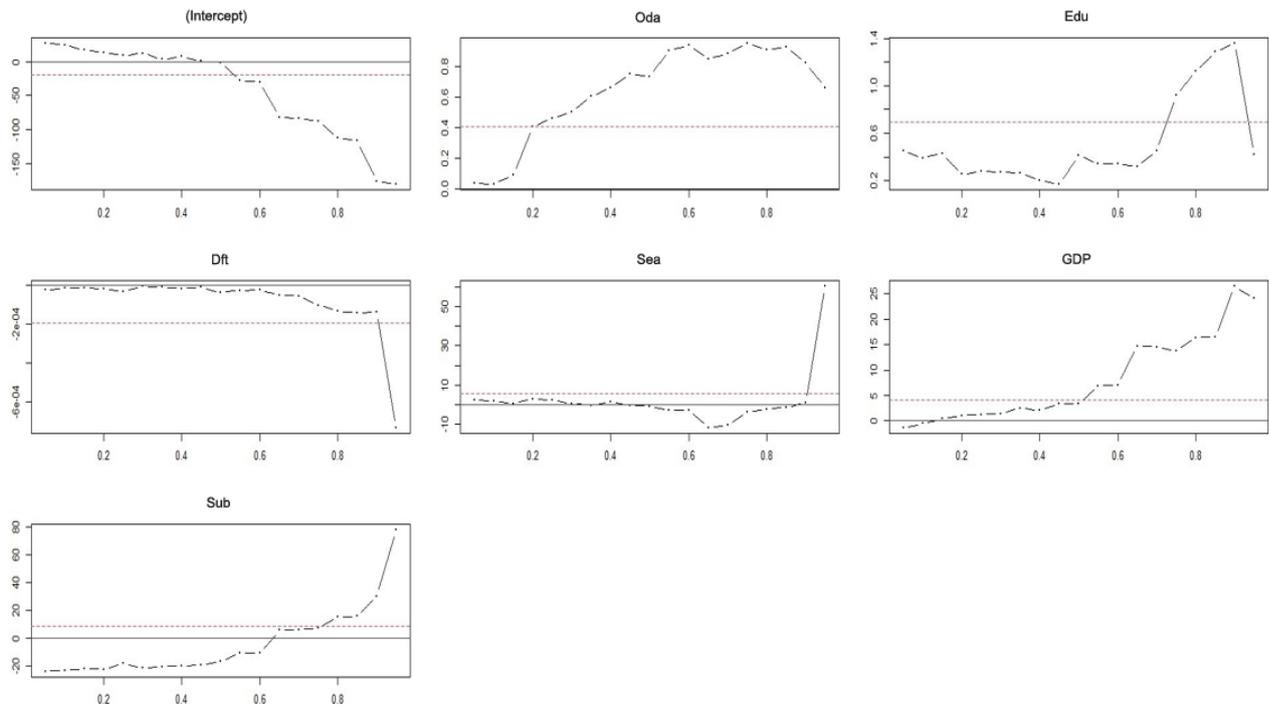


Figure 1. Aid effect on students.

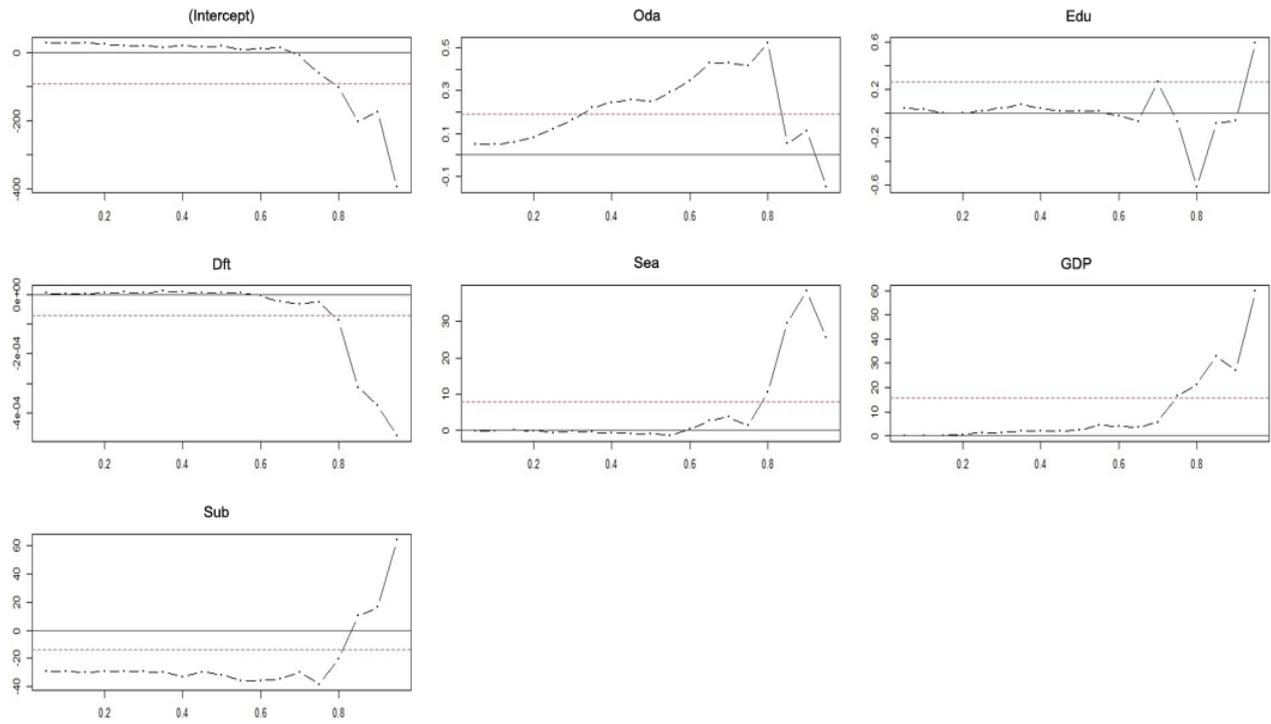


Figure 2. Aid effect on employees.

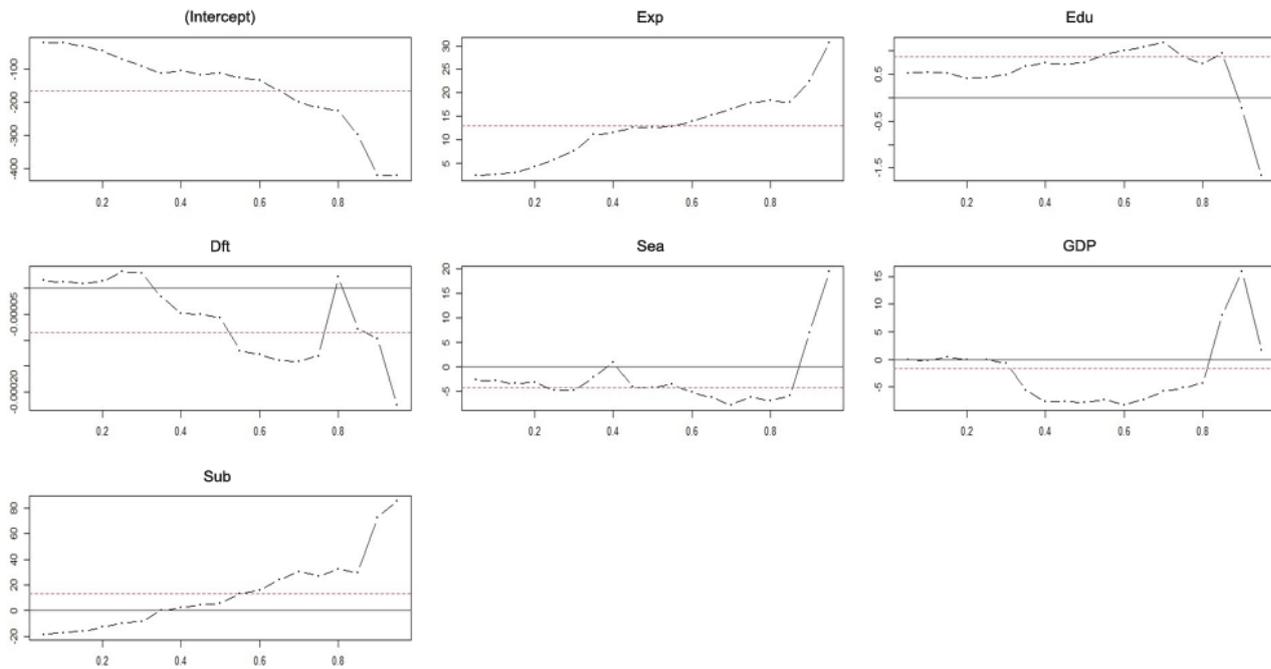


Figure 1. Export effect on students.

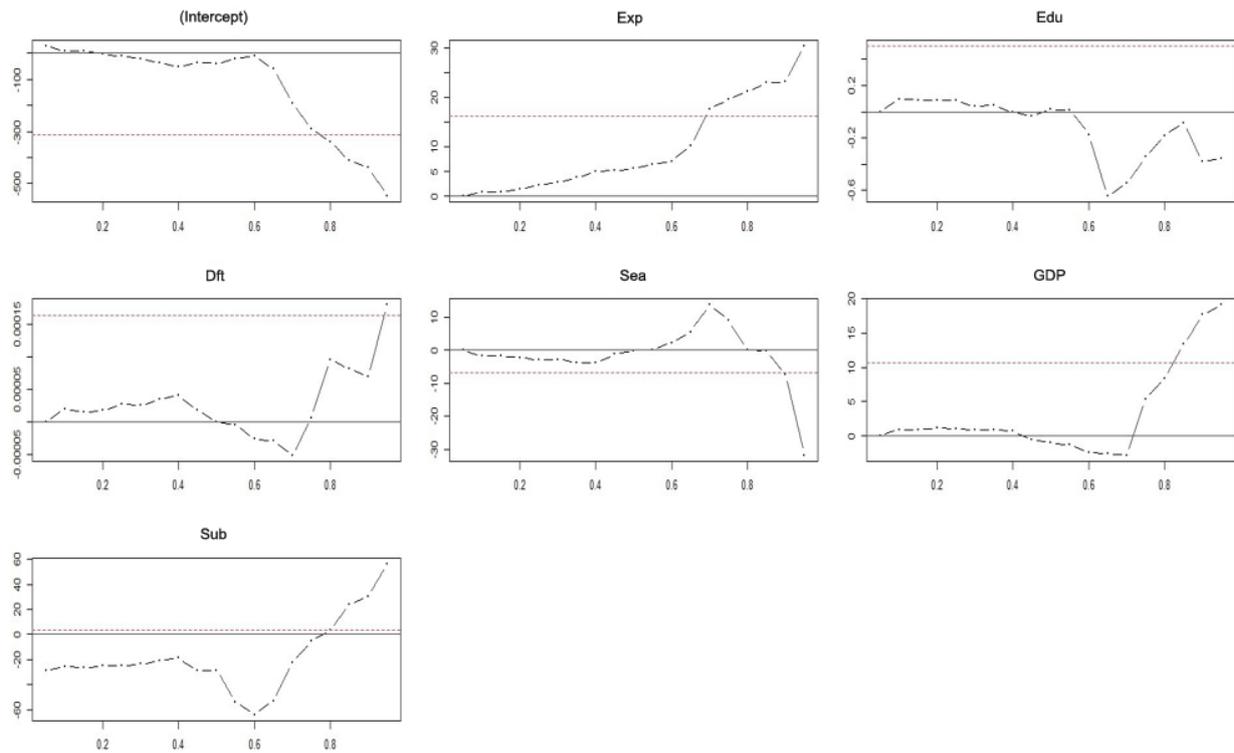


Figure 2. Export effect on employees.

## 5. CONCLUSION, POLICY IMPLICATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This research focuses on the empirical discovery of what attracts residents from African countries to move and settle in Japan. The results show that trade and international aid are important factors in promoting Japanese social values and culture for African residents and attracting them to move to Japan. International aid contributes to attraction when local economic development and the local country's foreign connections in Japan are limited. For countries with larger in-Japan connections and many migrants living in Japan, the economic indicator trade becomes a better explanatory variable. These results also indicate that local development and needs are both important factors to consider when providing international aid.

The policy implication shows positive consequences for developing the relationship between Japan and African countries. Japan tries to provide aid and help economic development, while African countries explore their demand for foreign investment combined with international aid. Regarding migration mobility, Japan anticipates an ageing population and labour shortage in a couple of years, pushing skilled labour immigration. On the other hand, Africa is experiencing youth population growth, with many young people seeking opportunities outside their home countries due to economic and political instability, which pushes for skilled migration to developed countries while fostering internal development to reduce reliance on external opportunities. Regarding recognizing foreign societies and cultures, Japan has traditionally emphasized cultural homogenization, which presents challenges in integrating diverse populations. However, a growing awareness of globalization and multiculturalism leads to increased engagement with international communities and cultural exchange programs. In Africa, efforts are being made to promote collaboration and cultural exchange across diverse nations through pan-Africanism and regional integration. With the rise of trade and international aid, Japan established the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) to promote economic cooperation and development in Africa. The focus is on infrastructure, agriculture, and education, aligning aid with African development priorities. The Japanese government declared approximately 4.1 trillion Yen in investment to be made in both the government and private sectors in Africa within three years at the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD). Africa demands more equitable and sustainable partnerships, moving beyond aid dependency towards mutually

beneficial trade and investment with Japan. They have various incentives for attracting foreign investment, such as offering tax reduction incentives to all foreign companies and allowing them to build infrastructure such as ports. These companies maintain control until they recoup their investments, typically through a 20-year agreement, after which control reverts to the government.

The limitation of this research is that the focus stays on the macro level without checking individual social structures and more micro and individual-level characteristics. Some personal factors in their home country could significantly affect their migration decisions. Future research could extend to what international aid can do to help foreign students and employees better settle down in Japan and contribute to Japanese society. Opportunities in the destination country are the most important factor when planning migration. Japanese-aged society would demand an even larger number of foreign laborers, many of whom may study in Japan first, looking for a job opportunity. Japanese social values and cultural recognition could help attract highly skilled migrants. It becomes more important to make an efficient policy to meet Japanese society's needs and make foreign students and employees feel at home. Also, how foreign connections or close relatives living in the destination country help the migrants make the migration decisions is worth exploring. The connection in destination countries helps the new migrants settle down quickly to start their new local lives, alleviating and lowering the uncertainty in the migration process.

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