

How Japanese former study abroad
students perceive this experience and its
career impact as a potential *Global Jinzai*

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Abstract

Fostering *Global Jinzai* (global human resource) has become increasingly important in the Japanese political and economic context with the country's challenging situation caused by globalisation and various domestic problems. Several policies have already been introduced and in particular the government has started encouraging students to study abroad with competitive funding in 2014. Although the Governmental Committee defined the term in 2010, *Global Jinzai* is still new and has contested opinions in society, as there are only few visible and successful examples of *Global Jinzai* in the public sphere. Furthermore, little research has been done to establish a connection between the educational outcome of studying abroad and *Global Jinzai*.

This study aimed to explore how Japanese former study abroad students perceive this experience and its career impact as a potential *Global Jinzai*. It employed semi-structured interviews as an exploratory method to understand what has been happening to two groups: professionals who studied in the UK between 2002 and 2004, undergraduate students who studied in the UK between 2013 and 2014. By investigating what they think they learnt during their studies abroad, how it affected or will affect their careers, how they perceive the competency of *Global Jinzai*, and if they identify themselves as *Global Jinzai*, this research explores the long term positive educational effect of study abroad and if it is beneficial in fostering *Global Jinzai*.

The results show that their study abroad has positive educational and career effects, especially on intercultural competency, English ability, tough independence, and academic skills and motivation. In comparison with the *Global Jinzai* definition in 2010, many of their perceptions were found to be similar. Although some of their perceptions of *Global Jinzai* differed according to their career histories, thematic analysis suggests that it is alike to their own career objectives and they are currently on the path to such careers.

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Author's declaration

This thesis contains original work carried out by myself under the supervision of Professor Chris Kyriacou.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

The main aim of the study is to explore how Japanese former study abroad students perceive their experience and its career impact as potential *Global Jinzai*. Many Japanese students study abroad for a number of reasons, but in recent years there has been a growing interest in how studying abroad can be beneficial for the Japanese economy. Government, industries and education are attempt to foster *Global Jinzai* (global human resources) by study abroad, and budgeting a lot for its promotion. However, there has been little research done concerning the correlation or causality between study abroad and *Global Jinzai*. As a former study abroad student who went to the UK in 2003/2004 when the number of Japanese study abroad student hit its highest (MEXT, 2015), I am not confident enough to identify myself as a *Global Jinzai*. This is because the only few visible examples of *Global Jinzai* in public are very successful people, who are very different from myself. Although many Japanese students had studied overseas by 2004 (MEXT, 2015), it is unknown where those returnees have gone. Without investigating this connection, study abroad cannot be an effective method for fostering *Global Jinzai*. Therefore, this study will investigate how Japanese former study abroad students perceive this experience and its career impact as a potential *Global Jinzai*.

1.1 Contextual analysis of Japanese Global Jinzai (Global Human Resource) boom

In recent years, the Japanese government and business community have been very keen to cultivate ‘*Global Jinzai (Gurobaru jinzai)*’ or global human resources (METI & MEXT (Global Human Resource Development Committee of the Industry-Academia Partnership for Human Resource Development), 2010; Yonezawa, 2014). The term is used frequently in various publications such as in economic associations’ reports (e.g. Keidanren, 2000). In response to such situation, the mass media, opinion readers and the English education sector have also started using this term in their articles and commerce. Since around 2010, several foundations and academic societies, which promote fostering *Global Jinzai*, have been established. It can be said that the current cultivation of *Global Jinzai* is now a fad in Japan. The background of this recent trend can be explained by two demand and supply issues; economic fear caused by severe

global competition and an increase in international contact; and the shortage of a courageous young population. By these two perspectives, this section will examine why the Japanese government and society have begun to focus on *Global Jinzai*.

1.1.1 Demand for *Global Jinzai*

(1) Japanese modern history of globalisation and the economic fear caused by globalisation

Japanese modern history started from the Meiji Restoration in the 1850s and 1860s. After the end of the “closed door policy” by the Tokugawa shogunate, the new Meiji government eagerly modernised the country in order to decrease the gap between themselves and the developed Western countries as quickly as possible (Helweg, 2008). This process can be said as the process of industrialisation and globalisation of Japan. Despite crushing defeat in World War II, Japan rapidly reconstructed its land and economy. By the 1980s, it had become the world’s second largest economy and, consequently, an “active member in the global community” (Li, 2014, p.553). The Plaza Accord in 1985 increased the exchange rate of the Japanese yen. In favour of reducing production costs, most of the manufacturing industry chose to move their plants to third world countries. The long term recession from the early 2000s has accelerated this movement. A decrease in population from 2011 and Japan's aging society has also contributed to this trend, which has included a search for new markets (Statistics Japan, 2015).

On the other hand, Japan seems to be losing its presence in the competitive global economy. Although its GDP has been second in the world ranking for 42 years, Japan started to lose its successful position during the last two decades. The neighbouring countries have been emerging; China, specifically, has taken over Japan’s former position. The International Institute for Management Development ranked Japan 27th in its International Competitiveness ranking in 2015 (International Institute for Management Development, 2015). Therefore, the Japanese government and business community have come to believe this shrinkage of domestic markets and global incompetitiveness are serious menace to the country. Major economic associations have consistently recommended that the government should foster human resources who can deal with this challenging situation (MEXT, n.d.).

(2) Recent increase in international contact and foreigners in the country

Coinciding with these economic problems, there has also been a growth in inbound foreigners in Japan. Firstly, the number of international students has been increasing. After the commencement of the “Plan for 300,000 Exchange Students (*Ryugakusei sanjumannin keikaku*)” in 2008, which aimed to raise the number of foreign students from 140,000 to 300,000 by 2020, the education sector has been very keen to recruit more international students (Study in Japan, 2010). Secondly, the deregulation of Asian tourist visas and the weak exchange rate of the yen has boosted the number of foreign tourists. A record high of 13,414,000 tourists visited Japan in 2014 (Japan National Tourist Office, 2015). Furthermore, the Japan Tourism Agency, through their has the Action Plan (MEXT, 2013), plans to raise this figure to 20,000,000 by 2020. The informal foreign labour, such as the Technical Intern Training Program, has also showed an increase in the last two decades in spite of strict national immigration policies (MHLW, 2015) (JITCO, 2015). As well as the overseas expansion of Japanese companies, these social situations are producing more opportunities for contact between Japanese nationals and foreigners. Consequently, demands for human resources who can deal with these situations have been increasing.

1.1.2 Supply of *Global Jinzai* students in Japanese higher education

Although the increase of international contact has created a demand for *Global Jinzai*, there seems to be a shortage in the supply side both quantitatively and qualitatively. The first obvious problem is the declining population which started in 2011 (Statistics Japan, 2015). For instance, 18 year-old Japanese population was only 1,180,000 in 2014, which was decreased 57.6% from 2,050,000 in 1992 (Cabinet Office, 2014). The diminishing population is mainly caused by the combination of a dwindling birth-rate and an aging society. Behind these issues, a complex background has emerged, such as trend of late marriage or stay unmarried, destabilization of employment, long working hour habits and developments in medical technology (Coulmas, 2007; Tsutsumi, 2011). Although warnings about these concerns had been voiced since the early 1990s, Japan has not yet been successful in finding a solution for the decreasing population.

Secondly, there is a current debate about the increase in the introvertedness of university students in recent years (Ohta, 2012). This debate was brought by two facts: an unwillingness of young graduates to go abroad for work (DISCO, 2014a) and a considerable decline in the number of students studying abroad. According to a publication by Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT, 2015), the number of Japanese students studying abroad started to increase slightly from the late 1980s, and dramatically rose in the 1990s. In 1987, the number of students was 14,297, but by 2000 this number had multiplied by five (76,464). However, after reaching a peak in 2004 (82,945 students), it has been falling gradually. In 2011, the number of students studying abroad fell to 57,501. The government and academics have been keen to find the reason for this decline and have been analysing this tendency (e.g. Funatsu, 2012; Ikeda, 2011; MEXT, 2013). Ohta (2012) explains the reasons according to the type of study abroad opportunity: long-term visits or exchange programmes, and degree programmes. For long-term visits or exchange programmes, he points out five possible reasons for the decline in study abroad participation: early start of job hunting, employers' little appreciation toward student's experiences in a foreign country, less developed credit transfer systems, less developed international education programmes, and new structure of Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) from 2006. At the same time, he gives six different reasons for the degree level study abroad decline: fewer children and an abundant number of domestic universities, rise of tuition fees in the USA and the UK, little socioeconomic benefit of higher qualification, increase of PhD degrees in Japanese universities, fewer chances for international scholarship, and short-term programme oriented tendency. Taking into consideration these reasons above, Ohta (2012) concludes the most dominant reason for the decline in both types of study abroad seems to be the introvert tendency of young people and in Japanese society in general. With a population of 127.3 million, the Japanese domestic market is relatively large. In spite of globalisation, there is a tendency for people to avoid risk taking and to prefer to stay comfortable in their own country. In addition, it is said that Japanese parents have become more overprotecting of their individual child as a result of a low birth rate. All of these issues have resulted in a generation of timid and less challenging students. In summary, the problems from the supply side due to a decreasing young population and their introvert tendency have begun to concern the government about the country's future, thus, an active discussion of *Global Jinzai* has developed.

1.2 The terms and definitions

1.2.1 The literary meaning of *Global Jinzai*

The Japanese term ” *Global Jinzai* (*gurobaru jinzai* or グローバル人材)” consists of two words: “global” and “*jinzai*.” The word “global” or “*gurobaru*” is a loan word from English which is well known after many years of globalisation. It is an adjective and is defined exactly the same as the English word “global”, which is “of, relating to, or involving the whole world, worldwide; (also in later use) of or relating to the world considered in a planetary context” in Oxford English Dictionary (2015). In contrast, “*jinzai* (人材)” is a Japanese word, which means either ‘capable person; talented person’ or ‘human resources; personnel.’ The definition changes depending on the context, but most times it could include both, because the difference between singular and plural nouns is usually not stated in the Japanese language. The term “*jinzai*” can mean both a single person or the pool of human resources. In sum, the term *Global Jinzai* can mean either global human resources or a globally talented person. As seen in government papers and academic articles, the commonly used translation seems to be “global human resources” (METI & MEXT (Global Human Resource Development Committee of the Industry-Academia Partnership for Human Resource Development), 2010; Yonezawa, 2014). Therefore in this paper, the term *Global Jinzai* will employ the meaning of “global human resource.”

1.2.2 The meaning of “*Global Jinzai*” in policies

The first official definition of *Global Jinzai* competencies by the government was published in 2010. Responding to the growing attention to *Global Jinzai*, which was caused by the boosted needs from industries and by the internationalisation of education (Yonezawa, 2014), the Global Human Resource Development Committee of the Industry-Academia Partnership for Human Resource Development (*Sangau jinzai ikusei patonashippu Gurobaru jinzai ikusei iinkai*) was launched in 2009 jointly by MEXT and Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI). The members consisted of eight executives from large companies and seven important professors from different universities (METI & MEXT (Global Human Resource Development Committee of the Industry-Academia Partnership for Human Resource Development), 2010). According to their final report, *Global Jinzai* are expected to have three categorised abilities and sub abilities as follows:

Competency A: Communication ability in a foreign language
(particularly in English, which is widely used in the world)

Competency B: Ability to understand and make use of different cultures

i. To take action while being conscious of cultural differences, such as differences in values and communicative methods (= Cultural differences)

ii. To not judge cultural differences as good or bad, but to be interested in and understand such differences and thus be flexible in action

iii. To recognise the strengths of diverse people with cultural differences and to use such strengths for the creation of new values through a synergetic effect

Competency C: Fundamental competencies for working persons

i. Ability to step forward (action)

Ability to take a step forward and try patiently even after failure

Independence / Ability to take actions / Ability to motivate others

ii. Ability to think through the issues (thinking)

Ability to ask questions and think well

Ability to identify problems / Ability to plan/ Ability to create

iii. Ability to work in a team (teamwork)

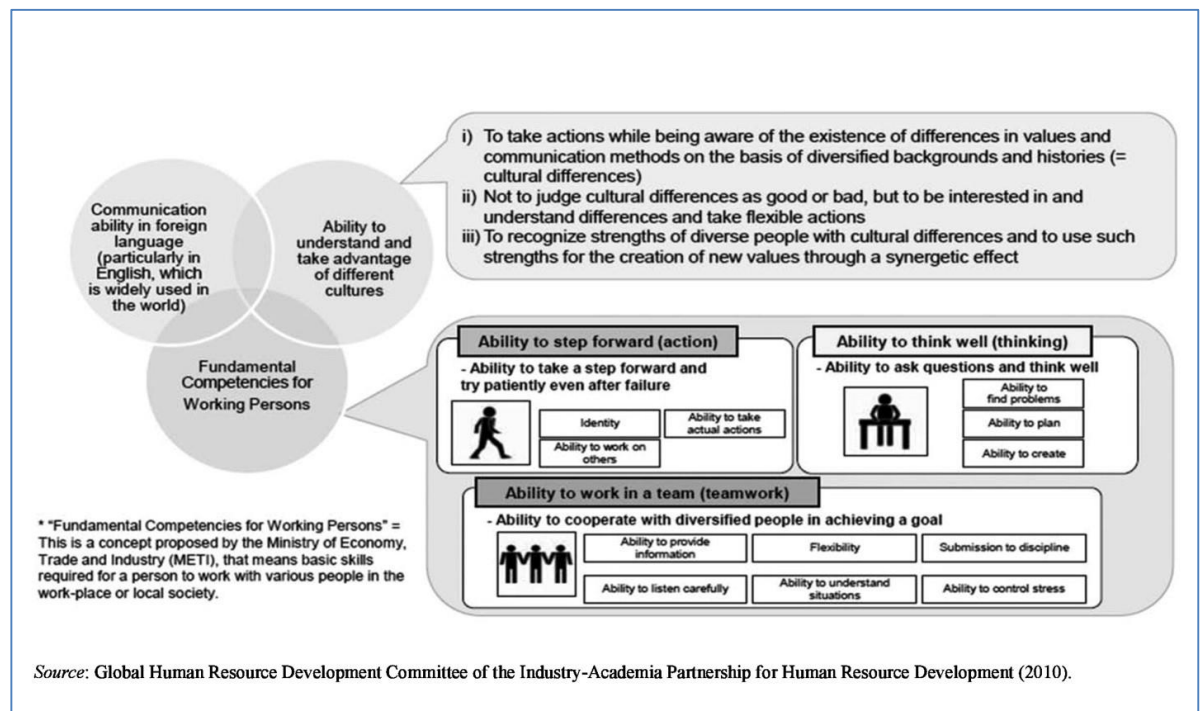
Ability to cooperate with diversified people in achieving a goal

Ability to provide information / Flexibility/ Submission to discipline/

Ability to listen carefully / Ability to understand situations/ Ability to control stress

Based on Global Human Resource Development Committee (METI & MEXT (Global Human Resource Development Committee of the Industry-Academia Partnership for Human Resource Development), 2010) and Yonezawa (2014)

Figure 1.1 Global Jinzai definition by the Global Human Resource Development Committee in 2010 translated by Yonezawa (2014, p.38)



Another major definition was published by the Global Human Resource Development Promotion Conference (Gurobaru jinzai ikusei suishin kaigi) under the Prime Minister’s cabinet in 2012, as part of the national strategic plan by the Democratic Party of Japan regime from 2009. However, this paper will use the definition by the Global Human Resource Development Committee in that it was posed by the actual producers and demanders of *Global Jinzai* for the first time.

1.2.3 Policy and practices

In order to foster *Global Jinzai*, several ministries of the Japanese government have jointly introduced policies and projects in various fields (Cabinet Secretariat, 2014). The core of these movements is globalisation of education. Firstly, after 2002 the internationalisation or globalisation of universities and high schools has been encouraged by a lot of competitive funding from MEXT (Ohta, 2006). Responding to the government’s and industry’s needs, and for their financial and honourable strategies, the education sector has eagerly been taking part of the change. For instance, as seen from MEXT’s intention with regards to the ‘Top Global University Project’ in 2014, Japanese universities are now being required to be ‘Global Universities’, which can educate students to become *Global Jinzai* (MEXT, 2012; Rivers, 2010). To fulfil this demand,

universities are focusing on developing study abroad programmes, increasing the number of incoming international students, and enhancing internationalisation at home. Secondly, in order to overcome the weakness of foreign language communication ability, improvements in English education has been introduced. As an eventful change, a new national curriculum which included English learning activities for primary school children was enforced in the 2011 academic year (Takeuchi, 2012). Thirdly, to create the global atmosphere and competitive learning environment for Japanese youth, the government and educational sectors are planning to welcome international students for secondary and higher education. This project was introduced after the completion of the previous project of 100,000 students, and now their aim is 300,000 students by 2020 (Study in Japan Comprehensive Guide, 2010). Finally, they encourage ambitious students to go abroad for studying or to join intercultural communication activities with scholarships. Most importantly, the project named “TOBITATE Young Ambassador Program” was started in 2014. By 2020, the government aims to increase the number of study abroad students to 120,000 in universities and 60,000 in high schools. (Chikara, Project, Promotion, Human, & Development, 2015; MEXT, 2014).

Besides the public sectors, there has been quick change within private sector as well in the last few years. For instance, new corporations have emerged and are now offering consultations and trainings to enhance their employees into becoming global human resources. Overall, it can be said that the academia and business communities in Japan are now attempting to develop global human resources led by government policies.

1.2.4 The meaning of study abroad

Study abroad is another important term in this research. Kinginger (2009) defines it as ‘a temporary sojourn of pre-defined duration, undertaken for educational purposes’ (p.11). The term will be used based on the definition as overseas living and studying experience of university students for the purpose of either language acquisition or academic study. By now, thousands of research and theoretical frameworks of study abroad have been established. Study abroad can be divided into some different models in terms of the programme’s characteristics. Three primary models by Hanouille and Leuner (2001), i.e. Island programme, Direct enrolment, and Hybrid programme, have been the most supported frameworks for years. According to Hanouille and Leuner (2001) as cited in Kehl and Morris (2007), the definitions of each programme are as follows:

1) Direct enrollment: This type of program entails direct placement of U.S. students into the host country's post-secondary educational system. This type of study abroad program may include either one-way or a more traditional two-way exchange of students and/or faculty. Faculty from the host institution teach the courses and students are housed independently or with students from the host institution;

2) Hybrid program: This type of study abroad programme includes opportunities for students to be enrolled directly in courses of the host institution, as well as in courses taught by faculty from the home university. Housing options may include home stays, hostels, or housing leased or owned by either the home or host countries;

3) Island program: This type of study abroad program is often thought of as a self-contained academic program. Students take courses alongside other students from the US institution. Faculty may be employed by and travel from the home institution, or be hired locally. Typically, classrooms are outside any local host university, with English as the language of instruction — with the exception of foreign language courses.

Kehl and Morris (2007, p.68)

It is now believed to be important to take these type differences into account in terms of assessment of study abroad, because they directly affect the students' outcome. Although Williamson claimed the developed version of these with the fourth model "Field-based programme" (2008), the three models of Haunouille and Leuner are still supported and used in studies carried out by many other scholars. Therefore, this research follows their division of programmes.

1.3 The main aim of the study and research questions

In spite of the growing interest in the *Global Jinzai* development, there are some questions with which to be concerned. Firstly, there is not a solid consensus on the definition of *Global Jinzai* and what competencies they are expected to possess among each level of society. A wide range of notions and opinions are seen in politics, industry, academia, and independent sources. Several different definitions have appeared in government reports (METI & MEXT, 2010; MEXT, 2011; MHLW, 2012; Prime Minister's Cabinet, 2012) and few outstanding individuals express their various opinions online. Despite the lack of consensus, some parts of the society are quickly responding to the appeal of *Global Jinzai* discourse.

A new government policy started to send students overseas with scholarships (MEXT, 2014), believing that study abroad is a device for cultivating *Global Jinzai*. As discussed

earlier, the term *Global Jinzai* itself contains the expectation for global experience, so any kind of international experience could be one of the essential requirements for *Global Jinzai*. However, there seems to be a shortage of *Global Jinzai* (Nakanome, 2015), although it has been more than 10 years since the number of study abroad students hit the peak in 2004 (MEXT, 2015). Have they gone somewhere or did they not succeed in transforming to *Global Jinzai*? It is necessary to investigate if study abroad contributes to the development of *Global Jinzai*, so that a clear connection between the two can be established.

To do so, it is vital to assess the long-term effect of study abroad from the *Global Jinzai* development perspective. This is because the term “Jinzai” implies human resource in the labour market. In other words, younger university students who have just returned from studying abroad are not included. At the stage of job hunting, they become to be recognised as “Jinzai,” and it will continue until they retire. In this respect, it is important to look at whether their abilities gained by studying abroad last long and whether they have been meaningful for the returnees’ careers. In addition, young people who are about to enter the labour market are hopefully willing to utilise these abilities in their future jobs. However, few studies have been conducted to follow these. Moreover, no qualitative research has scrutinised returnees’ perception of their competencies, career and *Global Jinzai*. Therefore, the main aim of the study is to explore how Japanese former study abroad students perceive this experience and its career impact as a potential *Global Jinzai*. The actual research questions were set as follows:

- 1) *How do former study abroad students perceive the effect of the experience of studying abroad on their career?*
 - a. *What do they consider they learnt during study abroad?*
 - b. *How willing are students to make use of their study abroad experience in their careers?*
 - c. *How do professionals perceive the effect of study abroad experience on their career?*
 - d. *What roles do Japanese employers expect their former study abroad students to take perform in their organization?*
- 2) *What does “Global Jinzai” mean in terms of former study abroad students’ perception?*
 - a. *What kind of competences are they required to have?*
 - b. *Are they similar to or different from the Government definition?*
 - c. *Should Global Jinzai be cultivated? And why?*
- 3) *Are former study abroad students Global Jinzai or potential candidates for it?*
 - a. *Do they perceive themselves as Global Jinzai?*
 - b. *Do the professionals think their bosses and employers perceive them as such?*
 - c. *In comparison with the definition of Global Jinzai and what they say they’ve learnt are applicable?*

1.4 Research methodology

This research employed semi-structured interviews as an exploratory method in order to investigate what had been happening to two groups of former study abroad students and how they perceive it. One group consisted of students who were about to start job hunting after their return from a UK university and the other group consisted of professionals who studied in the UK more than 8 years ago and had worked for more than 5 years in their career. Interview questions were designed to understand what they thought they learnt while studying abroad, how it affected their career as a potential *Global Jinzai*, and what does *Global Jinzai* mean to them. Data were collected in January and February 2015 mainly in Japan. Findings were also examined in light of the *Global Jinzai* definition by the Global Human Resource Development Committee of the Industry-Academia Partnership for Human Resource Development in 2010.

1.5 Overview of thesis

Following this introduction, chapter 2 provides the background information and literature review for the present study in order to give insight. It is presented from three different perspectives: the diverse interpretation of *Global Jinzai* among Japanese society, the connection between study abroad and *Global Jinzai*, and the long term effect of study abroad. Chapter 3 will show the detail of the research design used in this study. It includes the review of the aims of the study and research questions and an overview of study design. The main method used for this study, the semi-structured interview, will be reviewed and described. Then the details of data collection and analysis will be explained. It also outlines the procedures followed in regard to ethical considerations, data collection, data entry, and data analysis. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 present the key findings in accordance with each research question. Firstly, chapter 4 reports how former study abroad students perceive the effect of the experience of studying abroad on their career. Secondly, chapter 5 considers what *Global Jinzai* means in terms of former study abroad students' perception. Then, chapter 6 answers if these former study abroad students are *Global Jinzai* or potential candidates for it. The last chapter will outline the whole study and then draw conclusions. The limitations of the study are also considered and recommendations are given for further research.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

Based on the background explained in chapter 1, this chapter will give an overview of both the theory and empirical data which is relevant to the present study. It will investigate the arguments around *Global Jinzai* (global human resource) and studying abroad according to three different issues: a diverse critique of the *Global Jinzai* boom in Japan, the connection between studying abroad and *Global Jinzai*, and the long term impact of studying abroad.

2.1 Diverse critiques of the Global Jinzai boom in Japan

The term *Global Jinzai* is frequently used in Japanese society. In spite of the existence of a government definition, the argument concerning *Global Jinzai* is still ongoing (JICA, 2013; Matsushima, 2011; Nakanome, 2015) and the term has very diverse interpretations. Some believe that *Global Jinzai* refers to a person who can speak English and deal with international affairs, while others think this person must possess other specific skills and knowledge of their expertise (e.g. Matsushima, 2011; Ono, 2013). Examples of *Global Jinzai* usage can frequently be seen in advertisements, such as for private English language schools and institutes, human resource agencies, and universities. However, several academics and business leaders with foreign experience criticise the blind followers of the recent boom in *Global Jinzai*, especially from the perspective of English education. Having a sceptical opinion about English can sometimes be seen as a response to the public's unconditional English oriented mind-set or English myth. Matsushima (2011) notes the existence of an English oriented atmosphere in society in line with *Global Jinzai* cultivation, which has been generated by several policies introduced by both the public and private sectors. For instance the "Global Human Resource Development Committee of the Industry-Academia Partnership for Human Resource Development" established by MEXT and METI in 2009, led to MEXT introducing English as a compulsory subject in state primary schools in the 2011 academic year. Following that, from 2013, English subject classes in state high schools were required to be conducted in English. Some influential Japanese companies such as Rakuten and FAST RETAILING decided in 2010 to use English as their official language in their companies. As a result, several other large companies introduced new recruitment or promotion policies which required a certain score in the

Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC). Matsushima (2011) states that these changes seem to have created a situation in which people believe English is significant and necessary for employees.

2.1.2 Diverse critiques across the Internet

To understand the wide variety of critiques of *Global Jinzai* in society, the results of a Google search were analysed. On 21st July 2015, a Google search estimated 2,330,000 results for the Japanese word “*Global Jinzai (gurobaru jinzai or グローバル人材)*” The first thirty results came from the following websites.

Table 2.1 : The first 30 results of a Google search of “Global Jinzai (グローバル人材)” on 21st July 2015

Type of website	Amount
Independent source, such as blogs written by an individual or report of an interview or discussion in different types of well-known organisations or the media	8
Website of the government or related institution, which explain their policies and projects	7
Website of university for outreach	6
New company or corporation which offers consultation or training for fostering <i>Global Jinzai</i>	4
A new academic society	2
A book in an online book shop	1
Web dictionary	1
New networking project of a prefecture	1

There were several notable points. The first to be observed is that independent sources such as blog articles written by individuals or reports of interviews or discussions produced by well-known organisations were the most common. They accounted for more mentions than the government policy webpages and policy related university webpages. These writers or speakers are people who have an international or global academic career or work experience and have already achieved a good social status, such as journalists, researchers and university professionals. It can be noted that these successful people were deemed qualified to write about *Global Jinzai* by online magazines and organisations, because they were regarded as *Global Jinzai*, themselves and were in a position to comment.

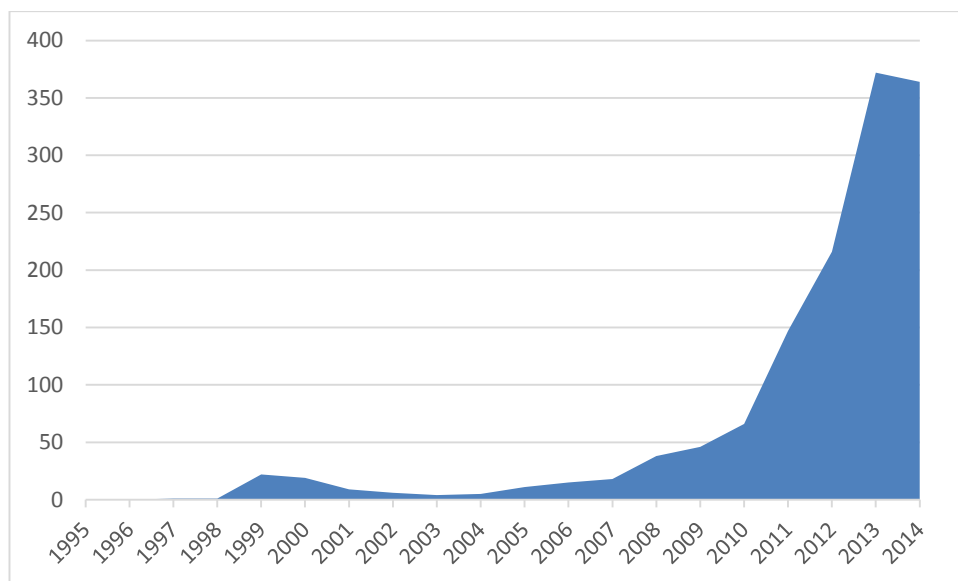
Their opinions and stances were diverse. Sceptics tended to start by warning readers not to accept the *Global Jinzai* boom unconditionally. Some explained the stance they take against the myth of English proficiency. For example, in his blog on Toyo Keizai online, a NASA Technologist Ono (2013) insists that having fluent English does not necessarily indicate *Global Jinzai*. He believes that English is just one of the essential conditions, and there are other important factors. Others state that the popular image of *Global Jinzai* does not meet the requirement of their global standard. Other commentators support the *Global Jinzai* development, but comment on how the actions taken so far have been unsuccessful. For instance, Nakanome of Nikkei Business online (2015) interviewed Yamato who had conducted research about *Global Jinzai* and showed the gap between its needs and the reality in Japanese business community. Throughout the interview, Yamato reported how much Japanese company were in shortage in *Global Jinzai*. On top of their critique of the social situation, these bloggers and interviewees tend to give their own image of *Global Jinzai*, which are also very diverse. For instance, a well-known journalist Akira Ikegami defined *Global Jinzai* is a human resource who is competitive all over the world, as well as is conscious of the strong points of Japan in a discussion event organised by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA, 2013). Overall, it can be assumed that those people were entitled to express their opinion of *Global Jinzai* at a public place given by authority such as famous magazine or organizations because of their successful careers. They claim what they believe to be right, although it tends to be anecdotal opinion. This is probably caused by the nature of *Global Jinzai* development, which is almost equal to the education for the next generation, particularly for the elite. As seen in many biographies, every individual has their opinions and advice to pass on to the next generation. What the Google search result can tell is that these articles have been frequently accessed.

2.1.2 Transformation in academia

Due to the recent boom of *Global Jinzai*, the term tends to sound new. As well as these independence sources online, academia has also been moving quickly. For example, the academic society, “The Japan Association for Global Competency Education (*Global Jinzai ikusei kyouiku gakkai*)” was only established in 2014. However, Japanese companies had been struggling with human resource development for globalising economy from 1990s, and three major economic associations submitted the reports of recommendations to the government between 1997 and 2000 (Keidanren, 2000; MEXT, n.d.; Yano, 2000). Google Scholar search in 09 September 2015 found that the term

already existed in 1997, and had been gradually changing the meaning over the decade. When the term first appeared, it was being used only in the context of human resource development and management strategy for Japanese corporates which run business globally. Their focus was on the workers who were sent abroad for their business. Then the discourse shifted moderately in the following decades. Firstly, the words that follows *Global Jinzai* changed from development (*kaihatsu*) to fostering (*ikusei*) by 2005 and 2006. Secondly, new issues were addressed little by little from the cooperation between industry and education, foreign worker development, practical ability of *Global Jinzai*, internationalisation of workers, to the critiques to the conventional human resource development in Japan. Thirdly, the appearance doubled to 38 hits in 2008 and to 147 hits in 2011, presumably because of globally minded policies such as new national curriculum including “Foreign Language Activities” for grade 5 and 6 in primary schools, and suggestion for fostering *Global Jinzai*. In summary, it can be said that the meaning of *Global Jinzai* has broaden gradually from specific people in the few global companies to more general globalised people all over society. The academic critique around the term also become various, and the research about new aspect of the term seem to be still under development. Their research are likely to connect the new term and existing academic fields, such as language learning. Otherwise they tend to be more philosophised opinion.

Figure 2.1. The number of articles found by Google Scholar on 9th September 2015



2.1.3 Diversity in policies

It should also be mentioned that there is a lack of consistency even on the policy side. As Ikeda (2014) pointed out, the competencies in government's suggestion reports differ slightly from each other although *Global Jinzai* development is an agreed urgent issue among Japanese ministries (METI & MEXT, 2010; MEXT, 2011; MHLW, 2012; Prime Minister's Cabinet, 2012). For instance, the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet (2012) and MEXT (2011) stated that 'Japanese identity' is a component of *Global Jinzai* competence, but the other two did not. Having a foreign language is not necessarily mentioned in some cases. There is a wide range of abilities and skills, therefore if all the criteria are met at once, that human resource would be an extremely highly qualified worker (N. Ikeda, 2014). In order to make the research doable, the present study selected one definition, which was suggested in 2010 by the Global Human Resource Development Committee of the Industry-Academia Partnership. However this situation in public policy is evidence of the complexity of *Global Jinzai* development.

2.1.4 *Global Jinzai* and new form of citizenship

It is important to examine the difference between *Global Jinzai* and commonly used similar terms such as global citizenship and world citizenship. Great attention has been paid to these new forms of citizenship in recent decades. Although there have been complex debates and variegated notions (Davies, Evans, & Reid, 2005), Heater (1997, 1999), for example, defined world citizenship as above state level in comparison to traditional state-embedded citizenship; Lewin (2009) said global citizenship, "whether we define that term primarily with respect to rights and responsibilities, participation in civil society, or work toward the common good, requires critical reasoning, empathy toward others, and individual action that goes beyond consumption" (p. 17). One thing in common is that these definitions are not related to any state action and are merely applied to the individual's attitude and behaviour.

By contrast, *Global Jinzai* in the Japanese policy context is clearly expected to be a useful workforce or contributor to the country and its economy. For instance, in their report of suggestions, the prime minister of Japan and his cabinet (2012) provided expressions such as the "development of a creative and energetic young generation is urgent in order to let our country's economy leap into genuine development again" (p. 5). It can be said that *Global Jinzai* development is a part of national strategy despite the

term global. As introduced by Davies et al. (2005), Japan's model of society and education can be categorised as a "national model of society," whose education system has an orientation toward an "internal focus on narrow national interests" and is "concerned with strengthening or maintaining national identity" (p. 75). In terms of purpose and means, there is a significant difference between Japan's *Global Jinzai* and global or world citizenship, and this nationalistic view might have a limitation in this rapidly globalising community where people with diverse culture interact on a daily basis.

Intercultural education, and its role in fostering a new form of citizenship, may have some implications on the possibilities for the development of *Global Jinzai*. The term has been used in numerous European documents since the 1970s (Portera, 2008). Although there have been theoretical weaknesses (Coulby, 2006), it has been expected to be helpful to the region where an increasing number of immigrants and a mobile population are coming. In a society with the coexistence of multicultural people, Portera (2008) argued that intercultural education is necessary to make people contact and interact with each other considering their differences and similarities. For example, studying abroad is an opportunity and environment that encourages students to interact with people from different backgrounds. In this respect, it can be recognised as an effective form of intercultural education.

While there are significant differences between *Global Jinzai* and other similar concepts, the competencies of *Global Jinzai* have similarities in some elements. For instance, the 2010 definition (METI & MEXT, 2010) contains "competency B (ability to understand and make use of different cultures)," which can be interpreted as an element of global citizenship and one outcome of international education. In addition, as the term *Global Jinzai* doesn't contain any literary meaning of nationalism, one could imagine a more global citizenship-like image for the term. In other words, *Global Jinzai* and its competencies can indicate several directions for the objectives. This fact suggests both the limitations and possibilities of *Global Jinzai*.

In summary, *Global Jinzai* has diverse interpretations and is contested at every level of society, and because of this, *Global Jinzai* development is a controversial issue. The academic discourse around it is still developing. Examples of *Global Jinzai* are rarely visible in the actual community except within a small minority of very successful people. Despite this situation, the education and business sectors are responding quickly to the

existing needs which have arisen due to rapid changes caused by globalisation. This may mean that the objectives of projects and activities are multidirectional.

2.2 Connection between Global Jinzai and study abroad

The Japanese government is planning to foster *Global Jinzai* by introducing various policies, such as competitive funding for universities, an earlier start for English education, and delaying the beginning of job hunting (Cabinet Secretariat and Inter ministry council for study abroad promotion of young people, 2014). Amongst these policies, encouragement to study abroad is the most noticeable one. A new scholarship scheme called “TOBITATE Young Ambassador Programme (*Tobitate! Ryugaku Japan: Nihon daihyou puroguramu*)” was introduced by MEXT in 2014 for university students and high school pupils who are planning to study abroad. A budget of 100,000,000 yen has been allocated to support this, and the goal is to double the number of study abroad students from 60,000 to 120,000 by 2020 (MEXT, 2014).

Yet here comes a question. The Government’s policy seems to have been planned based on the assumption that study abroad is a device for cultivating *Global Jinzai*. As discussed earlier, the term *Global Jinzai* itself includes the expectation of global experience. In this sense, an international experience such as study abroad could be an essential requirement for *Global Jinzai*. However, there seems to be a shortage of *Global Jinzai* (Nakanome, 2015), although it has been more than 10 years since the number of study abroad students hit its peak in 2004 (MEXT, 2015). There is no research into whether study abroad returnees identify themselves as *Global Jinzai*. As a study abroad returnee, I am also relatively sceptical about this perspective. In addition, Fujiyama (2012) criticises companies that report a need for *Global Jinzai* on one hand, but in reality tend to value personality such as curiosity, spirit of challenge, independence, and submission to discipline more than study abroad experience when they recruit new graduates. Therefore, it may be worth investigating if study abroad is contributing to the development of *Global Jinzai* so that a clear connection between the two is established. In this section, background literature about Japanese study abroad and its relationship to the cultivation of *Global Jinzai* will be discussed.

2.2.1 Study abroad in Japanese context

Studying abroad has always been very significant in Japanese history. As an isolated island in the Pacific Ocean, ancient countries in Japan had limited opportunities to communicate with other countries. It was necessary for the country's prosperity to import knowledge and technologies from the continent by sending young people abroad. Until the Tokugawa shogunate "closed-door policy," the most popular destinations were Chinese dynasties and countries on the Korean Peninsula (Sansom, 1958). Since 1862 however, Western Europe has been the focus in an effort to keep pace with modernisation and industrialisation. This has given current Japanese people a more western mind-set for a long time. Although there is a new preference for visiting emerging Asian countries, this mind-set still affects students' choice of study abroad destination.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the most important current issue surrounding study abroad is the decline in the number of students who study abroad. According to a MEXT publication (2015), the number of Japanese study abroad students started to increase slightly from the late 1980s, then it dramatically increased in the 1990s. In 1987, the number was 14,297, but it had risen five-fold by 2000 (76,464). However, after it reached a peak in 2004 with 82,943 students, it had decreased gradually to 57,501 by 2011 (MEXT, 2015). Several reasons have been suggested to explain this phenomenon including the introvert tendency of the young generation. Firstly, being a leading country in Asia, situation of Japanese higher education is different from what it was in the 1970s and 1980s. Not many students consider study abroad attractive any longer as they expect that they will be able to find a job and earn a high enough salary without the experience (Funatsu, 2012). Increasing number of Japanese students choose programmes with a shorter stay abroad such as four weeks, rather than semester-long or year-long programmes for financial or career reasons (Ohta, 2012). This indicates that it is essential to motivate students by stressing the different types of benefits to going abroad and by removing obstacles which prevent them from doing so.

Based on an agreement between universities, it is very common for most of the major Japanese universities to send students on short term island model programmes held all over the world during the spring and summer vacations. These students are accessible for researchers. The non-diverse conditions of participants, such as the length of stay, accommodation type, and entry level of English, also encourage researchers to

investigate the returnees. Therefore most of the literature in this area refers to returnees from short term study abroad programmes, such as one month accredited summer schools organised by universities (Kimura, 2011), (Yuki, 2013).

2.2.2 Study abroad outcomes in terms of *Global Jinzai* definition

In order to establish the connection between *Global Jinzai* and study abroad, first to be considered is a clarification of what ability *Global Jinzai* have. As shown earlier in this Chapter, there are diverse interpretations and opinions concerning *Global Jinzai*. This research employs the definition by the Global Human Resource Development committee of the Industry – Academia Partnership for Human Resource Development (2010), as it has been agreed by representatives from industry and universities, and is the mostly accepted. As described in Chapter 1, their competency model suggests *Global Jinzai* possess three main abilities: (A) communication ability in a foreign language, (B) ability to understand and make use of different cultures, and (C) fundamental competencies for working persons. If it is assumed that *Global Jinzai* are fostered as a result of studying abroad, the immediate outcome of study abroad should include these competencies of *Global Jinzai*. In addition, study abroad returnees should still possess these competencies of *Global Jinzai* some years later.

Another important factor to consider is the effect of study abroad on the returnees' career. The Japanese term "*jinzai* (人材)" means human resource. Therefore it refers to people in the labour market, who perform well after becoming a workforce. To confirm the link between *Global Jinzai* and study abroad, the following conditions must be met. First, the professional study abroad returnees should perceive that their gained competencies of *Global Jinzai* through their study abroad experience have been utilised well during their career and been valued by their employers. Second, student study abroad returnees, who are about to enter the labour market should expect that they will utilise their gained competencies of *Global Jinzai* in their future workplace, and they will be appreciated by their employers. Third, both the students and professionals identify themselves as *Global Jinzai* or candidates for it.

In this section, an overview of the relevant study abroad literature is given according to these three competencies of *Global Jinzai*.

A) Communication ability in a foreign language (particularly in English, which is widely used around the world)

The effect of study abroad on language learning has been widely researched, and most studies have shown the positive results of this experience (Carroll, 1967; Pérez Vidal, 2014). Not only language interest (Goldstein & Kim, 2006), but also language fluency have increased in many cases (Lafford & Collentine, 2006). Regarding the Japanese university students, the majority of studies relate to the impact of short-term study abroad programmes, because of the high number of both programmes and student participation in these courses. The findings from this research indicate similar effects as mentioned. Even with a short term stay, students improve significantly in listening skill and writing fluency (Kimura, 2011) (Sasaki, 2011), and motivation to study a foreign language (T. Kobayashi, 1999). Large scale surveys such as these conducted by the Institute for International Education of Students or Japan Student Services Organization-JASSO, also demonstrate that returnees perceive their language ability to be enhanced by the study abroad experience (JASSO, 2011). In Kobayashi's recent study, 91.7 % of participant returnees chose improved linguistic ability as the main benefit of studying abroad (A. Kobayashi, 2015). Engle and Engle (2004) state that the degree of development may differ according to the length, classes and accommodation of the stay. It is, however, clear that study abroad is at least beneficial for the development of communication ability in a foreign language, which is one of the core competencies of *Global Jinzai*.

B) Ability to understand and make use of different cultures

Increasing attention has been paid to the competency to deal with intercultural contact as the Japanese society has faced rapid globalisation in recent years. Although many academics have attempted to understand and explain the nature of the competencies around intercultural setting, as Fatinni states (2009), there are more than 90 different competencies, and consequently the assessments of them are also very diversified. These can be categorised by the areas which were assessed and the types of tests used (Fantini, 2009). Despite the difficulty in reaching a consensus, Deardolf attempted to combine the opinions of top intercultural experts and professionals, and found that case studies and interviews are the optimal way to assess the intercultural competencies (Deardorff, 2009).

The Japanese governmental committee in 2010 suggested a further competency in intercultural setting for *Global Jinzai*, and named it the “ability to understand and make use of different cultures.” According to this definition, this ability consists of three sub abilities; (i) to take action while being conscious of cultural differences, such as differences in values and communicative methods, (ii). to not judge cultural differences as good or bad, but to be interested in and understand such differences and thus be flexible in action, and (iii) to recognise the strengths of diverse people with cultural differences and to use such strengths for the creation of new values through a synergetic effect. However, the assessment to measure this ability has not yet been established, nor any research done to measure the outcome of study abroad in terms of *Global Jinzai* competencies.

Many studies have been conducted to demonstrate the positive effect of study abroad on students’ intercultural competencies especially in the USA and EU countries. For instance, Black and Duhon (2006) showed their programme enhanced American students’ cross-cultural tolerance and empathy, and longitudinal survey by Goldstein and Kim evidenced the reduction of ethnocentrism and prejudice in the American students after studying abroad (Goldstein & Kim, 2006). Regarding Europe, the European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (ERASMUS) has been the core of students’ mobility since 1987. From this achievement, VALERA study (Bracht et al, 2006) found that students with experience abroad have improved international competence. It was also detected that after even short term programmes lasting three to four weeks, Japanese students show changes in their cultural sensitivity (Katsura, 2002), their perceptions of, and their emotion and attitude towards others from different host cultures (Nakagawa, 2009; Tokui, 2002). While most of the literature tends to agree on the positive effect on intercultural competencies, there have also been warnings about the negative impact of study abroad. For instance, Kudo (2009) claimed that students could sometimes develop narrow nationalistic views or reinforce their existing prejudices, and stressed the importance of providing adequate support or a shock-absorbing activity which would help students to overcome the difficulties. It should be noted that because of various methods employed by previous studies, it is still difficult to compare the outcomes of study abroad in terms of *Global Jinzai* competencies. However, the research provides sufficient evidence to show that study abroad can benefit students’ development of intercultural competencies, and these competencies are very similar and interpretable to one of the core competencies of *Global*

Jinzai. Thus, it can be presumed that the “ability to understand and take advantage of different cultures” is also enhanced by the study abroad experience.

C) Fundamental Competencies for Working Persons

This third competence for *Global Jinzai* is slightly different from the other two in that it is secondary use of the competencies suggested by METI in 2006. This competence was demonstrated to encourage all young adults and general workers to possess. It includes (i) ability to step forward, consist of identity, ability to take actual action, and ability to work on others, (ii) ability to think well, consist of ability to find problems, ability to plan, ability to create, (iii) ability to work in a team, consist of ability to provide information, flexibility, submission to discipline, ability to listen carefully, ability to understand situations, ability to control stress (METI, 2006). According to METI (2006), the“(C) fundamental competencies for working persons” is expected to interact with and make good use of basic academic skills and expertise, on top of healthy humanity and living practice within each individuals. It has been designed because “changes occurring in the environment that surrounds businesses and the growth of young people require today's working people to have basic abilities that are commonly required in all types of jobs” (METI, 2013), but frankly speaking, it can be evaluated as an ideal competence as it includes pretty much everything that can imagine.

Being desired for not only *Global Jinzai*, but also all workers, study abroad may not necessarily enhance these fundamental competencies. However, if the experience helps students' development, it could be a strong motivation for students to study abroad. So far, there is no established way to assess these broad competencies at once. Several studies measure a few of these competencies, such as flexibility and independence regardless of *Global Jinzai*. Large quantitative studies carried out by institutions tend to have similar answer choices, and evidence positive change in these abilities (Dwyer, 2004; European Commission, 2014; JASSO, 2011). Hirose (2013) focuses on student independence as an important aspect of *Global Jinzai*, and insists that study abroad is an effective measure for its development. The qualitative research conducted by F. Kobayashi (2013) analysed students' reports in accordance with the fundamental competencies of the working person and detected the “ability to find problems”, “independence”, “ability to work on others”, and “ability to take actual actions.”

Other studies have investigated the outcomes of study abroad to identify aspects of personal development. Based on Chickering and Reisser's student development theory and Evan's list, Adachi (2010) created the framework to measure student development on a result of study abroad, which consists of seven dimensions; developing competence, managing emotions, moving through autonomy toward independence, developing mature interpersonal relationships, establishing identity, developing purpose, and developing integrity. Kudo (2009) took a grounded theory approach to generalise the educational effect on students, and uncovered the difficulties that students face and what kind of buffering actions they take against these during their stay overseas. He states (Kudo, 2011) that this process of overcoming problems brings changes of interpretation to their existing belief.

Thus, it could be concluded that only part of "(C) fundamental competencies for working persons" has been evaluated and has shown the positive effect of study abroad. It also seems right to presume that study abroad programmes affect students' personal development, which has a little similarities to the competencies of *Global Jinzai*.

2.2.3 Prospective career and expectation for job hunting

It is worth looking at students' views and employers' views on recruitment. If study abroad does enhance *Global Jinzai* development, the returnees should be expecting to utilise their *Global Jinzai* competencies gained from the experience to their future advantage, and to be valued for this by their future employers. In addition, employers should be willing to recruit the returnees because of these competencies.

In terms of the returnees, DISCO's survey in 2014 compared the preferences and desires related to future jobs between students with and without direct enrolment type study abroad experience. Interestingly, the study abroad students' reasons to work were their own skill up and career development, and they also wanted to use what they had learnt in their university in the future job much more than the other group. Moreover, they showed a preference for jobs with a more global focus. For example, they preferred to work for foreign investment companies, to work overseas, or to work for global businesses such as trading company (DISCO, 2014b). Dwyer's survey also supported this result. In her questionnaire to returnees, 70% of participants thought that study abroad had ignited an interest in a career direction (Dwyer, 2004).

Some studies suggest the study abroad competencies are helping students with job hunting. Dwyer (2004) showed that 72% of participants thought that they had enhanced abilities to speak a foreign language which they could utilise in the workplace. Maddux et al (2013) investigated how a multicultural study environment experience could have a positive effect on business school students' receipt of job offers, and found that students who reported themselves engaged in a more multicultural setting had seen a change in their integrative complexity, and had received relatively more job offers. Although this research was targeted at master's degree students, the result implies an advantageous situation for students who are aware of their intercultural experience.

From the employers' point of view, research by 2006 The Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) concluded that employers value study abroad experience when hiring new university graduates (Berg, Rayman, & Trooboff, 2008). However, the results are not conclusive in Japan. According to the Japan Association of Corporate Executives (2014), only 30 % of companies stated that foreign study experience would affect their decision when recruiting new graduates, and 60.9% denied any effect. Although this disappointing fact, the reason why the 30% of companies value these students was due to their independence, flexibility, communication skill, language ability, international outlook, and simply having had an experience of study abroad, most of which are related to *Global Jinzai* competencies. Thus, in terms of job hunting, the students' desire to utilise their advantage as study abroad returnees can be seen clearly, though companies' willingness to employ them is variable.

2.2.4 Long term effect of study abroad – quantitative research

Another important factor to consider in relation to *Global Jinzai* development is the long term impact of the overseas study experience. This issue raises the question of whether study abroad returnees still retain their gained competencies of *Global Jinzai* after some years in the workplace, and whether they perceive that these competencies have been utilised well during their career and been valued by their employers. The majority of research related to study abroad outcomes uses data collected from students before, during and just after their stay overseas. This is due to the accessibility of the participants. To follow former study abroad students over a period of time is problematic. Particularly after graduation from university or an institute, they are not obliged to report their contact details. In addition, the fact that human ability and

personality is affected by many different variables makes longitudinal research challenging (Yamauchi, 2015).

Although limited in number (Ashizawa & Yokota, 2014), there have been a few studies which followed former study abroad students over many years (Alred & Byram, 2002; AIFS, 2013; Dwyer, 2004; Franklin, 2010; JASSO, 2011; A. Kobayashi, 2013; Paige et al., 2010). Some of them were conducted by national institutes which have a long history of supporting study abroad students, and they were able to access their stored data and built network. Dwyer (2004) took advantage of this with the Institute for the International Education of Students (IIE), a leading non-profit study abroad organisation in the USA. The survey involved 3,723 American respondents who had had varying lengths of study abroad experience and years of work experience after returning home. The research found a correlation between the duration of the programme and the long term positive outcomes. It became clear that the full-year programmes have a more significant and enduring impact in most of the variables, especially continued language use, academic attainment measures, and obtaining overseas jobs than the programmes which lasted a few weeks or a semester (Dwyer, 2004). The survey data set itself is also appropriate to see whether study abroad returnees still possess their gained competencies of *Global Jinzai* after several years in the workplace. Among impacts of study abroad on selected behaviours, attitudes, and specific achievement, the 'intercultural development outcomes' obtained the highest results with more than 60 % participants' agreement. Other statements, such as "helped me better understand own cultural values and biases (98%)" and "continues influencing my interactions with people from different cultures (94%)" can be included in the "(B) ability to understand and take advantage of different cultures" in the *Global Jinzai* definition (p.158). The outcomes related to "(A) communication ability in a foreign language" were also supported strongly (p.157-159). However, apart from "enabled me to tolerate ambiguity" which is similar to "flexibility", none of the components of "(C) fundamental competencies for working persons" were seen in the list, although the personal growth outcomes such as "increased self-confidence (96%)" and "has had a lasting impact on world view (95%)" scored very highly (p.160). This seems to have been caused by the difference between the survey items, which were developed based on different contextual values. In terms of career impact, on the other hand, many participants agreed that they had 'acquired skill sets that influenced career path', 'ignited an interest in a career direction', and 'enhanced abilities to speak a foreign language which they utilise in the workplace' (p.159). Moreover, the academic attainments such as "enhanced interest in academic study

(80%)” and “influenced subsequent educational experiences (87%)” gained good support, although they do not frame *Global Jinzai* competencies. Franklin (2010) focused more on career impact and professional applicability of alumni, and showed that returnees with study abroad experience tended to gravitate towards jobs in international or multicultural environment.

In the Japanese context the interests in the long term effect of study abroad has been steadily increasing in the last few years. Some researchers have shown an interest in the field (i.e. Kobayashi, 2013), and others started a government funded project called “*Global Jinzai* 5000 Project” in 2014 (“*Global Jinzai* 5000 project,” 2014), which includes an extensive retrospective study which is still in progress. Currently the survey conducted by JASSO in 2011 is the largest source, with 1,957 20 to 49 year-old participants (JASSO, 2011). As their wording of survey items were similar to *Global Jinzai* competencies, the report produced data relevant to the present research. Firstly in terms of career impact, it was meaningful that the proportion who thought the overseas experience was useful for their current job was 66.9% for 6 to 12 month programme returnees. A multiple choice question asked what abilities had the returnees found useful in their work (see table below), 46.3% of all participants chose foreign language ability, 36.4% chose ability to understand and take advantage of different cultures, and 32.5% chose communication a ability. All three can be considered equivalent to the *Global Jinzai* abilities of “(A) communication ability in a foreign language” and “(B) ability to understand and take advantage of different cultures”.

Table 2.2. Useful abilities in their work by JASSO study in 2011

Useful abilities in their work (Up tp 3 items)	%	Global Jinzai competencies
Foreign language	46.3%	A
Ability to understand and take advantage of different cultures	36.4%	B
Communication ability	32.5%	AB
Spirit of challenge	22.4%	≠C
Expertise	17.2%	
Flexibility	12.8%	C
Human network/ Connection	12.4%	
Independence	7.6%	C
Degree	6.3%	
Certificates	5.6%	
Cooperativeness	4.4%	≠C
Leadership	1.5%	≠C
Others	1.6%	
Nothing	11.9%	

On the other hand, the abilities which from “(C) fundamental competencies for working persons” were seen only in a limited way. Only “flexibility (12.8%)” and “independence (7.6%)” were exactly the same components, and “spirit of challenge (22.4 %),” “cooperativeness (4.4%)” and “leadership (1.5%)” could be available to translated as idiomatically to “ability to step forward,” “ability to cooperate with diversified people in achieving goal,” and “ability to work on others” of the *Global Jinzai*’s competencies. The other components such as “ability to think well” did not appear in the results, as they had not been included in the answer choices. It is also important to mention that there were several abilities which were not included in the *Global Jinzai* competencies, but which were popular choices, such as “expertise (17.2%)” and “human network/connections (12.4%).”

Similar results to these studies mentioned above were reported in a case study. Referring to the research by the American Institute for Foreign Study (AIFS) in 2013 , Kobayashi (2013) conducted the survey with 174 former students of a Japanese university which led a half-year study abroad programme in the USA. In spite of the categorical and wording differences, his survey also showed that *Global Jinzai* competencies such as “knowledge about other culture (94.3%),” “proficiency in a foreign language (78.8%),” “ability to accept differences in other people (84.6%),” “independence (83.4%)” and “ability to be more flexible and open-minded (81.6%)” had positively affected students’ lives. The other influential factors out of *Global Jinzai* competencies such as “interest in global or transnational issues (66.4%),” “developing my awareness of political, economic or social events around the world (61.6%),” “a better understanding of myself and my values (81.1%),” “strengthened relationships with my friends (80.6%)” and human networks were also identified. The questions about career development were unique points in this survey, which found that participants believed the experience had contributed to their “ability to adapt in diverse workplace environments (62.8%),” “the importance I place on working in a field that I find interesting (56%)” and “ability to speak a foreign language in the workplace (61.5%)”. Although the number of studies is few, it is becoming clear that most of the *Global Jinzai* competencies which were gained by studying abroad still remain in returnees, and many of them appreciate these in their professional life. It is unclear whether some of the (C) fundamental competencies for working person, had been gained by studying abroad, or still retaining, whereas improvements in non *Global Jinzai* competencies such as academic attainment, human network, and personal growth were frequently cited.

2.2.5 Long term effect of study abroad – qualitative research

While the quantitative studies above seem to suggest a possible causality between study abroad and *Global Jinzai*, actual *Global Jinzai* are not yet visible in Japanese society after 10 years after the peak in the number of study abroad students. As shown earlier, the few visible examples in the media were extra ordinarily successful people. In other words, the question remains unanswered whether former study abroad students have become *Global Jinzai*. In order to answer this question, qualitative research which investigates what is happening to former study abroad students needs to be undertaken.

Few studies have attempted to ascertain how and why aspects of study abroad effect either immediate or long-term. In particular, no research has been done in relation to *Global Jinzai*. In the later part of their survey, Paige et al (2010) conducted interviews with American returnees, and explored how their study abroad experience had affected their lives, especially in terms of civic engagement. Alred and Byram (2002) on the other hand, followed British year abroad students 10 years after their return, and found though in-depth interviews that students tended to work as global mediators in their career. Franklin (2010) carried out mixed method research to investigate the long-term impact of study abroad in terms of student career development. After 10 years, returnees stated in the interview that the overseas experience had positively affected their careers in terms of career choice, gravitation towards international or multicultural jobs, economic returns and value as employees. In spite of the different perspectives, these studies suggest that returnees perceive their study abroad as the most meaningful experience in their lives, and what they had learnt had stayed with them, and had affected their lives in many different ways. This kind of study should be applied to the Japanese context.

2.3 Conclusion

This chapter has investigated the background of the *Global Jinzai* boom in Japan and the history of the current research around studying abroad and its effect on career. It has found that the term *Global Jinzai* has diverse interpretations and opinions among members of Japanese society despite the government definition in 2010. The academic argument around *Global Jinzai* is still in early phase. The only few visible examples of *Global Jinzai* are all very successful people, and the others remain unseen. Despite this situation, some sectors have been reacting quickly to social necessity without a common

goal. Although it is evident from the literature that a study abroad experience can be effective and beneficial for students' development, there has been little research to establish the connection between *Global Jinzai* and the study abroad outcome, especially in the long term. Therefore, this chapter has compared the research into the long term impact of study abroad and *Global Jinzai* competencies in 2010, and made it clear that study abroad can have an enduring effect on students in "(A) communication ability in a foreign language" and "(B) ability to understand and take advantage of different cultures" of *Global Jinzai*, but only partially on the "(C) fundamental competencies for working persons". In these respects, it can be presumed that study abroad contributes to *Global Jinzai* development. However, few studies have attempted to understand the students' perception of the effect, particularly in the long term, and in the Japanese context. It should also be mentioned that some outcomes were mentioned which are outside the main *Global Jinzai* competencies, such as 'expertise' and 'human networking'. In order to fill the gap between these studies, this research aims to explore how former Japanese study abroad students perceive this experience and its impact on their career, as potential *Global Jinzai*.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

The methodology chapter begins with a statement of the study aim and research questions. The rationale will then be given. This explains how and what methods were chosen and the how answer will be addressed. It also explains the method and process of sampling, data collection and data analysis.

3.1 Aim and research questions

The main aim of the study is to explore how Japanese former study abroad students perceive their study abroad experience and its career impact as a potential *Global Jinzai*. By investigating what they consider they have learnt during their studies abroad, how this affected their careers internally and externally, and their opinion of *Global Jinzai*, this chapter also aims to establish the connection between the study abroad programme and *Global Jinzai* cultivation. The questions guiding this study were as follows:

- 1) *How do former study abroad students perceive the effect of the experience of studying abroad on their career?*
 - a. *What do they consider they learnt during study abroad?*
 - b. *How willing are students to make use of their study abroad experience in their careers?*
 - c. *How do professionals perceive the effect of study abroad experience on their career?*
 - d. *What roles do Japanese employers expect their former study abroad students to take in their organization?*
- 2) *What does “Global Jinzai” mean in terms of former study abroad students’ perception?*
 - a. *What kind of competences are they required to have?*
 - b. *Are they similar to or different from the Government definition?*
 - c. *Should Global Jinzai be cultivated? And why?*
- 3) *Are former study abroad students Global Jinzai or potential candidates for it?*
 - a. *Do they perceive themselves as Global Jinzai?*
 - b. *Do the professionals think their bosses and employers perceive them as such?*
 - c. *In comparison with the definition of Global Jinzai and what they say they have learnt are applicable?*

3.2 Research design

This study employed a semi-structured interview, in order to understand what happened to the returnees after their return to Japan and how they perceived that experience. Two groups of returnees were invited to the interviews: Japanese undergraduate students who had studied abroad at UK universities recently and Japanese professionals who studied at UK universities about 10 years ago. Interview questions were designed for both groups. There were common questions about their experience of study abroad and perceptions of *Global Jinzai*, and also questions for the individual groups asking about either expectations or past experiences. The answers from both groups were analysed thematically, then the answers to the common questions were compared.

As mentioned in the literature review chapter, little research has been done in this field. There is a limited number of studies concerning the long term effects of studying abroad (Alred & Byram, 2002; Dwyer, 2004; JASSO, 2011; Paige et al., 2009). Especially, there is little qualitative research in relation to the long term effects of studying abroad on Japanese university students. In addition, in spite of the definition of competence for *Global Jinzai* by the governmental committee in 2010 (METI & MEXT (Global Human Resource Development Committee of the Industry-Academia Partnership for Human Resource Development), 2010), there is currently no established academic way of measuring this competence. Because of this situation, this study is experimental and exploratory.

Although these few existing studies mentioned above chose research instruments such as a survey (Dwyer, 2004; JASSO, 2011), and mixed method combining a survey and an interview (R. Michael Paige et al., 2009), this study determined to employ only a semi-structured interview as the qualitative method in order to enquire about the returnees' perception, rather than measuring the current competences of returnees quantitatively by establishing a new index for *Global Jinzai*. This is firstly because, a quantitative survey seemed not to be an appropriate tool to discover the reason and agency which occurred in the long period of their lives. There may have been other confounding factors such as events, experiences, socio-economic conditions and motivation which influenced their current skills, knowledge, and attitude, and it would be difficult to create enough potential possible variables to establish what these were. Understanding their perception through the use of an interview seemed more suitable for this long term effect study.

Secondly, considering government policy which encourages students to study abroad, it seems that they believe that study abroad is essential to become a *Global Jinzai*. If so, following the returnees' careers and establishing if they are in fact *Global Jinzai* or potential candidate for it may tell us the possible future result of the policy. Therefore, the core of this research is understanding what has happened to returnees and how they perceive their experience. According to Cohen et al. (2007)(Gillham, 2005), a qualitative approach is suitable for subjective facts. As this study is also aimed at understanding returnees' perceptions, an interview is the best mean to be employed.

Though the research is exploratory, there were three definite topics that the interview was aiming to cover: outcomes from study abroad and how they affected them, the perception towards *Global Jinzai*, and expectations of future career or perceptions of the past career. For these aims, interview should be controlled at certain degree. A structured interview was not flexible enough to gather a wide variety of opinions, but an unstructured interview might give too much freedom to the interviewee and specific topics may have been neglected. As Gillham (2005) explains, semi-structured interviews are effective for this kind of research. Therefore a semi-structured interview has considered relevant for the study.

This method was also chosen for practical reasons. It is not easy to contact the former study abroad students who meet the conditions of the study in terms of their study abroad type, and the length of their working experience. Therefore, choosing a small population for an in depth interview was also on a practical level.

For a deeper understanding of the situation, there was a possibility of conducting focus group interviews. However, the idea was dismissed for practical reasons. Japanese workers are well known for their diligence (Iwasaki, 2008), therefore it would have been problematic to organise a meeting where several professionals were expected to meet at the same time.

After deciding to do the semi-structured interview, account was taken of the relevant research in this area when developing interview questions (e.g. Alred & Byram, 2002; Nakagawa, 2009; Paige et al, 2009). In his research about former Year Abroad (YA) students in the UK, Alred & Byram (2002) used a tool which consisted of a narrative generation and unstructured but thematic interview. He allowed the interviewees to talk about their YA experience in the early stage of the interview in order to refresh their

memory, then in the later half he asked questions related to certain topics, such as personal development, careers and ways of life. The average length of the interviews was reported as approximately one and a half hour. Among the small number of research studies related to *Global Jinzai*, the study by Yamauchi (2015) was referenced although this was an assessment of a short term study abroad programme. Her method was to pick up some expressions which were relevant to Government definitions, among the open-ended questions in the evaluation questionnaire of students' study abroad experience.

Considering this literature, I designed an interview which consisted of 4 main strands, all of which had 3-5 sub-questions: 1) motivation for study abroad and result, 2) learning and effect of study abroad on both academic and non-academic life, 3) effect on career: prospect or past, 4) perception of *Global Jinzai*.

In the first stage of the interview, the participants were asked about their motivation and their objective of studying abroad. These questions were not directly related to the research questions, however, they were included to help the participants to refresh their memory.

For the research questions 1 and 2, most of the interview questions were designed to be very similar to the sub research questions, so that the main research question would be answered by gathering the responses. However, for the third research question, the direct question not only asked if participants thought they were *Global Jinzai*, but some comparison was also introduced: a comparison between what they thought they had gained from the experience, and what had been the most useful so far: the ideal image of *Global Jinzai* for them: and the government definition of *Global Jinzai*.

In practice, the length of interviews should be conducted within a reasonable amount of time for the interviewer and interviewee. In order to ascertain the presence of any trends, the interviews would be conducted with at least 10 participants for both groups. Consequently, thirty to forty minutes was considered to be the appropriate length for each person.

3.3 Information sheet

Some information could be significant to the interview data, such as prior experience in a foreign country, majors at both the home university and the host university, and the type and length of the job. To gain this kind of information efficiently, a questionnaire with factual questions was designed. Each participant was asked to fill in this questionnaire at the beginning of the interview. This questionnaire also had a self-rating portfolio which required participants to assess their ability levels in language, academic skills, independence, self-understanding, and intercultural competence, before and after the study abroad period. In so doing, this enabled participants to reflect on their past experiences.

3.4 Population and sampling

Two types of participants were invited to the interview: Japanese professionals and Japanese undergraduate students. One of the purposes of the study was to compare the different generations of study abroad returnees, especially the difference between before job hunting and after several years of working experience. Before starting the sampling, criteria were established for selection of participants in order to keep the number of variables as few as possible. The criteria for each group are as follows.

Table 3.1: Sampling criteria

	Group S: Students	Group P : Professionals
Common criteria	-Japanese -Based in home university in Japan, and studied at a UK university following a direct enrolment type study abroad programme, from 8 months to 1 year.	
Group criteria	-Undergraduate student in a Japanese university. -Returned from study abroad within the last twelve months. -About to start to job hunt	-Employed by an organisation. -Worked for longer than 5 years.

The reasons why the UK was chosen is firstly because, the researcher studied at UK universities in the past, and the former study abroad students could be recruited from

the researchers' personal network. Secondly, the UK is the one of the most popular study abroad destinations of Japanese students. According to the Japan Student Support Organization (JASSO, 2014), Asian countries such as China and Korea are popular destinations of Japanese students, however, they are usually preferred for short term study abroad. The USA and European countries are still preferred for semester long study abroad or even longer programmes. In 2012, the UK achieved the second highest position of the most popular destinations.

As mentioned in the literature review, the direct enrolment model is believed to be the most influential study abroad model (Dwyer, 2004; Engle & Engle, 2004), but has not been thoroughly studied because of the difficulty of access (to what?). As for the length of stay, 8 months was chosen as the minimum due to the difference between the Japanese academic year, which starts in April, and the British academic year which starts in September. Some of the visiting programmes of UK universities are shorter than one year. There are examples of visiting programmes with pre-sessional English course and direct enrolment to the main academic course in the university for two terms.

The target sample size was set at 10 for each group. The whole target population who went abroad to study was from 60,138 and 82,945 in 2004 to 2012 (MEXT, 2015). Among these, the number of students who went to the UK was between 3,709 and 6,395 between 2004 and 2011 (JASSO, 2014; Ohta, 2014). For this qualitative research study, 10 for each group was considered appropriate to find patterns and trends in the field. In addition, for the professionals, it was important to have participants from diverse industries.

Both convenient sampling and snow ball sampling were applied. Due to the researcher's previous study abroad experiences at two UK universities between 2003 to 2004, and 2013 to 2014, the researcher began by contacting friends who had also been there on study abroad programmes at the same time. These friends then introduced others who met the participant criteria and who were willing to assist in the study. Consequently most of the professional group were people who had studied overseas around 2003, and had work experience of 10 years. As a result, 13 professionals and 11 undergraduate students took part in the interview data collection.

3.5 Data collection

As recommended by various authors (e.g. Gillham, 2005) four pilot interviews were conducted after completion of draft interview questions. Two Japanese students from a UK university and two Japanese professionals in Japan took part in this process. Although those pilot participants had slightly different backgrounds from the actual samples, their responses assisted in the rewording of final questions for precise understanding, rearranging the order of questions for deeper thoughts, managing the use of time, and preparing new prompts to encourage less talkative participants.

The actual interviews began in January 2015 and were completed in February 2015. The interviews lasted approximately 30 to 45 minutes. Interviews were conducted in Japanese and audio recorded. All interviews except two were conducted face-to-face. This was desirable because ‘in an interpersonal situation where trust is established that disclosure becomes possible’ (Gillham, 2005, p.5). For the two professionals who were living in a third country on secondments, Skype was used. The face-to-face interviews were conducted by the researcher at an agreed venue, for example the cafeteria either on campus or near the offices or homes of the interviewees. All of the participants were willing to take part in the interviews. However, in advance of the meeting, the researcher asked them if there was any English product they missed, so that they could be given it as a small token of thanks. About one third of the participants agreed to this offer, but the others declined politely. Those who requested something, were given the specific souvenirs, and for those who declined the offer, a gift of a box of tea from the UK was purchased. The researcher also paid expenses for the refreshment as appreciation.

The Japanese language was chosen as the means of operation throughout the study for the interview, transcription and analysis. Generally speaking, English is the second language for most Japanese students who determine to study overseas. Many statistics show (ETL, 200X), that the English ability of Japanese people is relatively low, and life in Japan does not often require English ability. Therefore, it could be assumed that the participants’ English was not as fluent as their first language even with their study abroad experience. In addition to that, it was desirable for interviewees to express their perception about the Japanese context in the Japanese language, as the language enabled participants to explain customs and values which only Japanese people and society have. (Reference, 20XX) Two Japanese-English bilingual researchers were

involved with proofreading the English and Japanese interview questions and findings in order to maintain the equivalence of the two versions.

3.6 Ethical considerations

A number of ethical issues were considered (Arthur, 2012; Cohen et al, 2007; Gillham, 2005; Rubin, 2005). The data collection was conducted under the guidance of the Department of Education Ethics Committee at the University of York. There were no sensitive ethical issues related to this study so no potential distress to interviewees was anticipated. However, for the purpose of informed consent, an ethical explanation was given on the consent form at the beginning of the interview, and all participants were informed of what was involved in the interview process, how the data would be handled, and how they can inquiry. Therefore, all participants indicated their agreement on the consent form before the start of the interview.

The audio data was recorded using a digital voice recorder and the recording was copied to the researcher’s personal computer and duplicated on a hard disk and a university PC. These were then locked by password for security. The consent forms and information sheets have been stored in a locker at the researcher’s University. All the data will be kept in a safe by the researcher for three years after collection as stated in the consent form.

3.7 Data analysis

The qualitative data analysis of this study followed the established practice (e.g. Gillham, 2005; Rubin, 2005). The recorded interviews were transcribed and analysed in Japanese. The researcher began by identifying concepts, themes, events and topical markers according to Rubin’s definition (2005) as follows:

Table 3.2 Qualitative Interviewing (Rubin, 2005, p.207)

Term	Definitions
<i>Concept</i>	a word or term that represents an idea important to your research
<i>Theme</i>	summary statement and explanation of what is going on
<i>Event</i>	Occurrences that have taken place
<i>Topical markers</i>	Names of places, people, organisations, pets, numbers or public laws.

Using the software N–vivo, these sentences were highlighted with brief codes, which were used to organise the data. An attempt was then made to identify the themes in their statements.

As for information sheet, all the information was coded and entered into the web-software called Quaritarics which is supported by the researcher’s university. The data was then organised by using this software in order to better understand the participants’ background. In particular, the quantitative data such as age, academic year, and length of previous foreign experience were analysed by the software.

Establishing rigor in a qualitative research study is a significant theme for many researchers (e.g. Lantz, 2014). In this study, inter-rater validation was employed in order to verify the standard accuracy of the coding. The researcher asked a Japanese person who was an experienced researcher and a Ph.D. candidate in a Japanese university to find themes in the statements.

3.8 Strengths and limitations of the study

This research study is a comparison between two groups of study abroad returnees, it is not a longitudinal study. Although it compares undergraduate students who studied at three UK universities in the academic year of 2013-2014, and professionals who studied at two UK universities in the UK in between the academic years 2002-2003 and 2003-2004, it is completely different from following one group of returnees for 10 years. Therefore, the possible differences found in the results might not have been caused solely by the work experience, but also by the participants’ ages, the characteristics of home universities and host universities, and the personality of the returnees. For instance, whilst the professionals’ group had more similarity in the characteristic of host universities, the students’ group had more similarity in the characteristic of home universities. More student participants had various previous overseas experiences than the professional participants.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter overviewed the methodology of the current research study. By investigating what the participants considered they had learnt while studying abroad, and how they

felt it had affected their career, and how they are expected to contribute within their organizations, this study will attempt to answer the three research questions.

Chapter 4 The outcome of study abroad

This chapter reports the information collected from participants and analyses the key findings for the first research question: *how do former study abroad students perceive the effect of the experience of studying abroad on their career*. Firstly, background information about participants, which were collected from information sheets and interviews, are presented in order to provide a comprehensive picture of the research study. *This chapter also provides an analysis of qualitative data from the 24 returnees, which answers research question 1.*

4.1 Interview participants

As explained in Chapter 3, this research employed two groups of study abroad returnees: undergraduate students and professionals. Both groups studied at UK universities for 8 to 12 months using a direct enrolment model, such as an exchange programme or a one-way visiting programme. The details of the participants' information are presented below.

4.1.1 Group S – undergraduate students

Eleven undergraduate students took part in the interviews. All of them had studied at universities either in the north of England or London, between 2013 and 2014. Except for one student, all others were from the same private university in Tokyo and were studying international liberal studies. At their host university, however, their areas of study were varied. The last student was from a public university in Tokyo and had studied the same subject both in Japan and the UK. They were between 20 and 22 years of age, with a group average age of 21.2. Their date of interview was approximately 6 months after their return to Japan. (See Table 4-1)

Table 4-1 Table of student interviewees (Group S)

Participant Code	Sex	Department at home university	Department at study abroad university
S-A	M	Politics and Economics	Sociology
S-B	M	International liberal studies	Social Policy and Social Work

S-C	F	International liberal studies	Film, Theatre and Television / Sociology
S-D	F	Foreign Studies	Language and Linguistic Science
S-E	M	International liberal studies	Sociology and Linguistics
S-F	F	International liberal studies	Development Studies
S-G	F	International liberal studies	Law
S-H	M	International liberal studies	Sociology
S-I	M	International liberal studies	Modern Language
S-J	M	International liberal studies	Management / Theatre, Film and Television
S-K	F	International liberal studies	Humanity and Arts

4.1.2 Group P - professionals

Although the objective number for group P participants was 10, 13 professionals were engaged in the interview. Due to the effect of snow-balling recruitment, most of these professionals had studied at the same university at the same period of time in 2002 – 2003 or 2003 – 2004. Their home universities, however, were diversified. Some of the interviewees used exchange programmes between universities while others applied independently for junior year abroad programmes run by the host university. Their ages at the time of interview were between 31 and 34 years old, and the mean was 32.2. All had worked for more than 5 years after their graduation from university. Nine out of 13 had never changed employers and all were working for Japanese companies. (See Table 4-2)

Table 4-2 Table of professional interviewees (Group P)

Code	Sex	Department at study abroad university	Organisation type(s) / Department(s)
P-A	M	Engineering	Japanese / research
P-B	M	Economics	Japanese / system engineering
P-C	F	Cultural studies	Japanese / sales, planning, secretarial
P-D	F	Politics and International Studies	Japanese / sales and marketing Multinational / quality assurance
P-E	F	Politics and International Studies	Japanese / planning Japanese / international affairs
P-F	F	Economics	Japanese / sales Japanese / interior design

P-G	F	History	Foreign (2) / language teaching Japanese (3) / language teaching
P-H	M	Economics	Japanese/ accounting
P-I	M	Economics	Japanese / accounting, sales, planning
P-J	M	Business	Japanese / sales Multinational / controller Multinational / finance
P-K	F	Sociology	Japanese / trade administration and sales
P-L	F	Politics and International Studies	Japanese / sales
P-M	M	Business	Japanese/ sales

* People have two or three lines had changed companies.

4.2 Key findings for research question 1

Starting from this section, later parts of chapter 4 provides and analyses the results of data obtained from semi-structured interviews. In particular, the main questions guiding this portion stemmed from the research question 1 and its sub-questions, which are presented below.

1) How do former study abroad students perceive the effect of the experience of studying abroad on their career?

a. What do they consider they learnt during study abroad?

b. How willing are students to make use of their study abroad experience in their careers?

c. How do professionals perceive the effect of study abroad experiences on their careers?

d. What roles do Japanese employers expect their former study abroad students to take in their organisation?

4.3 What did they learn during their study abroad?

This section reports and analyses the key findings from returnees' perceptions of study abroad outcomes. Firstly, it reviews the results from individual groups, then compares and discusses the differences. During the actual interview, several questions were asked about what they learned from their experiences. Initially, participants were posed the question, 'what was the most important change among their development through study abroad?' This was asked to ascertain what was the most significant for them, among their many other experiences in learning and development. Subsequently, they were

asked to provide information about academic, career, and other aspects of outcomes, in order to know the effect in each aspects, no matter how they prioritise. This section deals with the first interview question above and academic and non-academic questions. Sometimes during the interview, participants would describe the details about their most significant experience. This section will also provide these examples. The topic of career is answered in the later this chapter in response to other sub research questions.

4.3.1 The initial results of group S: undergraduate students

As for most important development, undergraduate participants tended to choose personal developments such as independence, responsibility, activeness and self-confidence. This was followed by academic attainment and interpersonal skills. No opinions about English were given, except in regards to academic writing in English in UK higher education. This tendency might be due to the fact that for most of them, studying abroad was their first opportunity to live independently without their parents. In addition, 9 out of 11 participants had previous experience of living or studying overseas for more than one year and their home university department payed great attention to English-medium education.

It can be said that personal development was more essential for group S than linguistic attainment in their learning and development. Participant S-G provided a good example. Just a few days after her arrival in the UK, she was involved in a small accident, which she was able to resolve by herself. This gave her a feeling of determination. She described her feeling at that time:

[S-G] ... hmm, well, it wasn't really a big thing, but at that time, what to say,,, if I make an effort, I can open new doors. However impossible the situation seems to be, there is always an exit. At the same time, I got to know from the experience that I cannot live here dependent on someone else. That was my first learning, a lesson learnt from experience.

Another key fact to be mentioned is the significant effect of a personal network. Some students insisted the importance of people who they met during their stay and admitted their developments were strongly influenced by those people. For instance, student S-C, who already had high English proficiency because of childhood experiences abroad, said that her biggest attainment was ability to take action. Her reasons are as follows:

[S-C] my study abroad contemporaries were very active girls, and I was pretty much influenced by them.... They are Japanese. Actually, this point surprised me. Before going overseas, I didn't want to go to a university where many other students from my university were. Because, I wanted to be immersed into the life there, and didn't want to hang out with other Japanese students. It was like.. my personal pride. However, there, the students from my home university were such attractive people. How do I say this.... they were very motivated. They were very ambitious and trying to grow themselves by using this opportunity. They were aiming to study hard. I think that's why we could develop through friendly competition. That was good. The relationship with Japanese people continues after return home. So, I perceive it was good to be friends with them, having talked to them rather than avoiding them like the plague.

On the contrary, there were three people who gave negative impressions of this study abroad. They all had previous long term study abroad experiences in the USA or New Zealand during their high school years, which brought them great outcomes and precious memories. In comparison, life at the UK universities were less inclusive of them. In one case, the population of other Japanese students from the same university negatively impacted their lives. One of them changed their evaluation later by building close friendships with British flatmates and by finding academic connections between lectures there and applied studies in Japan after his/her return. However, the other two still negatively evaluated their recent experience at the time of interview.

In terms of the academic impact of study abroad, the majority of students pointed out the differences between university academic cultures in Japan and the UK. Without exception, they found that UK university students were more studious and intensive learning was meaningful to them. As for a non-academic impact, most of them answered personal development, bringing up the gist of the first question again. Overall, student participants spent relatively longer time discussing this topic, as their experiences were still recent and vivid. Some had already begun job-hunting, which seemed to have made them reflect deeply on their experience abroad.

4.3.2 The initial results of group P: professionals

Although the points made by professionals were more diversified than those of the students', about half of them mentioned change in their competencies in an intercultural setting, such as gaining a multi-dimensional view on things, knowledge about Japan, and resilience to life in a foreign country. This is demonstrated by the statement of P-I:

[P-1] ...one thing is, I felt I didn't know anything about Japan. Hmm, how do I say this, I know nothing about things like Japanese history and culture. So, over there, although I was asked why Japan had developed as such, I couldn't answer. Well, probably people worked very hard? That's all I could say. I felt it strongly. Therefore, I think it was the biggest impact of study abroad....

Personal development and the expression of opinions were also supported as points learned abroad by some interviewees. One individual answered English ability and another mentioned conversing in English. They tended to respond to this question based on what was deemed important in their career. Therefore, although some simply reflected on their life at the point of studying abroad, others connected the significance of learning with their current occupations.

Later questions about academic and non-academic impacts revealed that most of the professionals were influenced by higher education in the UK, especially by academic writing. On the other hand, others became less hesitant to access English information. Most of the non-academic impacts were global perspective and interests in both the global current events and Japanese culture.

4.3.3 Comparison and discussion

Firstly, it is evident that in the minds of the interviewees, English was not the most important aspect of study abroad outcomes, although there were changes in their English ability. Acquisition of the language in the host country is the most commonly studied and supported outcomes of study abroad in the literature (e.g. JASSO, 2011; Kobayashi, 2015). By contrast, in her qualitative study on Japanese returnees from direct enrolment study abroad, Ikeda (2011) observed the change in their perceptions towards English before and after the stay. The sample of this study can be said to support the latter. This trend was seen in both the majority of the undergraduate participants, whose English ability was already at an advanced level at the beginning of the stay, and also for the all other participants who had never previously lived in an English environment.

Secondly, the results demonstrate that for many of the participants, personal development such as 'independence' or 'responsibility' was the most significant development made through studying abroad, as is shown in literature (e.g. Dwyer, 2004). The students' personal development through study abroad was often generated from the

fact that they are away from home (Benson et al., 2013) and that they try to solve new challenges by themselves using their second language (F. Kobayashi, 2013). No matter if they were in group S or group P, none of these participants, except one, had ever lived alone before studying abroad. In particular, the student group tended to live with their parents, and presumably this resulted in their higher evaluation in personal growth.

Thirdly, group P referred to more various aspects of outcomes than group S. They tended to mention competencies useful in an international setting, such as a multi-dimensional view. In contrast to group S, they had less prior experience in foreign countries. Moreover their home universities were not particularly focused on English education or internationalisation in 2003. This can be presumed as a reason as to why they had relatively more opinions supporting intercultural competencies, expression of opinions, global views and English. In addition, their 9-10 years of working experience had influenced their perceptions of what their experience abroad meant to their lives.

Fourthly, academic attainment was very vital, although it was not chosen as the most significant change. Almost all of the students were shocked by the difference in academic cultures between the two countries and were motivated by this gap. Interestingly, most of them kept this academic motivation after they returned to their home university. Some started spending more time studying than before and others continued their self-English studies after their return, using novels or magazines to practice their reading. Few studies have been done on the academic attainment of Japanese students, as the number of students who choose direct enrolment programmes are limited and difficult to follow. This should be investigated further.

Fifthly, some of the examples provide sufficient evidence to suggest that students were greatly influenced by the people surrounding them during their study abroad, who are deferent on a case-by-case basis. For instance, as is shown in 4.3.1, one student was influenced by friends from the same home university. There were also several examples of mature students pursuing a master's degree, senior students in the bachelor's degree programme at the host university, and international flatmates. Although personal relationships sometimes resulted in a negative impact, it could be concluded that meeting and interacting with the others was very beneficial for young students' personal development and career choices. This could be related to the point made by Kudo (2009, 2011) which states that students develop their cognition by communicating with surrounding people during their study abroad.

4.4 How willing are students to make use of their study abroad experience in their careers?

4.4.1 Choice of job and expectation in job hunting

Many students said the study abroad experience had affected their choices for their future career. There are some students who determined their future careers, found new possible choices, and made their mind clearer or started thinking about graduate schools, due to their study abroad experience. Most of them wanted a job which enabled them to go overseas. However, a few people preferred to stay in Japan and utilise English in their jobs, as they thought they had had enough time overseas already.

There were two such examples given by students.

[S-F] ... And, but I myself, don't fancy going to work for a foreign enterprise...How do I say this, having studied abroad, I recognised deeply how Japanese, Japan is a nice country. This is the point which hasn't been really determined yet in my job hunting, but I've started thinking that the Japanese companies would be the place where I can contribute most to Japan. But at the same time, as I have studied abroad, I'm confident with my English, and it might be a waste if I don't try.

[S-E] I think it had an impact on my choice. Before, I was planning to be a salaried employee in a Japanese company, and to live life smoothly. However, having been overseas, I found people there valued expressing their own opinions, and I thought this environment fits me well. In that respect, foreign enterprises or multi-national companies attract attention more than Japanese company when I look for a job.

They hoped the experience would help them with getting job offers, but they were not sure if it was really the case. Some were relatively sceptical about their advantage, as they knew a lot of other returnee students. Many thought talking about what they did during study abroad was more important than the experience itself.

4.4.2 How they want to make use of competencies gained from study abroad

In terms of competencies which were gained from study abroad, and which students wanted to utilise in their future jobs, the majority of them mentioned communication skills, a tolerant attitude, and a multi-dimensional view towards people from different backgrounds. There was an example of such learning described by one of the students, who had willingness to use her communication skills in her future work:

[S-E] It's communication skills... When our society had an opportunity to cook Japanese foods with foreign student members as a part of a social event, because we're cooking Japanese foods, and there're more Japanese students, we tended to speak and manage the process in Japanese. At that time, these non-Japanese students sometimes looked very anxious. So we had a discussion about how to deal with this situation. I think this kind of thing is important as a communication skill with, how do I say this, people who are in a different situation from mine. For instance, in an office situation, a new graduate won't know the culture or common sense in the company. If I was a senior position in that situation, I would like to take care of the new graduates. When I don't know, I'd like to ask actively. Hmm, how to say this... I think I have learnt how to communicate with people when there is a communication gap.

Secondly, there were a few students who mentioned a change in personality such as, activeness and aggressiveness.

Few students mentioned English directly. This is understandable, because English was not chosen as the most important outcome of study abroad in the earlier question (see section 4.3.1). For them, English was too fundamental, and not a very important gain from study abroad experience. Academic expertise and personal philosophy were only mentioned by one student.

Similar trends to these findings above were also provided by the responses to the question about their expectations as future employees. They wanted to be allocated in the section which deals with international affairs, as a result of being valued as a good English speaker and interculturally competent. Except for two, the majority wanted to go overseas for work. For instance student S-H said:

[S-H] I'd like my future employers to value me positively as a former study abroad student. When the company expands business overseas, I'd like to be a part of the project. If I was in Japan, I'd like to be a contact to the people from overseas. When they open a new branch overseas, or have counterparts overseas, I'd love to be sent there. I think I can do it with some experience in the workforce. And in so doing, I would be more developed. That's why I want to work overseas.

4.5 How do professionals perceive the effect of study abroad experience on their career?

In order to better understand the professionals' perceptions of study abroad effects, four questions were posed during the interview: how they think their experience influenced

their choice of job and job hunting, what they think have been the most useful abilities and skills for their work, and if they have been transferred to a foreign country in their work career. This section reports the important findings from the responses and analyse these.

4.5.1 Choice of job and job hunting

The results clearly show that study abroad experience had influence in the first stage of their working careers. The majority of the participants agreed that there was an absolute effect on their choice of careers by clarifying their aspirations in their minds as a result of broadening their horizons. Like undergraduate students, they chose the jobs and companies which had an international aspect or opportunity to utilise their English ability. These returnees mentioned relatively more about a willingness to be connected to the world, rather than a willingness to simply speak English. Interestingly, two people found their first employers through the actual network or connection established by their study abroad experience. More directly, professional P-G found her future career as a Japanese language tutor from an experience when she was asked a question about the Japanese language from her international friend in the UK. On the other hand, there were also a few participants who were not influenced by studying abroad, as they had already had a clear direction on what they wanted to do before going abroad.

As regards to job hunting, most of them admitted that they had felt positive effects. It seemed that higher English ability evident from TOEIC scores gave the majority of them an advantage during the recruitment process. However, it was also mentioned by some of the participants that English ability was not necessarily valued highly. For them, English was a better thing to possess, but not essential, while a wide variety of stories which were based on personal development experience were more significant and attractive. In particular, participants who had been previously involved in their companies' recruitment process had a relatively sceptical view on valuing English alone. For instance, professional P-H who works for a Japanese trading company provided views from both sides:

[P-H] Well, during job hunting, the score of TOEIC had positive effects. But frankly speaking, it didn't matter. Well, I could score higher than the other students, which was appealing a little. But that's all... I had worked for 10 years, and sometimes been involved in recruitment interviews. Among those who apply for posts in a trading company, there are lots of candidates with study abroad experience. Their TOEIC

score are good enough, and this has become fundamental. From this perspective, my study abroad experience seemed to not be valued at that time. It's rather what they did during the stay, well, it's less than one year, so their achievement is not so great. So we think, what they felt and how they overcame the difficulty... the real experience is more important in Japanese recruitment context.

Only one professional mentioned a negative impact on job hunting delay, due to the time of year students' return. Although it must have been the same for half of the returnees, none of the others mentioned this. Presumably it was because they had secured a good job offer in the end. However, this is the same as one of the obstacles which prevent students from long term studying abroad criticised by some academics (Ohta, 2012).

4.5.2 Most useful competencies gained from study abroad

Although there were a wide variety of answers, more than half of participants said that English had been very beneficial in their careers. Interviews found that the majority of participants had been involved in international business or trainings at some point in their careers (see table 4-3 below). For those who work in a foreign country, who work in a multinational environment, and who have clients overseas, English was indispensable for their daily communication.

Table 4-3 Table of professionals' overseas experience after graduation

Code	Work related	Personal interest (e.g. further education)
P-A		
P-B	Training in Asia Frequent business trips to Asia	
P-C		
P-D	Frequent business trips to the North America	
P-E	Trainee in Europe Frequent business trips to many countries	Short course on hobbies in the UK
P-F		Work related diploma in Europe
P-G	Employed in two Asian countries	
P-H		
P-I	Training trip to Asia	
P-J	2 months training in Asia	
P-K	Opening of new office in Asia	
P-L	Expatriate staff in Asia	
P-M	6 months training in North America Expatriate staff in Asia	

Some pointed out various profitable aspects of their English ability at their work. English academic writing skills for example, had been advantageous for a professional in terms of logical expression in emails, and for a researcher in terms of submitting articles to international journals. Others mentioned the importance of accessing sources written in English. Interestingly, this point was also made by individuals who did not have any international aspect in their jobs.

As well as English ability, most of them reported other competencies which could be classified as competencies in an intercultural setting. Firstly, several people mentioned an ability to understand the views and values of people from different backgrounds. Others said the same thing about different perspectives that they adapted with foreigners and foreign countries and would never become upset by anything unexpected happened. One of the participants explained:

[P-G] Having lived for one year, I met diverse people both from the UK and different countries. So, how to say,,, perhaps, my stereotypes had gone. I lost the mind-set like, this person should be like this.. In my current job, I meet many international students every day. Well, I think have the attitude of not being upset with whatever happens.

She also described her challenging experience in the UK university classroom, where all other students were British, but none of them spoke to her.

[P-G] I thought it was unbelievable. I was so surprised. Now, I have very diverse international students and they're very unique. But that's why I always try to talk with them in order not to make them feel lonely.

There were also some interviewees who mentioned communication skills which enable them to speak in a low contextual manner. Expression of opinion and participation in discussion were reported by people who work multicultural environment. Very little was mentioned about other topics, such as independence, survival skills in a difficult situation, and acquisition of other foreign languages.

4.5.3 Analysis and discussion

This portion of writing compares findings from sections 4.4 and 4.5 and analyses them by comparing them with literature. To begin with, the results clearly show that the study abroad experience had an impact on the most of the returnee's career choice similarly in both groups. The majority of these people tended to select careers which have

international aspects or an opportunity to go abroad. This supports the tendency suggested by the literature (DISCO, 2014a; Dwyer, 2004; Franklin, 2010).

Regarding job hunting, group P holds the same attitude with group S in that employers do not always blindly value study abroad experiences. Some of the interviewees had positive expectations or impressions and others had realistic expectations or retrospections towards their advantage. These findings can be recognised as a reflection of the employers' bipolar willingness to value returnees when they recruit new graduates (JACE, 2014).

By comparing students' expectation of using their gained competencies and professionals' inventory of useful competencies in their life, it became clear that English ability and competencies in international settings are core for both groups in the same manner with JASSO's quantitative study on returnees (JASSO, 2011). However, group S mentioned less about English and more about personality traits such as activeness. On the other hand, group P admitted that English had been beneficial for them as well as the other diversified competencies. Presumably, this difference can be caused by either the generational difference or characteristic difference between the groups. As introduced in chapter 2.2.3, only 30 % of Japanese employers said that they value study abroad returnees when recruiting new graduates (JACE, 2014). Their reasons of value were returnees' independence, flexibility, communication skills, language ability, international outlook, and simply having had an experience overseas. In this respect, students' expectations and professionals' inventory agree with companies' expectations.

4.6 What roles do Japanese employers expect their former study abroad students to take in their organisation?

It is important to know how employers actually value and make the most of study abroad returnees. This section looks at the results of questions which asked about returnees' perceptions of their bosses and employers, and compares these with findings from previous sections and literature.

4.6.1 Expectation from employers

An interview question was asked about how they think their boss and employer value and utilise them as a former study abroad student. Slightly more than half of participants perceived they were valued as a study abroad returnee, but others did not.

However, it was evident from their responses that returnees believed that English ability was the absolute most valued competence that their bosses knew from their study abroad history. In fact, the majority of them had been chosen to deal with international affairs because of their English ability during their professional career and more than 60% have had an experience of working or training overseas. There were only two other points made, which were communication skills with customers and being a trainee of a company's employer development programme. Three of them admitted that they were not valued in terms of study abroad experience.

The value on their English they gained abroad seemed to depend on the office and organisational environment in which they worked. For instance, if the office deals with mainly domestic business and have few occasions for international tasks, their boss highly appreciates a returnee's English ability. On the other hand, if there is not any kind of international task, the boss does not even notice this ability of the returnee. For the workers in multi-national companies or international outlook offices of Japanese companies, their English ability seemed to be fundamental. This change of degree was very clearly described by three participants who had worked for different organisations. Professional P-D who had worked for a very conservative Japanese company and a multi-national company compares the difference:

[P-D] When I just started working for the first company, I was being utilised as a work-ready graduate, because the English speakers were so limited in that office environment.... For the first few years, yes, I was a work-ready graduate with English ability. But a few years later, I started to try to learn specific knowledge in the field. So, I think, I was valued as a study abroad returnee for the first two years... Then in the new company, because everyone can speak English, well, it has very little to do with (my study abroad experience). I think, not only English but also more detailed communication skills are needed.

Another key finding to mention was that there were a few professionals who described their company's culture as equal opportunity. Their employers, which were Japanese but ran multi-national businesses, did not differentiate between the workers according to their past international experience. The companies believe that wherever a worker is sent, he or she will do good job, as they have been selected to work for the company in the first place. It could be said that for some companies, study abroad experience is not regarded as precious as the other companies do.

4.6.2 Analysis and discussion

It became clear that most of the professional participants have been working in international environments or had been asked to deal with international affairs, whether bosses knew and valued their study abroad history or not. In addition, as shown in Table 4-3, the majority of participants had been overseas as a part of business, training or education. About half of them had shown initiative and received the opportunity or had chosen to go overseas of their own accord. Even three participants who did not mention any overseas experience in their careers were often commanded to deal with international tasks. As reported in government papers (e.g. METI & MEXT, 2010), many Japanese companies have been expanding their businesses overseas, especially within the last two decades. In that process, interviewees seemed to be valued and utilised well as a bilingual human resource. As seen in the literature (DISCO, 2014a) and sections 4.4 and 4.5, student returnees tended to choose jobs which have an international aspect. This was similar to both participant groups' career expectations prior to the beginning of employment, discussed in sections 4.4 and 4.5. In this respect, these findings provide sufficient evidence to state that their preference is to be fulfilled to some extent in their career.

Another point to consider is that this result of highly valued English ability slightly contradicts with the result from their own appreciation on competencies gained from study abroad experience, which were more varied, especially in the field of intercultural settings (see section 4.5.2). It also partially contradicts the report by AAEC, which showed the reasons for recruiting study abroad returnees were the traits of independence, flexibility, communication skills, language ability, an international outlook and having had an experience of study abroad (see section 2.2.3). This is presumably due to participants' perception as an information source. It is easy to recognise objectively the positive evaluation of English ability by the frequently asked tasks. On the other hand, competencies such as intercultural competencies and personal history of study abroad are difficult to distinguish and evaluate. It is almost impossible to know how employers value these competencies unless they explicitly tell the returnees and their study abroad history becomes older and more out-dated year by year. In addition, for those employers who have limited understanding of English or intercultural competence, these returnees' competencies might be misunderstood as a part of English ability.

4.7 Conclusion

The aims of this chapter were to present the information of samples, and report the results of the study and discuss all the findings to address research question 1: how former study abroad students perceive the effect of the experience of studying abroad on their career. Firstly, their outcomes of study abroad were analysed. It is suggested that for most of the participants, the most significant impact of the experience was on personal development, intercultural competencies and academic motivation rather than English ability. In particular, for those who had never lived alone, it was very challenging to make themselves a more mature and independent individual. Academic influences were not as strong, but almost all had identified the differences in British academic culture, and this resulted in a positive effect on their learning motivation either in their major or language studies.

Later, three sections reviewed several interview questions about career impact. It found that English and intercultural competencies were consistently reported as advantageous by returnees throughout all questions. However, the way people value these competencies depends on the situation, their individual history and the community to which they belong. As the literature suggests (DISCO, 2014a; Dwyer, 2004), both student and professional returnees tended to be in favour of jobs with international and multicultural aspects, and most of the professionals had actually been involved in international environments, or had been asked to deal with international affairs in varying degrees. It seemed that employers value them for their actual English proficiency rather than for their intercultural competencies or study abroad experience itself, which were invisible and old.

Chapter 5 The meaning of *Global Jinzai*

This chapter presents and analyses the key findings for the research question 2: what does “*Global Jinzai*” mean in terms of former study abroad students’ perception. In the government policy context, they are the potential candidates for *Global Jinzai*, or those closest to it. Therefore, understanding their perception may be equivalent to finding a consensus on the meaning of *Global Jinzai* by potential *Global Jinzai*. To begin with, it shows the results in response to the three sub questions: a) what kind of *competencies* are they required to have?, b) are they similar to or different from the government definition?, and c) should *Global Jinzai* be cultivated, and if so, why? Due to question similarity, the results for sub questions a and b are presented together by students and professionals respectively. The section then compares and discusses these results. As for sub question c, the findings from the two groups are analysed simultaneously, as there is no remarkable difference in the trends between undergraduate students and professionals. Finally, the conclusion discusses the overall results and analyses in order to respond to the overall question of former study abroad students’ perceptions.

5.1 What kind of competencies are they required to have? Are these similar to or different from the government definition?

This section reports and analyses the returnees’ perceptions of *Global Jinzai*. It relies mainly on their responses to the following interview questions: ‘what does *Global Jinzai* mean to you? What kind of person do you imagine from the term *Global Jinzai*? What kind of attitudes, knowledge and skills do they bear?’ It also includes their relevant opinion shown in their response in other parts of interview. First, the results of each group are independently shown and then the results are compared with the governmental definition of *Global Jinzai*. As explained in chapter 1, this study employed the definition of *Global Jinzai* suggested by the Global Human Resource Development Committee in 2010 (METI & MEXT (Global Human Resource Development Committee of the Industry-Academia Partnership for Human Resource Development), 2010). According to this definition, *Global Jinzai* are expected to possess the following competencies:

Competency A: Communication ability in a foreign language (particularly in English, which is widely used in the world)

Competency B: Ability to understand and make use of different cultures

i. To take action while being conscious of cultural differences, such as differences in values and communicative methods (= Cultural differences)

ii. To not judge cultural differences as good or bad, but to be interested in and understand such differences and thus be flexible in action

iii. To recognise the strengths of diverse people with cultural differences and to use such strengths for the creation of new values through a synergetic effect

Competency C: Fundamental competencies for working persons

i. Ability to step forward (action)

Ability to take a step forward and try patiently even after failure

Independence / Ability to take actions / Ability to motivate others

ii. Ability to think through the issues (thinking)

Ability to ask questions and think well

Ability to identify problems / Ability to plan/ Ability to create

iii. Ability to work in a team (teamwork)

Ability to cooperate with diversified people in achieving a goal

Ability to provide information / Flexibility/ Submission to discipline/ Ability to listen carefully / Ability to understand situations/ Ability to control stress

Based on Global Human Resource Development Committee (METI & MEXT (Global Human Resource Development Committee of the Industry-Academia Partnership for Human Resource Development), 2010) and Yonezawa (2014)

5.1.1 The initial results of group S: undergraduate students

The first major point of consensus noticed was in the importance of foreign language ability, especially English. All of the participants referred to it, and all except two thought that it was a necessary or unavoidable condition for a *Global Jinzai*. It can be said that fluency of English or a foreign language was the most important factor for group S who had taken part in this study. The second key finding in their *Global Jinzai* perception was cultural awareness. More than half of group S participants stated that a *Global Jinzai* should have knowledge and understanding of other cultures or countries,

as well as an attitude to try to understand people from different cultures. These two findings above are exemplified by the statements of student S-D and S-B:

[S-D] First thing which comes to my mind is English. Then, probably an ability in other foreign language. But I think language is not enough, so, well, Global Jinzai is someone who studied about the culture of people who live in a different region, or things like that.. Or, having an attitude of being interested and attempting to understand in a non-judgemental way at the first encounter.

[S-B] Well...I think, linguistic ability is essential. Then, additionally, important things are... when you are surrounded by people from different backgrounds, how you make yourself understood, as well as taking into account the opinions of others.

Similar to this quote by S-B, four students regarded the expression of opinions and taking part in discussions an important ability for a *Global Jinzai*. Apart from these major tendencies mentioned above, there were several other abilities mentioned by students, such as independence, aggressiveness, and a strong mentality.

Views which a *Global Jinzai* should possess, such as a global view, multilateral views and an understanding of Western views, was sometimes mentioned as well. Some group S participants described a *Global Jinzai* as a person of character. For instance, they said that *Global Jinzai* is a person who works to contribute to the others, society, or the world, or a person who is trusted by the people from other nationalities as a representative of Japan.

Interestingly, it seemed to be believed by most of student participants that these competencies for a *Global Jinzai* can be obtained by living or studying in a foreign country. This was why some students said that overseas experience itself is significant. Student S-F provided an example of how obtaining such competencies could happen:

[S-F] Global.... Firstly, to have an experience abroad.

[Researcher] Does it mean living or traveling?

[S-F] A certain amount, in the place, for more than one year. And yes, live like the people do. What comes to my mind first is being able to speak English. English ability enables you to understand different cultures more. Understanding different cultures.. Not Japanese.

[Researcher] What does it mean to understand different cultures?

[S-F] Knowing the peculiar culture there, and participating in it.

[Researcher] Oh, participating in it.

[S-F] Yes.

[Researcher] Is it like, to accept?

[S-F] To accept.

[Researcher] To follow?

[S-F] To follow. Yeah.

This obviously came from students' own international experience, but at the same time, it clearly supports the current government policy of encouraging students to study abroad.

5.1.2 The initial results of group P: professionals

The first crucial finding is that English was not regarded as important by the majority of professional participants. Many professionals did mention English abilities, but they did not blindly support the learning of English. For them, there were more important aspects of a *Global Jinzai*, such as communication skills and expertise. English was just a communicative tool which they can learn when it becomes necessary for their life or career. An example of such a view was expressed by professional P-B:

[P-B] Let me think.. If asked whether English is essential or not, I would say not essential.

[Researcher] Do you mean there is something more important than English?

[P-B] There is. Such as expertise in the job field and attitude towards communication. I think, if they have English on top of these, it would be just better.

Secondly, it was found that many professional participants agreed on the importance of possessing an equal and non-discriminative attitude towards others no matter who they are, nor where they are from. They chose the word 'equal relationship' rather than acceptance. This was described well by the professional P-M who works for a branch of a Japanese company in South East Asia:

[P-M] For example, going to different places, in different organisations, that's someone who respects the local people and can work with local

people, to do something that he/she has to do, work or study, whatever it is. Regrettably, in Asia, there is an atmosphere of Japanese supremacy, and I'm working in it. That's different from Europe and the USA. In this atmosphere, it's how to work well with local people, by communicating with them, um, communication in the genuine sense. It's someone who can work in that way, wherever he/she goes, although there are differences in the way things are dealt with in Asia, Europe, or the USA. It may not just be about working, though. Well.. I think, this kind of person is a Global Jinzai.

This view might have been caused by the organisational culture of Japanese multinational companies. It has been said to be a very home national oriented management system (Kasahara, 2014).

In addition, many of participants used the term 'communication skill,' which enables them to work with people from different backgrounds, not only with foreigners, but also with Japanese people who have different cultures. Although an 'ability to explain by language' or 'verbalization' were sometimes chosen instead, their meanings were similar in the context. This is demonstrated by the following statement by P-I, who had worked domestically for ten years:

Well, first of all, hmm, spare no effort in communication. Perhaps, someone who doesn't give up explaining by using language, and communicates until the listener understands. Someone who has that ability.. who has the disastrous experience. How to say, I presume, probably, it may be like a series of disastrous events, though I don't know well. So it is important to have the ability to overcome these difficulties. Hmm. So, it's the ability to explain to others, logically, by using linguistic ability. Hmm, able to communicate beyond the cultural borders....

It should be noted that all professionals who work in sales or planning departments pointed out these two skills and abilities above without fail. By contrast, participants who had more specialist type jobs such as research, system engineering, accounting and design insisted that expertise was the most important feature of *Global Jinzai*. It can be assumed that for the jobs which require workers to meet many people, having the skills and ability to communicate and cope with diverse people without causing any problems is vital. It can be interpreted that these abilities are vital core competencies of these type jobs, or in other word, it can be called expertise as well. The contrast between the two job types were clearly seen in the statement of P-H, who had been working in accounting and general affairs in a large Japanese trading company, and of P-A, who had been working as a researcher in a large Japanese electronics company.

[P-H] Hmm, but, perhaps, although the term Global Jinzai sounds very difficult, it's not someone who can do this or that. It's someone who can equally get along with people from different countries, different backgrounds, and diverse backstories. Having these abilities is fundamental. Then, in order to achieve this, there is English.....

....So, it's definitely not something like, because I studied bla bla bla at university.

[P-A] Above all, I think expertise is indispensable both in Japan and wherever they go. Going overseas in the name of globalisation, without expertise, eventually there would be nothing that you could gain, nor that you could give. You would just be going overseas to go overseas. In that respect, there should at first be people who have some kind of ability, and supplementary, have a connection to the outside world. This is the most global, I think...

An outstanding aspect of *Global Jinzai* competencies was given by participant P-J, who has been a financial specialist in three different organisations, including two enterprises with foreign capital. Based on his claim on the necessity of expertise, he believed that *Global Jinzai* should be competitive in the global human resource market:

[P-J] For me, for instance, it's someone who can be sold when placed in the global human resource market. That is to say, globally standardised, such as finance, marketing, specialty from each field, then can be sold in any country. Also, the toughness which enables them to get along in that environment, and something like international experience. I think it's someone who has these competencies.

There was another participant, P-D, who had been working for a foreign company after changing jobs from a Japanese company. P-J and P-D were the only two participants who had worked for a foreign company, and who mentioned the significance of value in the human resource market.

In addition to the findings above, some professionals mentioned the importance of knowledge about their own country and the partner country, toughness, and ability to verbalise.

5.1.3 Comparisons of *Global Jinzai* definitions

Some connections and variations were found in relation to the governmental *Global Jinzai* definition. Firstly, in comparison with the *Global Jinzai*'s competency A,

'communication ability in a foreign language' is strongly supported by the students' opinion about the necessity of English or a foreign language, whereas professionals valued English as less important. This is an important fact in that professionals thought English had been very useful in their work career as shown in chapter 5, supporting JASSO's finding in 2011 (JASSO, 2011). When it comes to *Global Jinzai* competencies, they think English is not as essential.

Secondly, as for competency B 'ability to understand and take advantage of different cultures,' it can be said that the first and second sub competencies are similar to undergraduate students' frequent expression of 'knowledge and understanding of other culture or county' and 'attitude to try to understand people from different cultures.' In the same way, the professionals' perception was alike, as they often spoke of 'equal and non-discriminative attitude to people,' which is similar to ii of competency B, although this was mostly seen in workers of sales and planning type occupations. B-iii competency of recognising and using the strength of diverse people was, however, not suggested by any participant in response to the direct question asking about the meaning of *Global Jinzai*. One example, however, was given at the end of the interview with P-D, who works for a foreign founded multinational company. According to her, her boss seemed to have this ability:

[P-D] Now I'm working for the Asia, Africa and Middle East division. Above us, there are several divisions, and on top, there is the global division. People there are working with people all over the world.. These people on the upper ladder are coordinating the subordinates in different places. They are sharing the same rules and goals. By looking at them, hmm, I think they have a specialised skill of managing those subordinates with different beliefs and different background.

Thirdly, competency C, 'fundamental competencies for working persons', had more variation among responses; only some parts of it were described. A few students and professionals mentioned each component of competency C, such as independence and stress control. Students tended to refer to these slightly more than professionals. 'Expression of opinion and ability to discuss' could be regarded as relatively similar to 'ability to provide information.' Presumably, for professionals, these fundamental competencies for working persons are just fundamental, as the name shows. This may be a reason why they did not mention these as *Global Jinzai* competencies.

In addition to the points above, former study abroad students described some aspects of *Global Jinzai*, which are not clearly indicated in the definition in 2010. In this respect, a key fact to note is the significance of expertise among participants from specific fields. Neither undergraduate students nor general professionals suggested this. Expertise does not exist inside the *Global Jinzai* competencies set, but outside of it and is meant to be utilised by the *Global Jinzai* competencies. However, for those who had been working in a specific field, it is considered an essential condition to be a *Global Jinzai*.

Another critical point to mention is that participants often described good or bad examples of *Global Jinzai* throughout the interview. Interestingly, the good examples of *Global Jinzai* were talented and very successful people. For instance, a student participant gave an example of her friend, who was very active, involved in various social activities, knew well about the academic field, and open minded with many friends. On the other hand, bad examples were usually given about workers who could not communicate well with colleagues, because of a lack of communication skills or open attitude to understand others from different backgrounds, even if they were fluent in a foreign language. The tendency here is similar to what was found in the Internet search by Google discussed in chapter 2. All of the examples of *Global Jinzai* seen in the independent sources were very successful people.

In summary, it seems that the meaning of *Global Jinzai* for former study abroad students vary according to their career history. For instance, a professional who had active career choices and had worked for a different types of enterprises thought *Global Jinzai* meant being specialised and competitive in the global human resource market, whereas other professionals who had been working for a Japanese company in sales insisted more on the importance of *competencies* in interpersonal and intercultural settings. This was also explained by students' opinions. In contrast to professionals, their suggestions about *Global Jinzai* competencies were limited mainly within foreign language ability and expression of opinions, which are important in university life overseas. Presumably, this is due to the fact that they have never participated in the workforce yet and do not actually know what is important in a working environment. Above all, it seems pertinent to say that returnees' own views regarding *Global Jinzai* fully demonstrated their beliefs which have been developed through their personal and work experiences. Moreover, it should be noted that their perceptions do not always agree with the *Global Jinzai* definition defined by the government.

Given the fact that returnees' perception of *Global Jinzai* varies according to their working career and life stage, it would mean these perceptions may change as they grow older and experience different types of work. The government committee, the Global Human Resource Development Committee consisted of executives from enormous companies and important academics, who were in a different stage of their lives or different job history. There must be a difference in perceptions between young workers and older executives or academics. In other words, the definition does not include the opinions of young workers, who can also be *Global Jinzai*. If the government aims to foster as many front line, business-oriented *Global Jinzai* as possible, it is critical to take into account the opinions of those that most closely resemble these *Global Jinzai*. In so doing, essential objectives and clues in how best to foster *Global Jinzai* may be found.

5.3 Should *Global Jinzai* be cultivated? And why?

This section presents and analyses the returnees' perceptions of *Global Jinzai* development in order to investigate whether they think *Global Jinzai* are needed in Japanese society and their reason for it. It mainly refers to the responses given for the interview question 'do you agree with the policy? And why?' As this question did not employ the governmental definition from 2010, participants answered based on their own perceptions of *Global Jinzai*. By asking why, this question aimed to understand their perception of the purpose of *Global Jinzai* development. This section looks at the results from the two groups together as there were no remarkable differences in the trends between undergraduate students and professionals. Subsequently, the analyses of the findings are discussed.

It is evident from their responses that all participants agreed that *Global Jinzai* to be fostered. Only a few people added a condition for this, but in general this was in consensus among participants. Several different reasons were given to explain why they supported fostering of *Global Jinzai*. To begin with, the economic situation surrounding Japan was often mentioned, such as the shrinking domestic market and maintaining the presence of the country in the world. As introduced in chapter 1, the economic difficulty of Japan has been warned of by government and economic associations for more than a decade. It can be said that it has already become common knowledge among the society as a consequence. Their views can be regarded as a national strategy. One professional,

who had been working for a Japanese company which had started business overseas in recent years, stated that:

[P-I] Well, perhaps, I think, globalisation is unstoppable. It's a rather well-known fact, and world is changing like that, so. Given this situation, think about how Japan is to survive? Hmm, I don't know if it's called Global Jinzai, but, the human resources who know about their own country, know about Japan, and know about overseas countries, then are able to negotiate and communicate there, will be needed without a doubt. That will consequently protect Japan. Well, I don't know if it is good for the world as well, but at least, it is good for Japan. It's necessary for Japan. So, I basically agree with the government fostering such human resources.

The second point made by participants was a rise in the interaction with foreigners. As a result of globalisation, the Japanese are having higher rates of contact with foreigners all around the world (see chapter 1, 1.1.1 (2)). This can be regarded as common sense, much like the economic situation above. In this respect, some participants believed that *Global Jinzai* are needed. They referred to inclusive citizenship and tended to worry about homogeneousness and a lack of tolerance or intercultural awareness in Japanese society. Interestingly, student S-K gave a more strong belief on this citizenship point of view rather than *Global Jinzai* as human resource. Her perception is given in this statements:

[S-K] It is not good if only a few people become Global Jinzai. It's like how 10 % of the population dominates most of the world wealth. Everyone should be a Global Jinzai. For that purpose, ordinary people should study in high school.

The conditions given in agreement to fostering *Global Jinzai* could be divided into two types. Three participants showed their worries against blinded support for English learning and maintained that *Global Jinzai* possessed more important abilities. Others claimed that if the person could not work for the country and only thought about their own careers, then that kind of person should not be cultivated. There were two examples of such a view expressed by P-K who works as a sales and trading assistant and P-E who had worked for recruitment in a Japanese company:

[P-K] Well, I rather agree, but it's meaningless if the person cannot speak proper Japanese before learning English, or doesn't mind their manners.

[Researcher] Why should they be able to speak proper Japanese?

[P-K] Well, it's probably because I'm working for a Japanese company, but if the worker cannot speak proper Japanese, or cannot use honorific expressions, that person results in adverse effect on our business. Even in English communication settings, those people don't have respect for others, as an adult, correctly. Hmm, if the person cannot work properly as a business person, it would be the same in English, that person won't change...

[P-E] ... So I agree with fostering these human resources, but it's how you perceive it... If the person is just able to speak English, and changes their jobs frequently, that's a bit different. Having fostered the young generation, if they go away for better-paid jobs overseas, it would be a different thing entirely. Here are Japanese people and the country of Japan, so it would be good if more and more people are fostered who can contribute to Japan. But it may not be very good if they've gone overseas without returning. Well, going somewhere temporarily to gain experience, becoming well developed, and coming back is good, I think.

[Researcher] Is the contribution to country or society?

[P-E] Oh, to country.

Although their aspects of this view were different, all of them have a sense of caution of fostering *Global Jinzai*, who were blindly believed as an ideal *Global Jinzai* by society.

Attention paid to the significance of studying abroad was given only by undergraduate students. Although it does not directly give a reason to support *Global Jinzai* development, several students discussed at length how meaningful their experience was for them and that they wanted as many other students as possible to study abroad as part of *Global Jinzai* development. Obviously, fostering *Global Jinzai* is not the main purpose of study abroad. However, they gave much importance to studying abroad as their recent experience was vital in their life. This is exemplified by the statement of S-G:

[S-G] Hmm, I don't know the reason why the government is talking about Global Jinzai development. But indeed, I thought the qualities of learning have a big difference between studying abroad and studying domestically. Study abroad doesn't necessarily mean that everything comes along okay. As an opportunity, it is important to create a system where everyone can learn in diverse environments. Because, for the moment, very limited people can study abroad now.

[Researcher] Do you think studying abroad is beneficial for fostering Global Jinzai?

[S-G] Hmm, it's ... yeah, very significant as one of the devices. But study abroad does not necessarily mean equal to Global Jinzai development...

In summary, it can be said that most of the participants share the common ground of understanding the necessity of fostering *Global Jinzai* for Japan's strategic future with other parties, such as governments, economic associations, and companies. It can be said that they are unconsciously supporting the "national model of society and education" in spite of their study abroad experience (Davies et al, 2005). At the same time, as some of the participants indicated, there seems to be another necessity to foster a new type of citizenship as a *Global Jinzai* that is inclusive of people from different backgrounds. This is also evident from the findings in Chapter 5.1, which showed strong support to the importance of knowledge of other cultures, and equal and non-discriminative attitudes for understanding people from different backgrounds, as a competency of their *Global Jinzai* image. As Japan is regarded as a very homogenous country, and some parts of society are still exclusive to outsiders. For instance, there have been many public hate speeches towards Korean citizens in Japan in recent years, which is not illegal in the country. It can be presumed that study abroad returnees possess a better understanding of intercultural relationships, which leads them to be tolerant of others, which was developed by intercultural education through the experience abroad.

In addition to the nationalistic and inclusive citizenship types of views mentioned above, it should be noted that there seems to be two other types of views of *Global Jinzai*. Firstly, there were a few people who mentioned global issues and the necessity to solve them. This is similar to the point Heater (1997, p.37) made. Secondly, there were a few descriptions given about ambitious people who were interested in their own growth and success rather than the benefit of the nation, a company or others. Several people emphasised this point as their career view (See P-E's quote above).

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter investigated the findings from interviews in order to better understand what *Global Jinzai* means in terms of the perceptions of former study abroad students. It became clear that their perceptions of *Global Jinzai* were diversified and depended on their lives and career histories. They seemed to have chosen some important competencies for *Global Jinzai* from the competencies which they deemed meaningful in their own lives. However, there were also certain patterns in their opinions. Firstly, professionals tended to oppose the students' and government definition of *Global Jinzai*,

in terms of (A) communication ability in English. Secondly, it can be said (B) ‘ability to understand and make use of different cultures’ was widely supported by both groups, and in particular, professionals in jobs which require communication with many clients and colleagues tended to supported this competency stronger. (C) ‘fundamental competencies for working persons’ were rarely referred in general, but by a few students. Fourthly, some of the participants pointed out the necessary competencies out of governmental *Global Jinzai* definition. Several professionals insisted on the importance of expertise above all, and broader view was sometime suggested as well.

As for fostering *Global Jinzai*, all the participants agreed on its necessity. Although the national strategic reasons were dominant, a few warned of the blind support for *Global Jinzai* development in the society. An interesting finding is that there were several individuals who pointed out an emphasis on the inclusiveness and tolerance towards diversity among Japanese people and society. In addition, two other types of *Global Jinzai* perceptions were detected: self-interestedness and global issues. These four were not always clearly separated and sometimes an individual could possess mixed opinions. These four stances might be explained by the individual’s ideology: collectivism, individualism, cosmopolitanism and global citizenship. Although further investigation is needed, research into these ideologies may provide an explanation to the contested arguments of *Global jinzai* in Japanese society. Due to the fact that study abroad returnees are expected to be *Global Jinzai* by government policies, it would be useful to understand and take into account what these actual returnees perceive as the necessary competencies and purpose of *Global Jinzai*.

Chapter 6 Returnees as potential candidates for *Global Jinzai*

As seen in the literature review, the meaning of *Global Jinzai* seems to be contested among society, and only a few visible examples are of very successful individuals. According to the policies which promote students to study abroad, it sounds like a good method to foster *Global Jinzai*. In order to establish a connection between the two things, this chapter presents and analyses the findings of research question 3: are former study abroad students *Global Jinzai* or potential candidates for it?

6.1 Do they perceive themselves as *Global Jinzai*?

Participants were asked how much they have in common with their own image of *Global Jinzai* (see chapter 5, 5.1). Although this sub-question had to have criteria to compare with, the meaning of *Global Jinzai* was consistent throughout society (see the chapter 2, 2.1). Therefore, the interview employed a question which made themselves able to do so with their own perceptions of *Global Jinzai* rather than the definition by the government, as they had already asked about it in the previous question and made their mind clearer than the multi-talented *Global Jinzai* definition.

The majority of them gave positive responses, although a professional's perception was relatively more positive. They were very humble, so many of those surveyed expressed that they were on the way to being *Global Jinzai*, but still had a long way to go. It sounded as if they were trying to be a *Global Jinzai*. Such an example was given by S-G. At first, she described her *Global Jinzai* image as a person with high language proficiency, with a contribution not only to her own nation but also to the world with a great deal of knowledge. In contrast she said:

[S-G] Ah, not at all. Well, but... I want to be like that. Hmm, I'm still on the way to get there, just came on the starting line for it. So well, it's like an excuse, but now is the time to garner the knowledge. So, keep the vision in my mind, I would like to study.

In other words, it can be presumed that returnees perceive a *Global Jinzai* to be their own career goals or objectives. Therefore, their self-evaluation changes depending on their self-confidence, or if there is any objective evaluation from others. Overall, it can be

concluded that the majority of former study abroad students are *Global Jinzai* or a candidate for it, if based on their own perception.

6.2 Do the professionals think their bosses and employers perceive them as such?

While the perception of boss's evaluation of themselves varied, the answers were generally yes. Professionals who have not had any international jobs tended to guess their boss's perception as/was low. Most of the answers had 'perhaps' at the beginning because they have never been told directly. Only the few people that gave confident replies were those who had an opportunity to be objectively evaluated, such as being selected as an employee in multinational companies.

Another interesting fact was seen in comparison with their perception of their boss's evaluation. About half of the population had a congruence between their own perception and the evaluation of their boss, while a few had a great difference. P-K gave sufficient evidence and reason for this. As reported in chapter 5.1, she firstly thought that a *Global Jinzai* needs to have good communication skills in Japanese, politeness to the business partners, and activeness to build a relationship. Then she admitted that she was far from this character. On the contrary, she believes that her boss regards her as a *Global Jinzai* because of her international tasks:

[P-K] Perhaps, they regard me so. Otherwise, they won't let me go business trip overseas. My position as well. I am in charge of new employee at the office in the Asian country. Well it's also because there's not enough workers now. I'm tentatively utilised and regarded as such..... Other surrounding members also treat me like that as well. I feel that every day.....

[Researcher] What is the big difference? Your image of Global Jinzai was like Do you think their image of Global Jinzai is a bit different from yours?

[P-K] They are like, being able to speak English is brilliant. But I think, it's necessary to possess comprehensive skill including other ones. I haven't get there yet. Every day, have to study. That's why.

This example shows there is a possibility of difference between their own perceptions of *Global Jinzai* and their boss' perception of it. However, based on their perception of their boss' evaluation, it could be said that most of the participants are *Global Jinzai* or candidates for it.

6.3 In comparison with the definition of Global Jinzai and what they say they have learnt are applicable?

This section compares the returnees' perceptions of their study abroad outcomes with the/a *Global Jinzai* definition in order to identify whether studying abroad is actually helping with developing the *Global Jinzai* competencies of students. The results, especially from chapter 4, are used here to compare.

6.3.1 (A) Communication ability in a foreign languages

Due to the destination of the participants' programmes, it is suitable to replace the 'foreign language' label to 'English' in this context. It is evident from the responses that students' evaluations on English change in each stage of life and in each context. At the beginning, English was one of the major reasons for them to go abroad. After return home, returnees did not recognise it as the most important outcome from the experience except few people, but they had willingness to utilise their English ability and to be valued by that. Then about ten-years later, professional participants agreed that English had been very beneficial in their lives and it had been valued by their employers (JASSO, 2011). Many of undergraduate returnees believe English or a foreign language is important as a competency of *Global Jinzai*, whereas some professional returnees think it is not an essential condition for a *Global Jinzai*. Despite the change in their own evaluation, the most important point is that they are valued by their employers and are using their ability in many business situations. Therefore, findings of this current study indicate that direct enrolment in a study abroad programme can enhance participants' (A) communication ability in English.

6.3.2 (B) Ability to understand and make use of different cultures

As well as much literature which suggests that study abroad impacts on intercultural competencies (Dwyer, 2004; JASSO, 2011; Katsura, 2002; Nakagawa, 2009; Tokui, 2002), the governmental committee said that "study abroad is the good opportunity to gain this ability to understand and make use of different cultures" in their report on *Global Jinzai* development in 2010 (p.36). In the current study results, both participant groups often described several competencies which are useful and helpful in intercultural and international settings. For instance, communication skills with different people, knowledge about Japan and other countries, multi-dimensional views and tolerance to diverse senses of value were brought up. These competencies were much

more frequently seen than English ability or other things in the context of learning outcomes of studying abroad and career expectations. However, it became of similar importance as English in terms of useful competency in their early careers, and less valued by their employers. On the other hand, regarding the meaning of *Global Jinzai*, this ability was absolutely supported by most of the participants, in particular professionals who had worked for a job which requires meetings and cooperating with others.

It is important to consider the similarity between these findings and *Global Jinzai* (B) ability to understand and make use of different cultures, in order to conclude if studying abroad is beneficial for enhancement of this ability. According to the definition, this (B) ability has three stages:

i. To take action while being conscious of cultural differences, such as differences in values and communicative methods (= Cultural differences)

ii. To not judge cultural differences as good or bad, but to be interested in and understand such differences and thus be flexible in action

iii. To recognise the strengths of diverse people with cultural differences and to use such strengths for the creation of new values through a synergetic effect

Yonezawa, 2014, p.38 based on Global Human Resource Development Committee, 2010

It could be said that most of the points made by participants are almost identical with sub stages 1 and 2. Though opinions related to stage 3 were limited compared to the other two, there were two individuals that explained the importance of this ability. Overall, key findings provide sufficient evidence to claim that studying abroad enhances the ability to understand and make use of different cultures in the early stage of returnees' careers.

6.3.3 (C) Fundamental competencies for a working person

In contrast to (A) and (B) competencies above, this/these (C) competency/ies was seen less frequently in the participants' perceptions. However, only in the context of learning outcomes from studying abroad. Returnees often claimed these as highly meaningful, especially people who had never lived alone before the experience. The precise competencies of reported (C) competencies were independence, ability to step forward,

expression of opinions (similar to ability to provide information), skills to adjust to the environment (similar to flexibility) and resilience to life in foreign country (similar to stress control). These were occasionally brought up in relation to the statement, especially in the context of studying abroad outcomes. This trend almost matches the findings from literature (Dwyer, 2004; JASSO, 2011; Kobayashi, 2013). The findings suggest that studying abroad is beneficial for younger generations to acquire some but not all parts of the (C) fundamental competencies for a working person. As explained earlier, this (C) competencies were suggested for all potential working persons in 2006 no matter whether they were *Global Jinzai* or not (METI, 2006), and in this respect, studying abroad should not necessarily cover all the (C) competencies.

6.3.4 Non-*Global Jinzai* competencies

What is to be noted is that there were several references to the competencies out of *Global Jinzai*'s core competencies. Most of all, changes in academic learning and motivation to continue learning were remarkable in both groups. The contents were knowledge of both major and minor subjects, academic writing, and simply English. Although they were not expecting or had not used this academic attainment unless going to the relevant career, their motivation to study harder seemed to be kept up, at least during their university lives. There is a typical example phrase stated by professional P-G:

[P-G] At my home university in Japan, I had never been taught anything about academic writing. I was just told to write essays and wrote them without any knowledge. But in the UK, I had to do that in English. So I learned how to write academically, and I got to know how. Later it was applicable to Japanese context. Consequently I could use the skill for my dissertation too. Then later, when I was a mature student for a master's degree, I became to work for the writing centre there. In this respect, that knowledge helped me.

As discussed in chapter 5, the expertise is one of the key competencies of *Global Jinzai* for specialist types of professionals. Academic attainment seemed to have a relevant impact on their expertise only when they choose careers in related fields to their majors and when they had the opportunity to use academic writing skills in their works. The latter could be regarded as competency to develop their expertise. Apart from the academic impact, personal relationships and expressions of opinions were also suggested, as well as literature (JASSO, 2011).

6.4 Conclusion

The findings from this chapter indicate that returnees from direct enrolment model study abroad have become *Global Jinzai* or candidates for it to a great degree. In comparison with their own perception of *Global Jinzai*, most of them tended to identify themselves as a *Global Jinzai* or a candidate for it. In case of group P, they presumed that their employers perceive them as *Global Jinzai* more than they themselves do, as employers seemed to value only their visible skills such as English.

From the objective comparison between their perceptions of learning and experiences, and the *Global Jinzai* definition in 2010, it became evident that their *Global Jinzai* competencies have been developed at certain degrees through studying abroad experiences. Moreover, students tended to have aspiration to make the most of these competencies, and professionals had been using these competencies in their career. It is meaningful that (B) competencies of *Global Jinzai* have grown and have been utilised well, though not everyone reported this growth. Each (C) fundamental competency of working persons had a different degree of support from participants, the most influential change seemed to be becoming independent, this happened within the students who had never lived alone.

In summary, these findings clearly show a certain degree of connection between studying abroad and *Global Jinzai*, and it is also important to consider the other aspects of learning outcomes, which has had a great impact on students' lives.

Chapter 7 Conclusions

7.1 Summary of findings and conclusions

7.1.1 Background and methodology

Japanese government, industries and education have been to very keen to foster *Global Jinzai* (global human resources) in recent years, and studying abroad has been presumed to be an efficient pathway for this. However, there has been little research done concerning the correlation or causality between study abroad and *Global Jinzai*. Therefore, this research study focused on the investigation and establishment of the relation between study abroad and development of *Global Jinzai* by exploring returnees' perception of study abroad outcome and its effect on their career and their own perception of *Global Jinzai*. This study addressed the following questions: 1) How do former study abroad students perceive the effect of the experience of studying abroad on their career? 2) What does “*Global Jinzai*” mean in terms of former study abroad students' perception? 3) Are former study abroad students *Global Jinzai* or potential candidates for it?

This research employed semi-structured interviews as an exploratory method. One group consisted of 11 undergraduate students who were about to start job hunting after their return from a UK university and the other group consisted of 13 professionals who studied in the UK more between 2002 and 2004 and had worked for more than 5 years in their career. Interview questions were designed to understand what they thought they learnt while studying abroad, how it affected their career as a potential *Global Jinzai*, and what does *Global Jinzai* mean to them. Data were collected in January and February 2015 mainly in Japan. Findings were also examined in light of the *Global Jinzai* definition by the Global Human Resource Development Committee of the Industry-Academia Partnership for Human Resource Development in 2010.

7.1.2 Outcomes of study abroad

The results suggested that for most of the participants, the major influences of the experience were seen in personal development, intercultural competencies and academic motivation rather than English ability despite their initial motivation. In particular, for

those who had never lived alone, study abroad seems to be challenging but meaningful learning experience to be more mature and independent individual. Academic impacts were not as strong, but almost all had identified the differences in British academic culture, and this resulted in a positive effect on their learning motivation either in their major or language studies.

Regarding their perception on career, English and intercultural competencies seems to be consistently advantageous for the returnees. However, the way people value these competencies depends on the situation, their individual history and the community to which they belong. As the literature suggests (DISCO, 2014a; Dwyer, 2004), both student and professional participants were likely to be in favour of jobs with international and multicultural dimension, and most of the professionals had actually been involved in international environments, or had been instructed to deal with international affairs in varying degrees. It seemed that bosses value them for their actual English proficiency rather than for their intercultural competencies or study abroad experience itself, which were invisible and old.

7.1.3 The meaning of *Global Jinzai* in terms of returnees' perception

It became clear that returnees' perceptions of *Global Jinzai* were diversified and depended on their lives and career histories. They seemed to have chosen some important competencies for *Global Jinzai* from the competencies which they deemed meaningful in their own lives. However, there were also certain patterns in their opinions. Firstly, professionals tended to oppose the students' and government definition of *Global Jinzai*, in terms of (A) communication ability in English. Secondly, it can be said (B) 'ability to understand and make use of different cultures' was widely supported by both groups, and in particular, professionals in jobs which require communication with many clients and colleagues tended to supported this competency stronger. (C) 'fundamental competencies for working persons' were rarely referred in general, but by a few students. Fourthly, some of the returnees pointed out the necessary competencies out of governmental *Global Jinzai* definition. Several professionals insisted on the importance of expertise above all, and broader view was sometime desired.

As for fostering *Global Jinzai*, all the participants agreed on its necessity. Although the national strategic reasons were dominant, a few warned of the blind support for *Global Jinzai* development in the society. Interestingly, there were some individuals who emphasis on the inclusiveness and tolerance towards diversity among Japanese people and society. In addition, self-interest and global issues type of *Global Jinzai* were also detected. These four stances seems to not be clearly separated and sometimes one individual possess mixed opinions. This point needs to be investigated further to explain the contested arguments of *Global Jinzai* in Japanese society. Considering the fact that study abroad returnees are expected to be *Global Jinzai* by government policies, it would be useful to understand and take into account what these actual returnees perceive as the necessary competencies and purpose of *Global Jinzai*.

7.1.4 Returnees as potential candidates for *Global Jinzai*

It is possible to say that returnees from direct enrolment model study abroad have become *Global Jinzai* or candidates for it to a great degree. The most of participants tended to identify themselves as a *Global Jinzai* or a candidate for it in reference to their own perception of *Global Jinzai*. In case of group P, they presumed that their employers regard them as *Global Jinzai* more than they themselves do in that employers seemed to value only their visible skills such as English.

From the objective comparison between their perceptions of learning and experiences, and the *Global Jinzai* definition in 2010, it became evident that their *Global Jinzai* competencies have been developed at certain degrees through studying abroad experiences. Moreover, students tended to have aspiration to make the most of these competencies, and professionals had been using these competencies in their career. It is important that (B) competencies of *Global Jinzai* have grown and have been utilised well, though not everyone reported this growth. Each (C) fundamental competency of working persons had a different degree of support from participants, the most influential change seemed to be becoming independent, this happened within the students who had never lived alone.

7.2 Limitations

Although the current study provides a number of significant findings, it does have some limitations. Firstly, the sampling of the study was somewhat limited. While this sample

was large enough to enable analyses of trends in the returnees from the UK, more interviews could have provided more insight into the varieties of former study abroad students' experiences. For instance, in this study, only returnees from some UK universities were involved. Interviewing more returnees, who went to different destinations such as the USA or China, would have generated the genuine trends in the outcome of study abroad. Secondly, due to condensed time, it compared groups of young students and professionals after some years of work experience rather than following one group longitudinally. Therefore, the results might have been affected by the characteristic differences between both sample groups. However, time and financial imitations necessitated restricting the sample.

7.3 Recommendations for practice

Considering the fact that most returnees had learnt and developed substantially throughout their time abroad, and that these experiences have had a great impact on their careers and on their competencies of *Global Jinzai*, it seems natural to conclude that the promotion of study abroad by government and academia should be promoted. In order to increase students' interests, the benefits of studying abroad, other than language acquisition, could be emphasised further. Developments in independence, flexibility, personal views, intercultural competency, personal networking and better career prospects may attract students who are concerned about their future.

In terms of *Global Jinzai* development, this study found that participants' perceptions were diverse but had some things in common. Firstly their views on the purpose for fostering *Global Jinzai* can be divided into four categories. This classification should be clearly distinguished and used depending on the purpose of education. Otherwise, the message to young students may be contradictory depending on different contexts and may cause confusion among students. Not only for the benefit of the nation, but also for the benefit of the citizen and the world should also be considered.

Another main finding of the study was that despite their youthfulness, professional returnees were often recognised as *Global Jinzai*, especially by their employees. Unlike publicly successful *Global Jinzai*, they are ordinary workers that play important roles in the front lines of the global business scene. In this respect, these workers should be highlighted more in society. Especially for young students, it is important to show these immediate role models for their realistic future careers. Furthermore, by understanding

and analysing what kinds of competency have been useful and significant for these role models, it might become possible to support study abroad students to develop that specific competency before, during and after their stay.

7.4 Recommendations for further research

This study cannot represent all Japanese study abroad returnees. Therefore, in order to provide a more comprehensive picture of the relationship between study abroad and *Global Jinzai*, it is worth investigating the views of returnees who went to the countries or who have never studied abroad. Regarding the meaning of *Global Jinzai*, a more broad investigation could be conducted as well. Because it is contested, not only the views of study abroad returnees should be analysed. The general public may have different points of view too. These perceptions might be divided into the previously suggested four groups, and would help human resource development for future generations.

Additionally, in order to maximise the outcome of study abroad for *Global Jinzai* development and to conduct systematic studies about it, appropriate measurement is desirable. Therefore, creating an assessment tool for *Global Jinzai* development needs to be considered in the future.

Although *Global Jinzai* will be increasingly important to the government, business community and academia in Japan, it also has the probability of stretching well beyond such national competitiveness goals and dealing with much larger issues, such as Japan's inclusive society and world peace. I hope that the findings of this research study and the recommendations above will be useful for all parts of society.

Appendix A: Information sheet

Pre-interview Questionnaire/ Information sheet 事前質問票

1. Age (年齢)
2. Gender (性別)
3. Academic year and age when you went to study abroad (海外留学時の学年と年齢)
4. Department at home University (日本の所属大学での学部)
5. Department at study abroad University (留学先の大学での学部)
6. Length of study abroad (海外留学の期間と西暦)
7. Foreign experience before study abroad 留学前の海外経験
 - * Living 居住: Country 国 duration 期間
 - * Traveling 旅行: times 回 Duration 期間
 - * Study abroad 留学: country 国 duration 期間
8. Personal Development during study abroad 留学中の自己成長
 以下の能力について、留学前と留学後の状態を五段階で評価し、どのような変化があったかを教えて下さい。(1=低い、5=高い)

Valuables 能力項目	Before studying abroad					After studying abroad				
Linguistic ability 言語力	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Intercultural competence 異文化理解力	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Attitude, Knowledge and skills to academic work at university 大学の勉強に対する姿勢・知識・スキル	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Independence and self-responsibility 主体性と自己責任能力	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Self-understanding 自己理解	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

For Professionals 社会人の方のみ

9. Jobs after study abroad (Type and Length) 留学後の職業 (職種と期間)

Appendix B: Consent form

How Japanese former study abroad students perceive the experience in their career? Informed Consent Form

What will be involved in participation?

I understand that:

- The purpose of the proposed study is to better understand how Japanese former study abroad students perceive the experience in their career.
- The study involves participating in an interview.
- Audio recordings of the interview will be made.

How will my data be handled?

I understand that:

- My participation is voluntary, and I may withdraw myself and my data before 28, February, 2015 by informing the researcher, Midori Kojima (mk921@york.ac.uk) without any penalty being imposed on me.
- Only the researcher administering the interview will have access to the data and information collected in this study before it is anonymized.
- The data and information collected during this study will be anonymized by the researcher as soon as possible after collection.
- Tutors in the Department of Education will only have access to the anonymized data.
- The anonymized data will be archived and may be used for other academic and research purposes by other researchers inside and outside the University.
- The anonymized data may be disseminated through seminars, conference presentations, journal articles and other scholarly publications.
- The data will only be used for academic and research purposes.
- The data will be kept for approximately three years.

What should I do if I have questions or concerns?

I understand that:

- This project has been reviewed by and received ethics clearance through the ethics committee in the Department of Education at the University of York.
- If I have any questions about this research, I should in the first instance contact the researcher, i.e. Midori Kojima (mk921@york.ac.uk)
- If I have any concerns about the conduct of this research, I may contact the Chair of the Ethics Committee, Dr Emma Marsden (emma.marsden@york.ac.uk).

Name of participant _____ Date _____ Signature _____

Name of researcher _____ Date _____ Signature _____

Appendix C: Interview questions

Questions for the both groups		
QuNo	Question in Japanese	Question in English
Learning and development through study abroad		
C1	なぜ海外留学をしたいと思ったのですか。	Why did you want to study abroad?
C2	海外留学をするにあたって、目標はありましたか？	What were your aims for study abroad?
C3	海外留学によって、目指していたことは達成されましたか。	Did you achieved those aims by studying abroad?
C4	海外留学によって得たこと、学んだこと、自分が成長したと感ずること等のうち、自分自身にとって大きかったことは何ですか。例示してお話し下さい。	Among your developments through study abroad (the things you learned and/or gained), what was the most important change? Please indicate and explain.
QuNo	Question in Japanese	Question in English
グローバル人材について Regarding to Global Jinzai		
C4intro	今政府がグローバル人材の育成に力を入れています。例えば、奨学金で学生の海外留学を推進したりしています。	In recent years, the Japanese government is keen to cultivate global jinzai. For example, it is financially supporting Japanese students who study abroad.
C4-1	あなたは、グローバル人材という言葉から、どんな人物を思い浮かべますか？その人はどんな知識や、スキル、態度を持っていますか？	What does global jinzai mean to you? What kind of person do you imagine from the term "Global jinzai"? What kind of attitudes, knowledge and skills do they have?
C4-2	グローバル人材の育成に賛成しますか。理由とともに教えてください。	Do you agree with the policy? And why?
C4-3	グローバル人材の人物像と比較した時、あなた自身はどの程度当てはまりますか。	How much do you have in common with your image of Global jinzai?
C4-4	(Only for group B) あなたの雇用主や上司は、あなたをグローバル人材だとみなしていると思いませんか。	(Only for group B) Do you think your employer thinks you are a Global Jinzai?
C5	グローバル人材育成の課題は何だと思いませんか？	What do you think are the challenges to cultivate Global Jinzai?
C6	インタビューの質問は、これで終わりです。最後にコメントや言い忘れたことなどがあれば教えてください。	This is the end of the interview. Please give any comments or answers, which you would like to mention in addition.

Questions only for group S (Students)		
QuNo	Question in Japanese	Question in English
Over all	* 将来のキャリアへの期待 * 海外留学の経験が、あなたの今後の人生・キャリアにどんな影響を与えると思うか、ということについて伺います。	*Career expectation* I'm going to ask some questions on how your study abroad experience will affect your life and career.
S1	学業： 海外留学によって、学ぶことへの意識・知識・スキルは変化しましたか。大学の勉強や進学、資格など、今後取り組みたいと考え始めたことがあれば教えてください。	Academic work: Has your study abroad experience changed your attitudes to learnings and your academic knowledge and skills? How? Are there any new academic challenges such as further study or qualifications that you wanted to try since studying abroad?
S2	その他：その他のことで、留学経験が影響した変化はありましたか。これからの大学生活や、将来、こころがけたい、取り組みたいと思いついたことがあれば教えてください。（例：ボランティア、趣味）	Non Academic interests: Do you have any other non-academic interests, such as volunteering and hobbies that you would like to try since studying abroad?
S3-1	職業選択： 海外留学によって、あなたの職業選択に関する意識は変化しましたか。	Career Choice: Has your study abroad experience made you think differently about your career choice? How?
S3-2	就職活動の難しさを一切度外視した場合、あなたは卒業後、どんな仕事に就きたいと思っていますか。業界、職種、勤務地等の希望があれば教えてください。	What kind of job do you want to have after graduation? (Regardless of job hunting difficulty.) Please say if you have any particular industry, job, and location in your mind.
S3-3	留学経験から得られたことの、どんなことを仕事に生かしたいと思っていますか。	How are you willing to make use of your study abroad experience in your careers?
S4	就職活動：海外留学の経験は、就職活動にどのように影響を与えていると思いますか。	Job hunting: How do you think study your abroad experience will affect your job hunting?
S5	雇用主からの評価： 将来の雇用主に対して、留学経験者であることを、どう評価され、どのような処遇をされることを期待していますか。（勤務地、業務内容）	Employers: How do you expect your future employer to value you and/or treat you as a former study abroad student?

Questions only for group P (Professionals)		
QuNo	Question in Japanese	Question in English
Over all	* 就職後の実態 自らの評価と他者からの評価	Reality after starting work / Your own evaluation and evaluation by employer or co-workers
P1	海外留学の経験はどのようにあなたのキャリアに影響をあたえたと思いますか。職業選択、就職活動、生涯学習等・教育、その他の社会活動等の視点から教えて下さい。	How do you think your study abroad experience influenced your career?
Prompt	1.職業選択	1. Choice of job
	2.就職活動	2. During job hunting
	3. 学業・生涯学習等	3. Academic work/ Lifelong learning
	4.その他の社会活動 (例: 趣味、ボランティア等)	4. Other social activities (hobbies, volunteering)
P2	海外留学によって得られた能力やスキルなどのうち、あなたの仕事に最も役立ってきたものは何ですか。一方で、活用する機会がないものはありますか。	What do you think have been the most useful abilities and skills for your work, which were gained through study abroad? On the other hand, are there any skills or abilities which you don't use a lot in your work?
P3	就職後、組織や職場の文化への適応で難しさを感じたことはありますか？それは自分が海外留学経験者であることに関連していますか。	Have you ever experienced difficulty when you were adopting the organizational requirements and office culture in your working experience? Do you think it is related to the fact that you are a former study abroad student?
P4	大学卒業後これまでに、海外での勤務や勉強をした経験はありますか？ある場合、その選択はどのような経緯でなされましたか。	If you have been transferred to a foreign country in your work career, or if you have chosen to study abroad again, please tell me how that choice was made.
P5	あなたの雇用者や上司は、あなたを海外留学経験者としてどの程度価値を置き、どのように活用していると思いますか。	How do you think your employer and boss value and utilize you as a former study abroad student?
P6	それは、あなたがキャリアを開始する時に期待していた扱いと近いですか？	Is it close to what you expected at the beginning of your career?
P7	それは、一般的に全ての海外経験を有する社員に当てはまることですか。あなたの組織で、その人たちは戦略的に活用されていますか。	Is it same for all employees with foreign experience in general? Are they strategically utilized in your organization?
P8	あなたが働く組織のグローバル化に対する、あなたの意見を教えてください。	What is your opinion towards the globalization of your organization?

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