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Determinants of Open Attitudes towards Foreign Nationals in Japan

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Cover Page Footnote

1)In this paper, I use "immigrant" and "foreign nationals" interchangeably. 2)This also indicates that multiculturalism is ambiguous (Colombo 2015). 3)A clear policy for multicultural coexistence has not necessarily been defined, even on the government and administration levels. In fact, critics argue that current administrative measures for multicultural coexistence are policies based on the "charity" of the majority and without institutional credibility (Kajita et. al 2005; Higuchi 2000). 4)Details of Hamura City are described in Ohtsuki (2017). 5)The figures were calculated based on the census (Statistics Bureau of Japan 2017). In addition, in the census categories, "Southeast Asia" is the sum of the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, and Vietnam; "Western" is the sum of the UK and the US; and "South America" is the sum of Brazil and Peru. India was added to the "others" category. 6)According to my fieldwork, many residents are willing to get in touch with American culture through an annual local event (the Friendship Festival), when the US military base is open to the public, or other events. In general, relatively good relationships have been built with Americans and the US military. 7)Details of the survey data used in this study are described in Ohtsuki (2017). 8)Based on my understanding of educational background in Japanese society, high school and lower was considered to represent a low educational background, and junior college and higher was considered a high educational background. 9)Household income was measured in real units of 10,000 yen. 10)Interactions with immigrants was coded as "Yes=1" and "No=0." 11)Recently, English has begun to be incorporated as a class in elementary school, and it is evident that import has been placed on English as the international lingua franca (MEXT 2013).

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Abstract

With a declining birth rate and aging population, Japan needs to open the door to immigrants to maintain its workforce. "Multicultural Coexistence," or *tabunka-kyosei*" in Japanese, is commonly used to describe the relationship between Japanese people and foreign nationals in Japan. Unfortunately, the definition of the term is unclear. This study defines multicultural coexistence based on two conceptions, namely "willingness for communication" and "support for or opposition to the equality of rights." The analyses are based on quantitative data of a sample of 1,823 Japanese persons and 292 foreign national persons (immigrants) living in the industrial city of Tokyo (Hamura City). Data analysis revealed that more than half the immigrants (65.9%) supported the most positive attitude "integrated coexistence." However, only 19.7% of Japanese people supported it, 33.8% of who supported "exclusionary coexistence." Using multinomial logistic regression, the author determined that age, English-speaking ability, neighborhood relationships, and interactions with foreign nationals were the determinants of orientations to coexistence for Japanese people. Based on the results, the author suggests that neighborhood and multicultural networks are key to promoting a coexistent Japanese society.

1. Introduction: Acceptance of Immigrants[1] in Japanese Society

With a declining birth rate and growing proportion of elderly people amidst the progression of globalization, Japanese society is in a stage of transformation. As the movement of people, goods, and money on a global scale accelerates and the fluidity of

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[1] In this paper, I use "immigrant" and "foreign nationals" interchangeably.

society increases, what changes are necessary for the "stable society" the Japanese have thus far developed? Although the impacts of globalization on societal change are nothing new abroad, in Japan—where ethnic homogeneity within society is high—globalization is the driving force behind much of the salient developments in the interwoven relationships formed between immigrants and the Japanese. In the country, communal relationships between immigrants and the Japanese is termed "multicultural coexistence (*tabunka-kyosei* in Japanese)." The term is widely used in academia and policy (Yamawaki 2006).

To fill gaps in domestic labor, there is an increasing demand to accept immigrants, mainly in the manufacturing and welfare service industries. However, there are also concerns about the divisions within society between the Japanese and immigrants. In other words, although a certain degree of demand for immigrants is recognized, there is no agreement in Japanese society on a specific way to coexist with them. In fact, it is often pointed out that the definition of multicultural coexistence is ambiguous, despite its frequent use (Ohtsuki 2013).[2]

According to the census, immigrants in Japanese society currently compose only about 1.5% of the total population. In terms of labor or human rights in the context of immigration, there are great differences between Japan and Western societies, which have accepted immigrants for a long time. Nonetheless, regardless of the legitimacy of arguments asserting the necessity of immigration or those taking a cautious stance towards the issue, it is necessary to actively discuss immigrant acceptance and settlement in Japanese society, which is experiencing a period of population decline.

Therefore, the study considers the question, "How can a healthy coexistence society in Japan be constructed?" In so doing, the paper first clarifies the form of coexistence desired by immigrants and the Japanese. Then, based on a quantitative analysis, I explicate the social

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[2] This also indicates that multiculturalism is ambiguous (Colombo 2015).

factors that determine orientations to a "healthy coexistence society."

2. Previous Studies on Multicultural Coexistence

Compared to advanced Western countries, the society of contemporary Japan is experiencing a declining birth rate and an aging population. An emerging issue is how to maintain and fill the gaps in the declining workforce. This poses a significant challenge to be urgently addressed by Japanese society. Following the Second World War, the Japanese economy and society have developed against the backdrop of ethnic homogeneity. However, a declining population, which makes social development based on ethnic homogeneity increasingly difficult, means that a different social policy is required. This implies acceptance of diversity and immigrants. In contemporary Japanese society, acceptance of immigrants has become an important task in realizing a sustainable society, to the same or greater degree than in Western societies.

On the other hand, even experts have not reached consensus on whether to accept immigrants. For example, economists often hold the view that although the acceptance of immigrants to compensate for the declining workforce may temporarily benefit the national economy, it would eventually exacerbate risks such as increased social welfare. Therefore, acceptance of immigrants should be restrictive. For example, Miyoshi (2013) simulated the effect of acceptance of immigrants on the Japanese demographic structure and tax/social security burdens, concluding that while accepting immigrants may work as a temporary stopgap for the aging population, it will not be effective as a fundamental measure. Instead, the potential elderly and female workforce should be leveraged. However, the dominant position in sociology in general and urban sociology in particular is to capture the process of immigrants' adaptation to a host society—Japan—while seeking a way of coexistence

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between the Japanese and immigrants not merely as a workforce but as social members (see Tani 2013 for example). Thus, in Japan, even academic experts have not reached consensus on the issue of immigrant acceptance[3].

Meanwhile, one major problem in the multicultural coexistence policy is that no clear definition of the term multicultural coexistence exists. Originally, the term became commonly used from the latter half of the 1990s through support efforts for reconstruction after the 1995 Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake. However, while now used more frequently, it is not clearly defined. Based on the high ambiguity, its definition (or lack thereof) has been criticized since the 1990s (for example, see Onai 1999).

Thus, how is multicultural coexistence academically defined? As Ohtsuki (2013) highlighted the ambiguity of the concept of coexistence, I summarize his main points here. Ohtsuki (2013, 2016) surveyed the numerous concepts of coexistence used in the academia until then, noting that in sociology, the concept refers to mutual "equality" and the "mutual exchanges" that unfold to realize such equality. Specifically, a relationship that balances equality and mutual exchange is considered the most progressive form of coexistence. Furthermore, balancing equality and mutual exchange dovetails with "everyday multiculturalism" (Colombo 2015), which focuses on quotidian interactions in which cultural differences are produced and negotiated.

Studies on the type of coexistence society to be sought, such as those on orientations to coexistence, are in harmony with research on attitudes towards immigration. In particular, in a study that tried to elucidate the determinants of attitudes of the Japanese towards

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[3] A clear policy for multicultural coexistence has not necessarily been defined, even on the government and administration levels. In fact, critics argue that current administrative measures for multicultural coexistence are policies based on the "charity" of the majority and without institutional credibility (Kajita et. al 2005; Higuchi 2000).

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immigrants, several independent variables were highlighted as effective through a range of data sets. Typical independent variables included educational background and interactions with immigrants.

Regarding educational background, some studies reported that people with a higher education tend to be more positive about immigration than those with a lower level of education (for example, Ohtsuki 2006). Others reported that educational background had no effect when controlling other variables (Hamada 2013). Consequently, definite conclusions have not been reached.

In terms of interactions with immigrants, various data analyses reveal that people with experience in interacting with immigrants have a more positive attitude towards immigration than those without such experience (for example, Hamada 2013; Nagayoshi 2013; Ohtsuki 2013, 2016).

Studies on the determinants of negative attitudes towards minorities have accumulated in the West. The "contact hypothesis" (Allport 1954; Cook 1978; Brown 1995, etc.) is representative of work contending that the experience of contact with outgroups comprising different races and ethnic groups can reduce negative attitudes such as prejudice and anti-foreign sentiment. Specifically, as Brown summarized, mere contact is not expected to improve negative attitudes, as it may increase prejudice. To reduce negative attitudes, contact must meet several of the following conditions. The contact must be actively recommended by public organizations such as government or education institutions (social institutional support); it must occur a sufficient number of times over a sufficiently long period (mutual acquaintance); both groups must be of equal status (status equality); and the contact must include a common task with a common goal (common task). However, it is difficult to assume that the contact experience assumed under the contact hypothesis reflects that of ordinary Japanese people and immigrants in Japan's highly homogeneous society.

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Rather, the assumed conditions match the social backgrounds of the West, where ethnic/racial minorities make their presence felt. In fact, it was reported that even contact experience in Japan, which does not satisfy the aforementioned conditions, tends to lower negative attitudes towards immigrants (Ohtsuki 2006).

In his analysis of the factors determining people's orientations towards coexistence, Ohtsuki (2013) determined that interactions with immigrants is a significant predictive factor, after controlling for several social position and consciousness variables. In other words, there is a tendency towards progressive coexistence if a person has had the experience of interacting with immigrants. In Ohtsuki's analysis, interactions with immigrants were measured using the question, "Do you have, or did you have any immigrant friends or acquaintances?" In light of the context of a Japanese society characterized by high ethnic homogeneity, even casual interactions based on friendships or acquaintanceships with immigrants can theoretically be interpreted as embodying a multicultural network. As such, having a multicultural network promotes a coexistence society.

The theoretical explanation that a positive attitude towards coexistence in society will develop through friendly interactions with immigrants in daily life (i.e., a multicultural network) seems optimistic considering that some Western countries that have accepted immigrants and refugees have become more restrictive in their approaches to immigration. However, in contemporary Japanese society, where the immigrant population is small and everyday interactions are rare, daily interactions as friends or acquaintances are effective social opportunities for promoting understanding of a society coexisting with foreign nationals. As the number of immigrants increases in the future, it is unclear whether such interactions will continue to enable the stable maintenance of the positive understanding of coexistence. At that stage, to promote positive attitudes, in addition to interactions based only on friendships, it might be necessary to engage in meaningful interactions, as contact

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hypothesis studies (Brown 1995) assert. Nonetheless, for a highly ethnically homogeneous society like Japan to aim for an immigration policy that protects the human rights of immigrants while accepting them, a policy that promotes daily opportunities for interactions among people is more realistic.

However, Ohtsuki's analysis model has caveats. First, perhaps because of the use of macro-level nationwide data, it does not adequately capture micro-level relationships between individuals and their local communities. Next, when focusing on a multicultural network, it is necessary to consider whether it is important that the network is multicultural or if the network with others is important, regardless of multiculturalism. Therefore, an analysis that compares ethnically homogeneous and multicultural networks is necessary. In addition, in the highly ethnically homogenous Japanese society, the Japanese language dominates. Given this, when considering the effects of multicultural networks, the extent to which people can speak foreign languages must be considered. Currently, the effect of foreign language speaking ability as a determinant for attitudes towards immigrants has yet to be tested. However, considering the findings of previous studies that people with a high education or experience interacting with immigrants tend to form positive attitudes towards immigration, foreign language competency may contribute to their relevance.

Possibly, human relationships in local communities may be closely associated with attitudes towards immigration. A micro study that focused on individual relationships and participation in local communities claims that territorially connected human relationships, typical in neighborhood relationships, are vital to the development of local communities (Ishida 2015). Furthermore, considering that immigrants account for approximately 2% of the Japanese population, most neighborhood relationships for the Japanese are with other Japanese. If territorially connected human relationships such as those in neighborhoods are key to local community development, interactions among the Japanese in neighborhood

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relationships may be a determinant of orientations towards coexistence, as are interactions between Japanese and immigrants.

3. Methods

3-1. Framework

In this study, I operationalize the highly ambiguous concept of multicultural coexistence orientation as a concrete index and examine its determining factors. While noting the aforementioned caveats of the study by Ohtsuki (2013), I adopt "the impact of a multicultural network on a coexistence society" as the theoretical framework, and examine the effect of interactions with immigrants on the multicultural coexistence orientation. Furthermore, multicultural coexistence is indexed according to Ohtsuki's (2013) definition, and consists of measures of orientations towards equal rights and communication, which were based on responses to the following questions. To measure orientation towards equal rights, if one answered, "I agree" or "I somewhat agree" to the statement, "Foreign nationals living in Japan should have the same treatment and rights as Japanese people," it was assumed that the respondent supports equal rights. If one answered, "I somewhat disagree" or "I disagree," it was assumed that the respondent opposes equal rights. Regarding orientation to communication, if one answered "I would like to" or "I suppose I would like to" to the question, "Would you like to associate with Japanese people where you live (in your neighborhood)?" a high willingness for communication was assumed. If one answered, "I cannot say either way," "I suppose I would not like to," or "I would not like to," a low willingness for communication was assumed.

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Table 1 Type of coexistence

		Equal Rights	
		Support	Oppose
Willingness to Communicate	High	Integrated Coexistence	Hierarchical Coexistence
	Low	Aversive Coexistence	Exclusionary Coexistence

As shown in Table 1, if the two aforementioned dimensions of multicultural coexistence orientation are binarized, it can be classified into the following four categories: integrated coexistence, hierarchical coexistence, aversive coexistence, and exclusionary coexistence. Among these, integrated coexistence supports the idea that immigrants and the Japanese should have equal rights and actively interact. In this study, the active coexistence of mutual interactions with equal rights is regarded the most progressive coexistence orientation. In contrast, exclusionary coexistence, which does not desire interactions and propagates the inequality of rights, is regarded the most negative coexistence orientation. While comparing integrated and exclusionary coexistence, I analyze the determining factors of coexistence orientation.

Ohtsuki (2013) also indexed the coexistence concepts shown above, analyzing them based on nationwide data. However, Ohtsuki's study focused on the analysis of orientations of the Japanese towards coexistence, and overlooked the orientations of immigrants. To discuss the type of coexistence desired for Japanese society, the orientations of immigrants living in the same society must be understood. Therefore, this study controls the area and analyzes orientations towards coexistence for both the Japanese and immigrants. Specifically,

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Hamura City in Tokyo was designated as the area surveyed and analyzed.

3-2. Overview of Hamura City

This section provides an overview of the surveyed area, Hamura City, Tokyo.[4] Hamura City is about a one-hour train ride from the heart of Tokyo, and is within commuter distance. In the 1960s, when the gross national product of Japan was the second largest in the world, it developed as a leading industrial area in Tokyo as the center for major automobile and electric machinery manufacturing companies. Until the latter half of the 1980s, the population exceeded 50,000 people and showed steady development. However, after the burst of the bubble economy and as Japan sought to break the vicious cycle associated with its "lost 20 years," large companies closed their factories operating in Hamura City. Furthermore, the immigrant population that rapidly increased in the 1990s as a response to labor force demand in the manufacturing industry also decreased. Overall, the city's socioeconomic situation is experiencing a downward trend. Currently, amidst the recession since the collapse of the bubble economy, there are no outstanding breakthrough measures, and the economic trend of Hamura City continues to deteriorate. Especially for a city whose development was centered on the manufacturing industry, the impact of the recession caused by the "Lehman Shock" was great, and a dire economic situation persists with the withdrawal of business establishments and closure of factories.

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[4] Details of Hamura City are described in Ohtsuki (2017).

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Table 2 Immigrant population

Area	Population (N)	Population (%)	South Korea, North Korea	China	Southeast Asia	North America and Europe	South America	Others
Nationwide	1752368	1.4%	21.5%	29.2%	18.2%	3.0%	9.2%	19.0%
Tokyo	378564	2.8%	19.4%	36.0%	11.2%	4.4%	1.0%	28.1%
Hamura City	1107	2.0%	7.7%	15.7%	21.7%	8.3%	37.5%	9.1%

Table 2 presents the immigrant population by location.[5] The proportion of foreign nationals in Hamura city is 2%, lower than that of Tokyo as a whole, but higher than the national figure. Thus, the "moderately" high immigrant population in Hamura City compared to national figures signifies that the current situation in Hamura City provides perfect material for discussing a "future Japanese society with progressive multicultural coexistence." As evidenced by the figures, many people come to Japan from South America (Brazil and Peru). As mentioned in the previous section, Hamura City is a manufacturing hub for industrial products including automobiles, and it is assumed that many of these individuals work (or train) in these factories. The adoption of a policy to grant nationality based on blood relations rather than a child's place of birth by the Japanese government gives preferential treatment to descendants with Japanese bloodlines, as far as the acceptance of foreign nationals goes. In other words, unlike other immigrants, Japanese descendants are not subject to work restrictions, increasing the Japanese descendant population from South America in industrial areas such as Hamura City. Recent years have witnessed an increase of immigrants

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[5] The figures were calculated based on the census (Statistics Bureau of Japan 2017). In addition, in the census categories, "Southeast Asia" is the sum of the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, and Vietnam; "Western" is the sum of the UK and the US; and "South America" is the sum of Brazil and Peru. India was added to the "others" category.

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from Southeast Asian countries through the Technical Intern Training Program, rather than Japanese descendants from South America. However, as shown in Table 2, many immigrants from South America remain.

Many immigrants hail from Western countries (the UK and the US), and because there is a US military base in the adjacent city (Fussa City), the number of Americans living in Hamura City is relatively large compared to other areas. Thus far, no outstanding incident or trouble with the US military or Americans has occurred in Hamura City or Fussa City[6].

As mentioned, Hamura City houses many immigrants from South America and Southeast Asia, and many from the West, particularly the US. Therefore, although the proportion of immigrants from China and Korea is slightly lower than that indicated by the national figures, there is no large bias in the national origin of immigrants in Hamura City. Therefore, it is considered an area fit for the discussion on the relationships between the Japanese and immigrants as a non-Japanese group.

3-3. Data

In this study, I analyzed data obtained through quantitative surveys on Japanese people and immigrants living in Hamura City. Survey data for immigrants were collected to compare to the distribution of coexistence orientations among Japanese people. The survey respondents, sample size, and survey period/method/response rate are as follows:[7]

* Japanese survey respondents

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[6] According to my fieldwork, many residents are willing to get in touch with American culture through an annual local event (the Friendship Festival), when the US military base is open to the public, or other events. In general, relatively good relationships have been built with Americans and the US military.

[7] Details of the survey data used in this study are described in Ohtsuki (2017).

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- Respondents: Japanese men and women living in Hamura City, Tokyo (aged 20 to 79 years)

- Sample size: 6,000 (based on random sampling using the voter registration list)

- Survey period: July to August 2015

- Survey method: questionnaire survey in mail format

- Response rate: 30.4% (1,823 questionnaires)

* Immigrant survey respondents

- Respondents: immigrant men and women living in Hamura City, Tokyo (aged 20 to 79 years)

- Sample size: 819 (census survey using the basic resident register)

- Survey period: November to December 2015

- Survey method: questionnaire survey in mail format

- Response rate: 35.7% (292 questionnaires)

For the surveys targeting immigrants, I extracted information from the basic resident register; however, at the time of extraction, the country of origin and language of the respondents were unknown. Therefore, I distributed questionnaires in multiple languages (Japanese, English, Spanish, Portuguese, Tagalog, Chinese, Korean, Thai, and Vietnamese), and made it possible to respond in any language.

The response rates for the surveys for the Japanese and immigrants were 35.7% and 30.4% respectively—both less than 40%. However, in recent years in Japanese society, the collection rate for quantitative surveys has declined, because of concerns over the "protection of personal information." Therefore, it is not unusual to obtain response rates of under 30% with mail surveys. In addition, considering that the surveys for this study were conducted in a

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suburban area of a metropolis like Tokyo and not a rural area, the response rate can be considered as relatively "good."

4. Results

4-1 Determining factors of coexistence orientation

In this study, I explored the determining factors of the Japanese orientation towards multicultural coexistence through a quantitative analysis. First, I present the distribution of the dependent variable, coexistence orientation (Tables 3 and 4). Although 292 and 1,823 questionnaires were returned for the immigrant and Japanese samples respectively, Tables 3 and 4 are based on 223 and 1,696 valid responses respectively.

Table 3 Orientation towards coexistence: Immigrants (N=223)

		Equal Rights	
		Support	Oppose
Willingness to Communicate	High	Integrated Coexistence 65.9%	Hierarchical Coexistence 4.0%
	Low	Aversive Coexistence 26.9%	Exclusionary Coexistence 3.1%

Table 3 shows the distribution of immigrants' coexistence orientation. Regarding rights, the proportion of integrated coexistence was 65.9%. At 26.9%, the second highest was aversive coexistence, which hopes for equality of rights but not mutual communication. Based on this, many immigrants support integrated coexistence.

As shown in Table 4, the highest proportion of Japanese people demonstrated a preference for aversive coexistence (37.7%), or the acceptance that immigrants have equal

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rights to Japanese people and the unwillingness to communicate with them as individuals. The next highest was exclusionary coexistence at 33.8%. As such, preferences for aversive and exclusionary coexistence together account for more than 70% of the responses, indicating that many Japanese people are reluctant to communicate with immigrants.

Table 4 Orientation towards coexistence: Japanese (N=1,696)

		Equal Rights	
		Support	Oppose
Willingness to Communicate	High	Integrated Coexistence 19.7%	Hierarchical Coexistence 8.7%
	Low	Aversive Coexistence 37.7%	Exclusionary Coexistence 33.8%

However, it is premature to conclude that negative feelings towards immigrants fuel the distribution of Japanese respondents' coexistence orientation. The reason is the language barrier. Japanese society is characterized by high ethnic homogeneity; therefore, Japanese is the most-used language in the country. From the Japanese perspective, it is difficult to converse in a language other than Japanese. Therefore, it must be considered that people are reluctant to communicate with immigrants if the interaction necessitates speaking a foreign language. However, despite the high proportions of aversive and exclusionary coexistence, and that the proportion for integrated coexistence was only 19.7%, there is little room to refute the claim that unlike immigrants, the Japanese demonstrate a circumspect attitude towards coexistence with "the other."

A large discrepancy is evident between immigrants and the Japanese in the comparison of Tables 3 and 4. While many immigrants support integrated coexistence, for the Japanese, the majority group, the proportion oriented towards integrated coexistence is less than 20%, while the proportion for exclusionary coexistence is higher. That many immigrants aim for

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coexistence with equal rights and mutual interactions, while the Japanese more strongly support aversive or exclusionary coexistence, suggests that even if ethnic/racial minorities and the majority group of Japanese both supported multicultural coexistence in Japan, a large discrepancy in the concrete ways of coexistence envisioned by the two would still exist.

Realistically, to achieve a healthy coexistence society, it is vital to promote understanding of a progressive coexistence society—or integrated coexistence society—among the majority, who hold more social power. Therefore, I examine the determining factors of the majority group's (Japanese) orientations towards coexistence below.

Table 5 Descriptive statistics of independent and control variables

		N	%
Gender			
	Male	899	49.6%
	Female	914	50.4%
Degree			
	Low	927	51.4%
	High	877	48.6%
Interact with Immigrants			
	Yes	674	37.4%
	No	1,126	62.6%
		Mean	S.D.
Age		56.57	15.646
Family Income (unit=10,000 yen)		537.87	389.101
Neighborhood（four-point scale; 4=greatest）		2.78	0.858
English skills (five-point scale; 5=greatest)		1.95	0.947
Third-language ability (five-point scale; 5=greatest)		1.36	0.673

Table 5 presents the descriptive statistics of independent and control variables, and Table 6 presents the multinomial logistic regression results for the multicultural coexistence orientation of the Japanese as the dependent variable. The reference category is the

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exclusionary coexistence orientation. As independent variables, I included "gender," "age," "educational background,"[8] "household income,"[9] and "interactions with immigrants."[10] Furthermore, the aforementioned caveats in Ohtsuki's (2013) analysis were addressed by including "neighborhood interactions" as a measure for ethnically homogeneous networks, and "English-speaking ability (self-reported)" and "third language ability (self-reported)" as measures of foreign language speaking ability. Similar to previous studies (Hamada 2013; Nagayoshi 2013; Ohtsuki 2013, 2016; etc.), for the key variable "interactions with immigrants," if the question, "Do you have, or did you have any immigrant friends or acquaintances?" was answered "yes," it was assumed that "there is interaction." If the response was "no," it was assumed that "there is no interaction." The reason "neighborhood relationships" is a helpful indicator for homogeneity within a network is that because the survey's target area is a region where the proportion of immigrants is only about 2%, neighborhood relationships for the Japanese are likely to be with other Japanese neighbors.

In contrast to the exclusionary coexistence model, age, English-speaking ability, neighborhood relationships, and interactions with immigrants demonstrated significant effects in the integrated coexistence model. Second, for hierarchical coexistence, age, educational background, English-speaking ability, and interactions with immigrants demonstrated significant effects, and for the aversive coexistence model, only third language ability had a significant effect.

Regarding age, younger people were more positive about coexistence than older people.

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[8] Based on my understanding of educational background in Japanese society, high school and lower was considered to represent a low educational background, and junior college and higher was considered a high educational background.

[9] Household income was measured in real units of 10,000 yen.

[10] Interactions with immigrants was coded as "Yes=1" and "No=0."

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In other words, as ethnic homogeneity is historically high in Japanese society, coexistence with immigrants is a major social change that revisits concerns over societal stability. Young people are more receptive to such changes.

However, regarding the positive attitudes of young people, it must be kept in mind that the immigrant population is still small. If immigration acceptance is a means to secure replacement labor, which has become necessary as a result of the declining birth rate and aging population, these immigrants will eventually compete with these young people in the labor market. Conversely, for the elderly, an increase in the number of immigrants who can bear the expanded demand for welfare services could be a welcome trend (Beck 2014). Considering this, the results pointing to young people being more positive towards coexistence may be an optimistic attitude stemming from the fact that thus far, they have yet to encounter actual instances of coexistence with immigrants. Therefore, as the number of immigrants increases in the future, possibly, conservative sentiments towards immigrants may increase as well, as already evident in the UK and USA.

Regarding educational background, extant studies hypothesized that highly educated people are more positive towards immigration than those with lower education levels (e.g., Hamada 2013; Nukaga 2006). However, these studies did not confirm the effect of educational background, as when other variables were controlled for, it was not statistically significant. In this study, highly educated people showed a tendency to support hierarchical rather than exclusionary coexistence, although the effect of educational background was not confirmed for integrated coexistence, the most progressive form of coexistence. Therefore, educational background has a limited effect on orientation towards coexistence and does not seem to promote the equality of rights.

The results of the analysis provided in Table 6 indicate that the ability to speak a foreign language, especially English, is important in promoting understanding of a coexistence

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society within Japanese society. The percentage of immigrants whose native language is English was not very high in the area surveyed in this study, as most immigrants came from South America and Southeast Asia. Therefore, English is not likely to be their mother tongue. As such, as a high level of English speaking skills is a determining factor for the coexistence orientation among the Japanese, English-speaking ability has more meaning than mere conversational ability with immigrants. I present two explanations in this regard.

First, it is possible that through acquiring the ability to speak English, people find positive meaning in communicating with those who are not Japanese. In the formal education system in Japan, people study English for six years: three years in junior high school and three in high school. Furthermore, at the university level, most require English as a compulsory course, and while instruction focuses on reading and writing, by the time college-bound individuals finish school, they will have learned English for nearly ten years.[11]

However, how to prioritize the four essential language skills has long been debated, and improving reading and writing as well as speaking skills has become problematized (MEXT 2014). English-speaking ability is tied to a positive coexistence orientation, which may reflect the possibility that the act of communicating in English with people from English-speaking countries may lead to positive attitudes towards communicating with people of different cultural backgrounds from non-English-speaking countries. Currently, the Japanese government has positioned English as the common international language, and is promoting the improvement of English speaking skills. The results of this analysis indicate that because learning to speak English helps cultivate international perspectives among Japanese people, the government's efforts to improve their abilities to speak English is a policy that could be effective in constructing a healthy coexistence society.

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[11] Recently, English has begun to be incorporated as a class in elementary school, and it is evident that import has been placed on English as the international *lingua franca* (MEXT 2013).

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However, the significance of English-speaking abilities may not always be positive. This is the second explanation. The international perspective cultivated through the acquisition of English-speaking abilities ultimately extends understanding of the common ground shared with Western society. Therefore, the positive attitude of coexistence of the Japanese may be an unconsciously imagined coexistence with immigrants from Western societies in particular. As mentioned, although the opportunity to learn English over the mid- to long-term in Japan exists, in daily life, it is difficult to acquire skills in foreign languages other than English, unless one voluntarily attends a language school or selects a second foreign language in college. Consequently, exclusionary stereotypes such as the "foreign language is English" and "conversations with immigrants are in English" may form. Thus, even if people with strong English-speaking abilities have a positive understanding of a coexistence society, they may have an inaccurate image of who the coexisting partner is. People may expect an opportunity to test their own English-speaking abilities with immigrants from Western countries. However, as shown in Table 2, many immigrants are from countries whose official language is not English, which may crumble their fragile "expectations" for English conversation.

Previous studies repeatedly emphasize that interactions with immigrants cultivate positive attitudes towards these groups (for example, Nukaga 2006; Hamada 2013; Ohtsuki 2013). In this analysis, interaction with immigrants was also statistically significant in both the integrated coexistence model and hierarchical coexistence model, demonstrating its pivotal role in promoting understanding of a coexistence society in Japan. I elaborate on the promotion of interactions with immigrants in the below analysis.

In Table 6, neighborhood relationships are a determining factor of coexistence orientation. These relationships tend to bring about integrated rather than exclusionary coexistence orientations. This relationship between interactions with immigrants and an

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increased understanding of coexistence with immigrants is not surprising when considering that both concepts contain multicultural elements. However, I emphasize that the effect of the neighborhood relationship found in this study is a unique finding. Here, the neighborhood relationships of the Japanese are considered as ethnically homogeneous networks, because as previously mentioned, immigrants compose 2% of the population of the targeted survey area. Considering the remaining population of Japanese, neighborhood relationships will inevitably consist of interactions between Japanese people. In other words, the interactions between Japanese people in the form of neighborhood relationships (i.e., homogeneous relationships) are a factor in forming heterogeneous relationships of coexistence between the Japanese and immigrants.

As noted by studies that call for the retreat from multiculturalism, the efforts of individuals of each cultural group to respect each other's culture while mutually engaging in non-interference may lead to divisions in society (for example, Colombo 2015). In this case, the homogeneous interactions between the Japanese presented in this study may result in negative attitudes towards coexistence. However, the results of this study suggest that increases in homogeneity help understand heterogeneity. A possible reason why homogeneous interactions had no negative effects on understanding heterogeneity may be because in Japanese society, where the immigrant population is small, an increase in immigration is not yet recognized as a definite threat. Therefore, as there is no threat because the numbers are low, in the future, if the number of immigrants increases, ethnically homogeneous interactions may lead to critical attitudes towards heterogeneity.

Another reason why homogeneous interactions have a positive effect on understanding heterogeneity is that given the backdrop of Japanese society's declining and aging population, personnel who can assume the roles of building local communities are drastically limited. After the Second World War, welfare policies were mainly run by the state or companies.

However, due to the long-term recession and declining population since the 1990s, government support for welfare policies has declined. Public organizations such as municipalities have engaged in policy changes that enhance welfare through mutual help schemes among residents, rather than public assistance (Ishida 2015). Because those engaged in neighborhood relationships are mostly connected to local communities through these relationships, the decrease in public assistance for welfare is a clear and present reality. Possibly, residents who perceive such crises in the local community accept immigrants as a scarce resource that could inherit the reins for the local community's future.

Either way, that interpersonal neighborhood relationships, which in Japan are homogeneous, lead to positive attitudes towards heterogeneity indicates that merely enhancing support for immigrants is not enough as Japanese society plunges into a new stage of multicultural coexistence. Rather, the results of this analysis suggest that it is necessary to simultaneously support improvements in the quality of life of Japanese people by promoting local community participation (i.e., neighborhood relationships).

4-2 Determining factors of interactions with immigrants

An examination of the determining factors of multicultural coexistence orientations determined effects for age, English-speaking ability, interactions with immigrants, and neighborhood relationships, as shown in Table 6. Previous studies verified the tendency for interactions with immigrants to reduce negative attitudes towards them. Therefore, in the following analysis, I employ interactions with immigrants as the dependent variable to examine the determining factors.

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Table 7 Logistic regression results: Determinants of contact with immigrants

	B	S. D.	Exp (B)	
Intercept	−2. 486	0. 404	0. 083	***
Gender_Female=0	0. 270	0. 131	1. 310	*
Age	−0. 022	0. 005	0. 979	***
Degree_Low=0	−0. 151	0. 140	0. 860	
Family Income	0. 013	0. 037	1. 013	
English ability	0. 609	0. 086	1. 839	***
Third language ability	0. 756	0. 114	2. 129	***
Neighborhood	0. 303	0. 085	1. 354	***

***p < .001, **p < .01, *p < .05

N=1297

χ^2=242.489

Nagelkerke R^2=0.231

   Table 7 presents the results of the logistic regression, which employed Japanese interactions with immigrants as the dependent variable. Gender, age, English-speaking ability, third language speaking ability, and neighborhood relationships were significantly associated with the dependent variable (α =0.05). For gender, men tend to interact with immigrants more than women, but this reflects the trend that in recent years, immigrants came to Japan for economic activities. Furthermore, Japanese society is characterized by a gender divide—typified by full-time housewives—in the labor market and domestic labor. Therefore, Japanese men tend to have more interactions with immigrants in the workplace. Furthermore, as many immigrant workers are engaged in blue-collar work (Kajita et al. 2005), Japanese men have more opportunities for interactions with immigrants than Japanese women.

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Regarding age, similar to the analysis above, younger individuals tend to interact more with immigrants than older people. This could be because compared to older individuals, younger people have more opportunities for social interactions in general.

Unsurprisingly, a high level of foreign language ability increases interactions with immigrants. If immigrants' Japanese language ability is low, then the foreign language ability of the Japanese becomes the only means by which to communicate with immigrants. Furthermore, a high level of English-speaking abilities is linked to interactions with immigrants, but not only with those from English-speaking countries. As mentioned earlier, among the immigrant groups in this study's targeted area, the proportion of European and North American immigrants—who are assumed to be from English-speaking countries—is low, with immigrants from South America and Southeast Asia accounting for the majority. Despite this, that a high level of English-speaking ability leads to interactions with immigrants indicates that for both the Japanese and immigrants, English is a communication tool used as a common international language.

Finally, I discuss the effects of neighborhood relationships. People who have developed neighborhood relationships tend to experience interactions with immigrants. As previously shown in the results of the analysis, neighborhood relationships, or ethnically homogeneous networks, is a determining factor of coexistence orientation. However, this relationship is mediated by heterogeneous interactions with immigrants, or multicultural networks, as homogeneous neighborhood relationships are a determining factor for multicultural networks, which are a determinant of coexistence orientation.

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 ┌─────────────┐              ┌─────────────┐
│ Multicultural │    ═══▶     │ Coexistent Society │
│   Network    │              │             │
 └─────────────┘              └─────────────┘
        ▲                      ▲
        │                    ╱
        │              ╱
 ┌─────────────┐
│ Neighborhoo  │
│      d       │
│   Network    │
 └─────────────┘
```
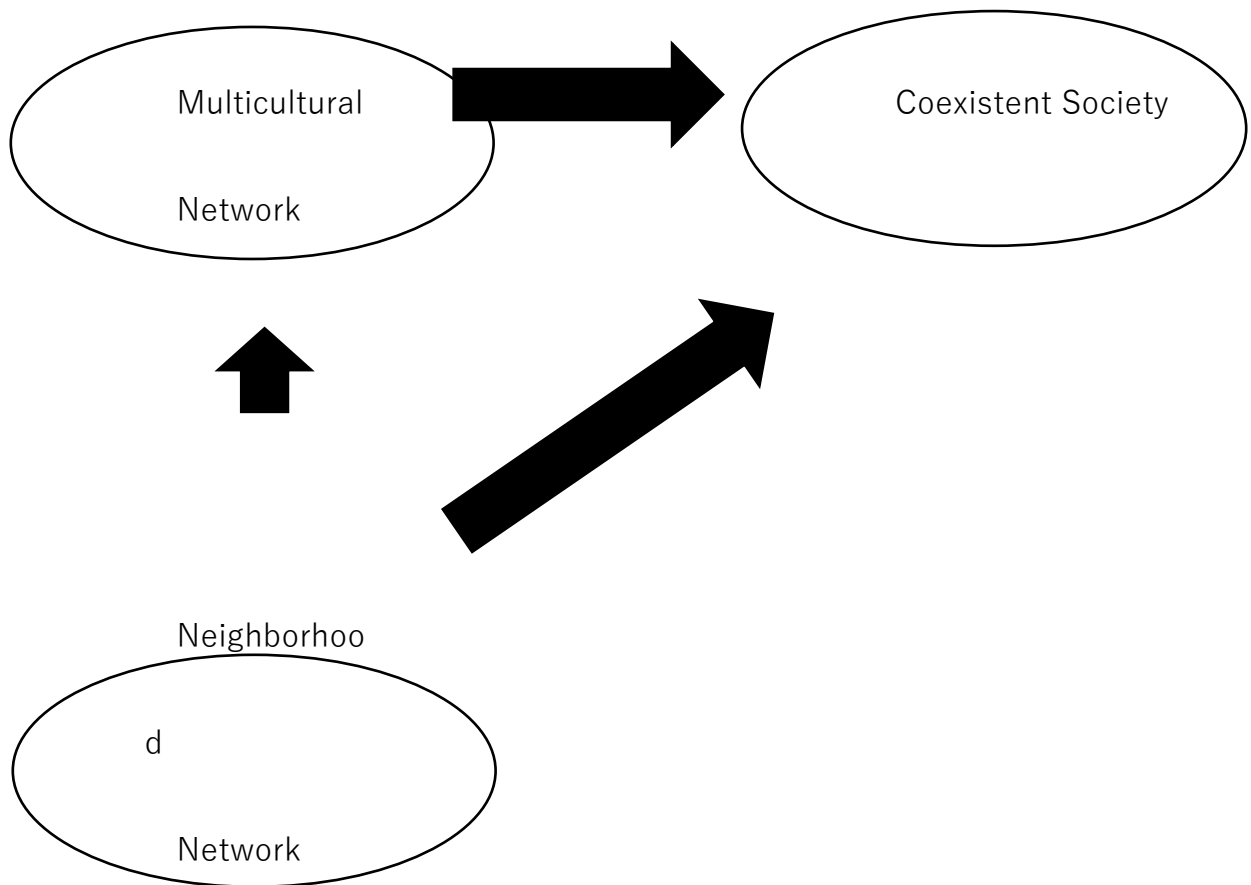
Figure 1 Towards a Coexistent Society in Japan

The findings of this study for interactions with immigrants are schematized in Figure 2. A multicultural network of interactions with immigrants and network of neighborhood relationships among the Japanese were identified as the direct determining factors of promoting understanding of a coexistence society. In addition, the network of neighborhood relationships is also a determining factor for multicultural networks.

5. Conclusion: From their problem to ours

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In Japanese society, which is characterized by high ethnic homogeneity, accepting immigrants is a major change that has emerged in tandem with globalization. The acceptance of heterogeneity in the form of accepting immigrants has redefined the homogeneity that is a fundamental aspect of Japanese society.

In this study, I examined the concept of multicultural coexistence—which is ambiguous as an academic and policy term—and classified multicultural coexistence into four categories based on orientations towards equal rights and communication. These categories are integrated coexistence, hierarchical coexistence, aversive coexistence, and exclusionary coexistence. Furthermore, I argued that integrated coexistence is the most positive type of coexistence society, and examined the determining factors of orientations towards this type. The results of the analysis indicated that in contrast to the many immigrants oriented towards integrated coexistence, only a relatively small proportion of Japanese people thought similarly. Although immigrants desired coexistence, many Japanese people were reluctant to coexist with immigrants. Furthermore, I highlighted English-speaking ability, interactions with immigrants, and neighborhood relationships as determining factors of coexistence orientations. The results of the analysis on the determining factors of interactions with immigrants indicated that homogeneous neighborhood relationships have a positive effect on heterogeneous relationships such as those involving interactions with immigrants.

The reasons Japanese people are reluctant to live in a coexistence society are beyond the scope of this study. However, one reason is that accepting immigrants solely based on the labor market is not attractive to most Japanese. As noted by studies that call for the retreat from multiculturalism, the acceptance of minorities can have negative implications for people who already suffer from inequality in the host society (typically women) (Okin 1999). Accepting immigrants as labor power can reduce the potential demand for women and those

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less educated. To guarantee a place for their activities, a passive attitude towards coexistence with immigrants is adopted. If this explains the passive attitude towards coexistence among the Japanese, it is important to rethink the necessity of coexistence with immigrants. In other words, the promotion of an understanding for a coexistence society, not labor market demand, protects human rights.

Currently, the Japanese government has not actively advanced a long-term vision for accepting immigrants (Kajita et al. 2005; Ohtsuki 2016). Given this, the acceptance of immigrants through the principles of competition may accelerate, increasing the discrepancies between immigrants and Japanese people in the meaning of coexistence. To avoid such discrepancies, the government must present a vision of coexistence from a human rights perspective. In other words, the social policy for achieving a coexistence society is not a policy for "them," the immigrants, but for "us," not as Japanese, but as fellow human beings.

Homogenous neighborhood relationships have a positive effect on immigrants as a heterogeneous existence, suggesting that a shift in thinking "from them to us" is key to promoting a coexistence society. In other words, promoting multicultural coexistence does not solely entail support for immigrants. Support for the Japanese such as improvements to their quality of life through improving their neighborhood networks is also an important consideration necessary for the promotion of a coexistence society. Thus, the transition from multiculturalism to social cohesion that occurred after the social divisions the former precipitated, can be interpreted as Western societies' attempt to transform the paradigm "from them to us." However, for a highly homogenous society like Japan, defining multicultural coexistence as "our problem" may be more difficult than it is for Western societies. Therefore, we must uphold human rights in our acceptance of heterogeneity, and focus on measures that support the realization of such commitments.

This study controlled the survey area, and then analyzed orientations towards the multicultural coexistence of the Japanese and immigrants. New findings were obtained along with many challenges. First, while limiting the surveyed area allowed us to present findings regarding the attitudes of the Japanese and immigrants living in the same area, the findings cannot be generalized. This shortcoming could be improved through a nationwide survey in the future. Furthermore, although this study presupposes a simple causal relation between an independent variable and control variable based on the adoption of the recursive model as an analytic tool, more intricate relations are thought to exist. For example, mastering a foreign language may be nurtured by interactions with immigrants, and an orientation towards coexistence can motivate this interaction. Surveys and analyses based on these intricate causal relations are also future tasks of this study.

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