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**Local-level integration policies in Japan:  
exploring municipal measures through the  
MIPEX**

Nobuko Nagai

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## Local-level integration policies in Japan: exploring municipal measures through the MIPEX

Nobuko Nagai

### Keywords

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### Abstract

This paper investigates integration policies of Japanese cities, specifically Hamamatsu, Kawasaki and Osaka based on the five policy areas given by the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX). Through secondary data analysis, it emphasizes different scopes among three cities by highlighting the MIPEX as a functional toolkit to observe the distinct nature of national and local integration policies, and concludes that Kawasaki is capable of producing advanced integration policies among studied cities. This study also suggests that it is challenging for countries like Japan whose integration policy takes a decentralized approach to capture an entire image of migrant integration with national-level integration policy assessment tools such as the MIPEX, which links to methodological nationalism.

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## **Introduction**

Migration has become a focal point of political and policy debates and brought the idea of integration into prominence (e.g. Huysmans, 2000; Spencer, 2011; Mügge, 2016). Integration is recognized as the process of migrants' settlement, interaction and social change, which encompasses various domains such as employment, health, education, culture and political representation (Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas, 2016b). Scholars often argue that local authorities are more capable of formulating pragmatic policy measures than the national government and possess a grave responsibility to respond to migrants' demands and improve their everyday life (e.g. Tsuda, 2006; Poppelaars and Scholten, 2008; Anagnostou, 2016), and the role of localities vis-à-vis the national government in migrant integration has garnered attention.

In light of this, this paper aims to examine local-level integration policies in Japan, a country with a decentralized integration approach. It analyses policy documents of Hamamatsu, Kawasaki and Osaka Cities regarding migrant integration and categorizes them based on the five policy areas given by the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX), a widely recognized international policy index. Through policy analysis, the study emphasizes different scopes among three cities and the national government by highlighting the MIPEX as a functional toolkit to observe the distinct nature of national and local integration policies.

This paper begins with a literature review to define essential terms and concepts and an overview of contemporary migration to Japan. Subsequent chapters are respectively dedicated to the aims and objectives and methodology. Following the analysis, the paper closes with discussion and conclusion.

## **Definition and practice of integration**

While there is a vast literature on migrant integration, many agree that '[t]here is no single, generally accepted definition, theory or model of immigrant and refugee integration' because of its complex and multifaceted nature (Castles et al, 2002: 114). The definition also varies among different countries and contexts over time. The concept of integration is indeed contested; academic debates on theoretical definitions of integration and an imagined society that derives from them (e.g. Favell, 2003; Schinkel, 2017) corroborate Robinson's (1998) assertion that "integration" is a chaotic concept: a word used by many but understood differently by most (118, quoted in Ager and Strang, 2008: 167). Academic exploration has also coined different terminologies such as incorporation and social cohesion in order to express the encompassing and spontaneous process of migrant settlement (Rudiger and Spencer, 2003; Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas, 2016b; Spencer and Charsley, 2016). As more countries have come to witness diversification within society, Grzymala-Kazlowska and Phillimore (2018) argue that the existing concept of integration, which stems from the 'traditional' assumption of migration, must be reconsidered (181).

As definitions of integration diverge, so do practical meanings attached to integration. In the policymaking process, the concept of integration is often segmented and framed based on several dimensions, whose integration processes and timeframes differ widely (Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas, 2016b). While the initial understanding of integration emphasized migrants' efforts to be assimilated into the host community, the two-way process of integration, which involves both migrants and hosting countries, has become the mainstream (Castles et al, 2002; Ager and Strang, 2008). The

two-way process also encapsulates the idea of the bidirectional pro/regress of integration, which does not necessarily proceed from 'not integrated' to 'integrated' (Phillimore, 2012; Spencer and Charsley, 2016: 4). Since integration itself is an ongoing process in society, there is no end-point to conclude that migrants are completely integrated. The multi-directionality of integration has been further discussed to underline identities and connections that migrants retain with their countries of origin, signaling the transnational pattern of migration (Snel et al, 2006; Garcés-Mascareñas and Penninx, 2016; Spencer and Charsley, 2016).

Regardless of the absence of full consent on the definition of integration, the need for specific policy indicators or frameworks has been acknowledged (Phillimore and Goodson, 2008). Ager and Strang (2004), for example, in their work on developing a successful integration framework for refugees, delineate that integration can be achieved when an individual or group attains equal 'public outcomes' as well as 'active relationship' within their own community and host communities, where they enjoy access to relevant services and maintain shared notions of nationhood and citizenship (9). In contrast, Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas (2016b) simply define integration as 'the process of becoming an accepted part of society,' believing that integration cannot be determined by outcomes, nor can the particular requirements or degree of integration be detailed (14).

#### *National- and local-level governance of integration*

When practicing migrant integration in a form of policy, roles of national and local authorities are worth to consider. Policies towards the migrant population often take a different shape at the national and local levels, due to their contrasting purposes and focuses (Vermeulen, 1997; Hammar, 1985). Poppelaars and Scholten (2008) construe that, whilst the national government enforces a policy in view of immigration control and national security, the local policy framework takes a more pragmatic approach that involves migrant organizations. Although the degree of such divergence may differ depending on nations' sociodemographic characteristics and political structure, the interplay between national and local authorities exerts a considerable influence upon construction and implementation of integration policy. The local-level integration, which is expected to concern the 'conditions provided to resident immigrants' (Hammar, 1985: 9), can be impeded by the state-centered scheme that determines migrants' legal and political standing, or by the lack of resources caused by the complex power balance between different levels of authorities (Gebhardt, 2016; Galandini et al, 2019).

Yet, academics have emphasized the significant responsibility and capability of local governments in implementing and smoothening migrant integration (e.g. Penninx et al, 2004; Borkert and Caponio, 2010). Many argue that local governments can handle 'demands and effects of migration,' which allow authorities to contrive their own strategies and eventually demarcate themselves from the national governance (Anagnostou, 2016: 7; Myrberg, 2017). When compared to the national government, local offices are considered to be less restrictive in selecting target population and more proactive in granting some rights to migrants. For localities, taking a legal responsibility for foreign residents and ensuring their welfare seem to be the most reasonable choice in order to fuel the local economy and avoid any negative repercussion in community (Tsuda, 2006; Poppelaars and Scholten, 2008; Anagnostou, 2016). Some scholars (e.g. Uitermark et al, 2005; Hagan et al, 2011), however, point out the danger of the locality-led integration approach. Ambrosini (2013), for instance, looks at local policies that exclude migrants and 'disguise themselves as universalistic, aimed at the protection of general interests' in terms of civil, social, cultural, security-, and economic rights (138). By examining

the state of integration in small towns and rural areas, Danson and Jentsch (2012) moreover remind of different characteristics and policy effects that different scales of 'locality' have. With such a warning in mind, local-level integration should be carefully explored through understanding the position of local authority vis-à-vis the national government and local migrant communities.

Different scopes of migration and integration at the national and local levels may evoke the discussion on methodological nationalism. Methodological nationalism is understood as the 'naturalization of the equation of society, state, and nation' (Jeffery and Wincott, 2010: 170), which narrows down one's scope to the nation-level and therefore uniforms the analysis. Based on this definition, Greer et al (2015) point out that, in the context of policy analysis, methodological nationalism often obscures efforts and outcomes of localities. Although Fanning (2013) refutes that the national-level decision-making still has the most effect on migrants and their everyday life, it is at the same time clear that the nation-centered migrant management has formed the generalized image of 'others' and oversimplified the complexity behind the stratification (Wimmer and Schiller, 2002a; 2002b). One should hence avoid using sole lens to capture integration and its dynamics behind and understand different scopes and frames that different levels of authorities may employ.

In light of this, a growing literature on multi-level governance and integration has given a new insight into the multi-level cooperation among national, regional and local governments as a fundamental key to formulating successful integration policies (e.g. Zincone and Caponio, 2006; Scholten, 2013; Zapata-Barrero et al, 2017). While underlining existing administrative conflicts such as devolution and policy contradictions, these studies suggest that both top-down guidelines and bottom-up mobilization are indispensable to facilitate national and local integration processes, which are in nature multi-dimensional. Insofar as local-level policy actors can be and tend to be forerunners who experimentally design and implement integration measures, what is essential is the proper multi-level governance mechanism that enables the multi-level and cross-sectional, yet independent coordination in policymaking (OSCE, 2017). In order to comprehend the respective role and intention of national and local governments with regard to migrant integration, comparative studies on different cities in the same country and in different countries would be crucial (Glick Schiller and Çağlar, 2016; Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas, 2016b).

### *EU integration practice*

Political bodies and actors have formulated frameworks of integration both at the national and local levels. Taking an example from the EU, the Council of the European Union (2004) in the Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy defines integration as 'a dynamic, long-term, and continuous two-way process of mutual accommodation' and refers to local-level institutions as the start point of the two-way process (19). Asserting that migrants have 'rights and responsibilities in relation to their new country of residence' (Ibid.), the Council stresses that migrants' economic, social, cultural, and political rights must be fully ensured, and, from that point on, the EU has been constantly working on the integration policy development by polishing the principles and setting short- and long-term goals (European Commission, 2011). In addition, EU-based integration indices have been developed to measure and evaluate the degree and outcomes of integration policies. Among them, the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) categorizes national policies in eight sections and has served as an international tool to measure integration policies since 2004, extending its scale beyond Western nations (Geddes et al, 2005).

The EU cooperation in the realm of integration has allowed the concept to be unfolded at different levels of governance and networks and has exercised an effectual impact on their policy contexts (Rudiger and Spencer, 2003; Council of the European Union, 2004; European Commission, 2011). Particularly, city- and municipal-level integration practices and their influences have drawn attention from academics and policymakers (Ponzo et al, 2013). The European Commission (2013) spotlights the neighborhood effects on migrant integration and captures the status quo in eighteen neighborhoods in six European cities. Encompassing not merely migrants but the whole population, the project underlines the complexity of the multi-layer research that involves national, local and individual levels; yet, it concludes that integration occurs under the considerable influence of macro-level institutions in a time-dependent process (European Commission, 2013: 1). Furthermore, global intercity networks also play a constructive role in encouraging interactions and policy developments among cities (Ponzo et al, 2013). One of the most recognized is the Intercultural Cities (ICC) Programme sponsored by the Council of Europe; more than 120 cities across and outside the EU have joined and utilized the ICC tools to evaluate and improve their integration practices (Council of Europe, 2015). The ICC's unique approach supports the belief that local-level integration policy is a 'significant driver behind local well-being and attitudes towards immigrants' (Joki and Wolffhardt, 2017a: 5).

### *Non-EU integration practice*

Integration practice has also been active outside the EU, and displayed different challenges and approaches. For instance, identified as a 'nation of immigrants,' the United States has committed to building a society where migrants are 'fully incorporated' (National Academics of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM), 2015: 1). Although numerous academic research and policy developments have been taken place, the NASEM reported the difficulty to gauge integration processes in the US. The nation is more diverse in terms of migrants' race, ethnicity and religion than ever before, and the role of localities, particularly small communities that were used to be segregated, has been growing (*Ibid.*).

Furthermore, Canada serves as a unique example for its enthusiasm for multiculturalism (e.g. Kymlicka, 1998; Griffith, 2017). While gradually modifying the underlying conception of multiculturalism, the Canadian model has been successfully integrating migrants to some extent (Griffith, 2017). To observe situations of migrants and develop a credible framework for integration, the Canadian Index for Measuring Integration (CIMI) examines migrants' economic, social, health, and civic and democratic participation dimensions at province and city levels, spotlighting migrants and the receiving community as central players of 'two-way street' of integration (Canadian Institute for Identities and Migration, 2017: 4).

It must be noted, however, that acknowledged concepts and following practice have mostly derived from the Western, especially European, perspectives. Although the MIPEX, primarily concerned only European countries, added Japan and South Korea to the list since 2011, it can be said that theoretical and political discussions on integration are yet undeveloped in such countries. It is only recent that the influx of newcomer migrants marked a watershed for South Korea to challenge its homogeneous identity and promote migrant integration (e.g. Kim, 2010; Hwang, 2016). The term 'multiculturalism' has become the byword often employed by policymakers and the media; however, its very practice remains ambiguous and therefore calls into question the magnitude and sustainability of Korea's

integration policy (Shin, 2012). This resonates with the state of integration in Japan, which will be expounded in the following section.

## **Migration and Integration in Japan**

### *Migration trends*

The number of migrants arriving in Japan is growing, as the nation is in need of migrants due to the labor shortage triggered by its dropping fertility rates and super aging population (Usui, 2006; Hagiwara and Nakajima, 2014). The migrant population in Japan can be categorized in two groups: old-comers and newcomers. So-called old-comers, descendants of Koreans and Chinese with special permanent resident status, are believed to comprise one-third of the foreign population in Japan (Usui, 2006). Many of them, especially Koreans, entered Japan from 1910 Japan's annexation of Korea until the end of the Second World War in 1945 (Chapman, 2006). They are called *zainichi* (lit. 'resident or denizen in Japan') and have been expected to deal with a strong pressure for assimilation in cultural and ethnic terms. The nation currently grants permanent residency and essential welfare services while leaving behind some problems such as postwar compensation, ethnic education and hate speech (Yamawaki, 2002; Chapman, 2006).

It was after 1980 when the national debate on migration was stimulated as Japan started to witness the arrival of foreign workers who were pulled by the nation's economic bubble which lasted about fifteen years and the following labor shortage (Milly, 2006; Usui, 2006; Kondo, A., 2015). These newcomers imposed some challenges to the existing structure of Japan's immigration policy (Yamawaki, 2002). Among them, the most prominent population is ethnic Japanese from South America. Being called *nikkeijin* (lit. 'return migrants of Japanese decent'), they are mostly second and third generations of Japanese migrants who had crossed the sea to Latin America, predominantly Brazil, for the government's migration program and further job opportunities (Tsuda, 2009). The mass-'return' of those *nikkeijin* was accelerated by the economic crisis in Brazil and Japan's liberalization of Immigration Control Act, which entitled ethnic Japanese to long-term resident visa. Contrary to the nation's original expectation that those ethnic Japanese would smoothly assimilate into the society, *nikkeijin* had to struggle with their unfamiliar ancestral culture and language, which led them to social segregation and high concentration in particular cities and neighborhoods (Kondo, 2005; Ishida, 2009; Tsuda, 2009).

Japan's political response to migrants has been often hostile and xenophobic, as observed in the general cliché, 'Japan is not a country of immigration' (Yamanaka, 2008: 187). Indeed, low-skilled workers therefore have been entering the nation with various 'side-door' visa systems, and the government has been criticized for not taking sufficient measures for such migrants (e.g. Tsuda and Cornelius, 2004; Tegtmeyer Pak, 2006; Nakamatsu, 2014; Kato, 2016). It was in 2019 that the government officially created the visa category for low-skilled migrant workers. While officially accepting the entry of low-skilled foreign workers, nevertheless, the government states that such policy changes 'are not an immigration policy' and indeed does not allow family accompaniment, which have drawn criticism (Cabinet Office, 2018, p. 34). Japan's such political attitudes will no doubt affect migrants in Japan and their daily lives and throw into doubt the future of migration to Japan.

### *Integration and Multiculturalism in Japan*

Integration is not a common word in Japan; instead, the term *tabunka kyousei* (lit. 'multicultural coexistence') has been widely spread to describe incorporation of migrants into Japanese society (Kashiwazaki, 2013). In its Plan for the Promotion of Multicultural Community Building (hereafter MC Plan), the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) defines multicultural coexistence as 'coexistence of community members with different nationalities and ethnicities by respecting mutual differences and building equal relationship' (MIC, 2006: 5). However, the nation's slogan of *tabunka kyousei* remains vague since Japan has not grasped the universal understanding of multiculturalism, according to academics (Kashiwazaki, 2013; Nakamatsu, 2014). Qi and Zhang (2008) contend that the term 'multiculturalism' employed by the Japanese government entails the idea of 'anti-multiculturalism,' derived from multiple power relations rather than ideological conceptualization (3). Japan's ambiguous understanding of multiculturalism partially attributes to its prevailed notion that treats nationals as monolithic group and foreigners as a collective identity (Tai, 2009; Kashiwazaki, 2013; Nakamatsu, 2014). The equivocal definition of multiculturalism has hence allowed poor public awareness, discrepancy in comprehensions of the concept between the central and local governments and foreign residents, and little structural changes in the existing policy frameworks (Yamanaka, 2008; Nagayoshi, 2011; Izawa, 2013; Nakamatsu, 2014).

Without the clear definition of *tabunka kyousei* at the national level, Japan's migrant integration<sup>1</sup> is mainly led by prefectural and municipal offices. The MC Plan, first official measure for migrant integration, was distributed to municipalities, calling for their own 'guidelines and plans for the promotion of multicultural coexistence in keeping with the circumstances of their respective regions' (MIC, 2006: 1). As Aiden (2011) describes that the government has given a role of 'coordinator' to municipalities, the MC Plan accentuates the role of local governments to ensure multicultural coexistence in each community with four-pronged approaches: communication support, livelihood support, multicultural community building, and system development to promote them. Nonetheless, the MC Plan lacks the 'component of *national* integration' (Kashiwazaki, 2013: 42, *italics in original*), and municipalities are responsible for migrants' everyday living and their sociopolitical status. Kwak (2009) calls Japan's decentralized approach of integration 'peculiar' and highlights the peril associated with leaving the process of multicultural coexistence in hands of local citizens by insisting that locality-based policy without a regulative principle could result in exclusive and assimilative measures or incapable of providing a legal protection.

## Aims and objectives

The aim of this paper is to investigate integration policies of Japanese cities, specifically Hamamatsu, Kawasaki and Osaka, and observe whether the national-level assessment accurately reflects the state of Japan's local integration policies. Since national and local authorities in Japan do not officially employ the term 'integration,' this study regarded policies and ordinances relating to the incorporation of migrants and the enhancement of their access as a subject of study and call them 'integration policies.' Two objectives have been raised:

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<sup>1</sup> In respect that the MIPEX considers Japan's multicultural existence guidelines and programs as integration policy based on the understanding that its policy concerns migrants' incorporation into the society, this paper likewise regards Japan's notion of multicultural coexistence and following policies as the nation's integration strategy.

- to understand the status of integration policies in Hamamatsu, Kawasaki and Osaka and detect commonalities and differences through policy analysis;
- to identify different characteristics of national and local integration policies by comparing with the MIPEX results.

This study is based on secondary data analysis of official publications from selected municipalities. The secondary analysis not only illustrates detailed facts and information about cities and their measures, but also helps discern the big picture of integration in Japan from an objective standpoint. This would be an essential condition for examining local integration strategies and highlighting the contrast with the MIPEX.

### *City Profiles*

This study analyzes integration strategies of selected three cities in Japan: Hamamatsu, Kawasaki and Osaka. These municipalities hold above 2.5 percent of foreign-born residents within their entire population and are among twenty metropolises called 'ordinance-designated cities.' These designated cities have a population in excess of 500,000 and are considered to be taking initiative in economics and administration (Ohsugi, 2011). Owing to administrative functions delegated by the central government, they are able to administer several affairs such as social welfare, financial assistance and urban planning without concerning major decisions of prefectural governments, which facilitates policy implementation and adds a variety to policy designs (Ohsugi, 2011; Sagamihara City, no date). Selecting ordinance-designated cities is therefore reasonable for the study, as these cities are capable of flexibly arranging policies that strongly reflect local populations.

City	Total Population	Foreign population	Proportion of foreign population to total population (%)
Hamamatsu	804,621	23,412	2.9
Kawasaki	1,515,607	39,587	2.6
Osaka	2,722,098	131,949	4.8

**Table 1.1. Demographics of Hamamatsu, Kawasaki and Osaka as of 2018<sup>2</sup>**

City	1 <sup>st</sup> Country	2 <sup>nd</sup> Country	3 <sup>rd</sup> Country
Hamamatsu	Brazil (39.3%)	Philippines (15.6%)	China (11.1%)
Kawasaki	China (35.8%)	Korea (19.0%)	Philippines (10.6%)
Osaka	Korea (51.1%)	China (24.6%)	Vietnam (8.0%)

**Table 1.2. Top Three Nationalities of Migrants and Their Proportion to Foreign Population of Hamamatsu, Kawasaki and Osaka as of 2018**

<sup>2</sup> Cities' demographics are drawn respectively from official statistics, and the percentage of foreign population and migrant nationalities were calculated by the author:

Hamamatsu: total population (Hamamatsu City, 2018e); foreign population (Hamamatsu City, 2018e); migrant nationalities (Hamamatsu City, 2017b);

Kawasaki: total population (Kawasaki City, 2018c); foreign population (Kawasaki City, 2018b); migrant nationalities (Kawasaki City, 2018a);

Osaka: total population (Osaka City, 2018d); foreign population (Osaka City, 2018b); migrant nationalities (Osaka City, 2018a).

As shown in Tables 1.1. and 1.2., Hamamatsu, Kawasaki and Osaka possess different demographic profiles, which are expected to have affected their integration policymaking. Hamamatsu's experience with large migrant groups is relatively brief, as newcomers started to arrive in the city from the 1990s (Tegtmeyer Pak, 2003; Yamanaka, 2006). This industrial technopolis has been home for a large number of migrant workers from Latin America, who occupy nearly 40 percent of foreign residents (Hamamatsu City, 2017b). Kawasaki's migrant population, on the other hand, is a mixture of Korean and Chinese old-comers and newcomers from Asia and South America who arrived from the late 1980s for job opportunities. Being one of the important industrial cities in Japan, Kawasaki is known as a pioneer in developing own integration strategy (Tegtmeyer Pak, 2003). As the second largest city of Japan, Osaka holds the highest proportion of foreign residents (4.8 percent), both old-comers and newcomers, among selected three cities. Osaka is known for the high concentration of long-term Korean residents, and the city has been for long dealing with the *zainichi* community (Weiner and Chapman, 2009; Saga, 2012).

### *Policy Documents*

The targeted population is registered long-term migrants, who are specifically: Chinese and Korean descendants, return migrants of Japanese descent, Japanese returnees, migrant workers, families and spouses, and refugees. As each city has released their own basic guideline for incorporating migrants into the city through service provision and support, the analysis orbited around those guidelines, adjoining other ordinances and projects that concern foreign population.

Data gathering relied on electronic sources mainly on cities' official websites, and most of publications were translated from Japanese into English by the researcher. Considering the Hamamatsu Vision, which was revised based on the 2016 amendment of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act, the timeframe of this study focused on policies and schemes that are in effect as of 2 July 2018. A full list of the studied policy documents appears in the Appendix.

### *The MIPEX as an Instrument*

The MIPEX evaluates policies that concern migrants based on eight policy areas: access to nationality, anti-discrimination, education, family reunion, health, labor market mobility, permanent residence, and political participation. Despite its EU-oriented nature, the 2015 project covered 38 countries, including all EU member states, the United States, Canada, Japan and South Korea (Huddleston et al, 2015). The reliability of the MIPEX has been proved (e.g. Howard, 2009; Ruedin, 2011; Koopmans, 2012; Bilodeau, 2016), and a number of qualitative and quantitative studies have employed the index for further secondary policy analysis, comparison and evaluation at multiple levels (e.g. Cebolla and Finotelli, 2011; Koopmans, 2012; Anagnostou, 2016; Joki and Wolffhardt, 2017b).

This study has used the MIPEX for policy analysis by categorizing integration policies of three selected cities based on the five MIPEX policy areas, which are: anti-discrimination, education, health, labor market mobility, and political participation. The study utilizes the MIPEX for local-level policy analysis in order to facilitate the comparison among the three cities and highlight the divergence between national- and local-level integration emphases. Three of eight MIPEX policy areas – access to nationality, family reunion, and permanent residence – are encapsulated in the national-level immigration policy and immigration status and therefore regarded as outside the localities'

competence. Given this, this paper does not consider these areas in localities' integration measures. Having included Japan in its evaluation, the MIPEX is the suitable instrument to highlight how city-level policies converge or diverge from national policies when measured by defined policy areas.

### *Data Analysis*

This study applied framework analysis, which allows the researcher to conduct a study in a specific setting, which limits its timeframe and dataset (see Srivastava and Thomson, 2009). The researcher followed five steps that Ritchie and Spencer (1994) specified for framework analysis, which are: familiarization, identifying a thematic framework, indexing, charting, and mapping and interpretation (178) by coding in NVivo 11, the qualitative data analysis software. For the sake of simplification and clear comparison, some indicators were summarized into one category, especially when the MIPEX divides the fields of policy application, target population and its range of legal actions. For this reason, tables in following sections list the specific policy measures the cities have taken, along with Japan's national policies that the MIPEX evaluated for the 2015 project.

### *Ethical and Access Issues*

Although there are no major ethical considerations presented, as this study hugely relies on online data gathering such as official policy documents and municipalities' webpages, the researcher paid particular attention to reliability and publication dates of these sources. In addition, as many social science researchers like Mangen (1999) and Carmel (2012) concern, the lack of conceptualization can often fail to convey original implications when a concept or theory is translated from a different language to another. It has thus been researcher's responsibility to wholly comprehend political and cultural contexts and preserve the impartiality when translating Japanese documents into English.

## **Analysis**

### *Anti-discrimination*

Recognizing that levels of race-, ethnicity- and religion-based discrimination against migrants cannot be directly controlled by authorities, the MIPEX evaluates nations' anti-discrimination measures based on laws and policies that protect migrants and provide proper access to justice systems. The presence of anti-discrimination law and equality policy, with focus on the promotion of human rights, therefore greatly accounts along with the legal assistance and sanction procedure (MIPEX, no date-a; no date-b).

Measures	Hamamatsu	Kawasaki	Osaka	Japan
Anti-hate speech ordinance/ law	No	No	Yes	No
Human rights scheme	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Consultation service	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Workshop and/or training on human rights issues	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

**Table 2.1. Policy Measures for Anti-discrimination. Source: Author's analysis; MIPEX (2015)**

In the area of anti-discrimination, Osaka is advanced than the other two cities since it became the first municipality to pass the ordinance against hate speech before Japan's Diet enacted the anti-hate speech law in 2016. The table does not list the national anti-hate speech act as this was not in effect when measured by the MIPEX in 2015. Even after the national legislation, yet, Osaka's ordinance is more powerful in a way that the city can publish the name of individuals and organizations who have made discriminatory remarks whereas the national act merely defines the concept and does not ban hate speech (E-Gov, 2016; Osaka City, 2016; Osaki, 2016). While all three municipalities are aware of discriminatory situations against migrants in the communities and provide consultation services, their competence is rather limited to equality policies and has not yet established a thorough legal procedure.

Hamamatsu's human rights scheme remains indistinct and lacks specific tactics whilst Kawasaki and Osaka's official documents seem to be more progressed and specific. This divergence can be explained by their lengthy experience with Korean and Chinese old-comers. In particular, Korean *zainichi*'s fervent campaign against discriminatory treatment in the 1960s is considered to have stimulated these two cities (Tegtmeyer Pak, 2003; Tai, 2007; Saga, 2012). Racial discrimination is pervasive in Japan especially against Korean and Chinese residents while *nikkeijin* in many occasions are regarded as ethnically Japanese (Tsuda, 2009). This might explain cities' attitudes, as foreign population in Osaka and Kawasaki is dominantly Korean and Chinese while Brazilian *nikkeijins* reside in Hamamatsu.

### *Education*

Three main topics highlighted in the domain of education are: access to education, support provision, especially language learning assistance, and intercultural education for all (MIPEX, no date-b). At the same time, the MIPEX places a value upon opportunities for migrants to learn their native languages and cultures and also for all students and teachers to appreciate diversity (Ibid.). While assistance for migrant students and intercultural education can be flexibly coped by municipalities, access to education is handled by the central government.

Measures	Hamamatsu	Kawasaki	Osaka	Japan
Encouraging school enrollment of migrant children	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Information in multiple languages	Yes	Yes	Not specified	Yes
Consultation service	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Placement of support staff	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Schoolteachers training	Yes	No	Yes	No
Japanese-language education	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>3</sup>
Migrant language education	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Migrant culture education	No	Yes	Yes	No
Intercultural education for all	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

<sup>3</sup> The Japanese government only disseminated the guideline to prefectural offices on Japanese-language acquisition practices for migrant children (MIPEX, 2015).

Research on migrant students' situation at school	No	Yes	No	No
Grants for ethnic schools	Yes	Yes	No	Partially
Lobbying the government	No	Yes	No	

**Table 2.2. Policy Measures for Education. Source: Author's analysis; MIPEX (2015)**

Education seems like one of the target fields municipalities focus on inasmuch as cities attempt to cover all three focuses the MIPEX emphasizes. In Japan, foreign children are not obliged to enter compulsory education but able to attend public school with the same financial assistance as Japanese nationals (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, no date). Nevertheless, language and culture barriers and insufficient publicity have hindered migrants' school attendance (Sakamoto et al, 2014). Although basic education policy is in the hands of the central government, migrants' learning opportunities and outcomes can be improved by local administrative efforts.

Cities are eager to provide migrant children in public schools with language support as well as parents and guardians with consultation services. Nonetheless, what differentiates the three cities is the extent of their policy measures. Firstly, Hamamatsu and Kawasaki attempt to involve all migrant children; especially, Hamamatsu provides cohesive support by reaching out to every household. Both cities, secondly, subsidize ethnic schools, which are often exempt from the national policy framework. These infer that Osaka in education is not willing to include the entire migrant population but only considers children who choose to enter the public school system as a target of integration. What is common between Kawasaki and Hamamatsu is that both cities hold a large newcomer population. This hence leads to the supposition that municipalities, having seen a huge influx of newcomer migrants, hustle to integrate foreign population before they become marginalized or segregated while large Asian migrant population in Osaka can be absorbed into their long-standing ethnic communities.

### *Health*

The MIPEX mainly looks at migrants' entitlement and accessibility to health services and the involvement of migrants to improve the health situation of host countries (MIPEX, no date-b). The former component assesses the availability of both fundamental and responsive health services for migrants as well as their accessibility through multi-language information and interpretation services while the latter aims to increase awareness about migrants' health (Ibid.). Rather than health entitlement, access facilitation and enhancement of communities' health situations would be local governments' focuses.

Measures	Hamamatsu	Kawasaki	Osaka	Japan
Promoting NHI/EHI registration	No	Yes	No	Yes
Benefits for the elderly	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Benefits for those with disabilities	No	Yes	Yes	No
Information in multiple languages	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Medical consultation service	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Mental health consultation service	Yes	No	No	No

Health service for ethnic schools	Yes <sup>4</sup>	No	Yes	No
Grants for health-related NPOs	Yes	No	No	No
Lobbying the government	No	Yes	No	

**Table 2.3. Policy Measures for Health. Source: Author's analysis; MIPEX (2015)**

Those who stay in Japan more than three months are eligible for either the National Health Insurance (NHI) or the Employee Health Insurance (EHI) (Council of Local Authorities for International Relations, no date), but only Kawasaki actively promotes migrants to register. The table helps to assume that Kawasaki's policies cover the first element that the MIPEX lists, which is migrants' availability and accessibility to health services. In terms of the enhancement of the community's health situation, Hamamatsu seems to be one step ahead by subsidizing local NPOs, such as the Medical Aid for Foreigners in Hamamatsu. The total number of applied measures does not hugely vary among the three, but it can be asserted from the degree and content of policies that cities with newly arrivals are more eager to integrate migrants in the health domain.

### *Labor Market Mobility*

What the MIPEX concerns here is access to labor market, including private and public sectors and self-employment, access to support system and basic labor rights (MIPEX, no date-b). In light of different roles and responsibilities that different levels of governance owe, local governments have an advantage in providing support systems for employment and trainings whereas basic workers' rights and their access to labor market are often controlled by national policies.

Measures	Hamamatsu	Kawasaki	Osaka	Japan
Employment support for adults	Yes	No	No	Yes
Employment support for the second generation	Yes	No	No	Yes
Collaboration with private sector to facilitate access and information	Yes	Yes	No	No
Collaboration with public sector to facilitate access and information	Yes	No	No	Yes

**Table 2.4. Policy Measures for Labor Market Mobility. Source: Author's analysis; MIPEX (2015)**

Municipalities do not seem to be active in labor market mobility. Basic rights are ensured for migrants as for Japanese employees, and fundamental benefits such as employment insurance, employee health insurance, and compensation benefits are also available (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, no date). Providing respective employment support for target population and collaborating with companies and public offices, Hamamatsu is taking a lead in this area. Hamamatsu's policies for foreign laborers are comparatively specific than other two cities and frame both top-down and bottom-up approaches to encourage migrant employment and improve their work environment. In contrast, Kawasaki confines itself to the minimal protection for foreign employees while Osaka has not taken any specific measures.

<sup>4</sup> Hamamatsu provides financial assistance to NPOs that conduct health checkups in ethnic schools.

This gap can be expounded with cities' geographical and industrial characteristics. Serving as the second largest city and mecca for merchants, Osaka has leeway to lure high-skilled and high-motivated migrants even from outside the city, which explains the city's reluctant attitude in terms of labor market. The similar could apply to Kawasaki, which lies near the capital city Tokyo, allowing migrants to easily move in for job opportunities. Hamamatsu, while playing a role as an industrial technopolis, is not as immense and influential as other two. This could be one of the motives for Hamamatsu to enrich integration measures for already-existing migrant population in assisting employment and improving their work environment, which would contribute to the sustainable labor force.

### *Political Participation*

The MIPEX clearly defines this area by listing migrants' electoral rights, political liberties and consultative bodies as important components (MIPEX, no date-b). Local governance seems to have less competence in this area since migrants' political rights and associated representation hinge upon national policies and constitution.

Measures	Hamamatsu	Kawasaki	Osaka	Japan
Voting rights	No	Yes	No	No
Promoting migrants' political participation	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Hiring migrants as public officers	No	Yes but restricted	Yes but restricted	Yes but restricted
Migrant councils	Yes	Yes	No	No
Lobbying the government	No	Yes	No	

**Table 2.5. Policy Measures for Political Participation. Source: Author's analysis; MIPEX (2015)**

Based on current constitutional interpretation, Japan does not grant suffrage for foreign residents in national elections, but their voting rights for local referendums, which does not concern the constitution, have been regarded differently by municipalities. Voting rights for cities here refer to rights granted to migrants to vote in city referendums. Moreover, the Japanese government restricts a requisite for hiring foreigners as public officers (Osaka City, 2017j). Migrants' political participation in local cities depends on localities' interpretation of the national policy and therefore reveals the core stance municipalities assume towards migrants.

For instance, Kawasaki grants voting rights for foreign residents who stay in the city more than three years under its local referendum ordinance (Kawasaki City, 2008). Concerning absolute local suffrage for migrants, the city lobbies the national government with a coalition of other proactive municipalities (Kawasaki City, 2015c). It also reaches out to migrant communities through the Kawasaki Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents where foreign residents submit policy recommendations directly to the mayor (Kawasaki City, 2015c; 2017).

Two elements can be found to shape political status of migrants in these cities. First, one must expect a long period of time to have foreign population in local decision-making as a part of the community. Hamamatsu, in spite of its migrant-friendly measures in other policy area, remains rather defensive in political terms. The city's limited experience with newcomer population can be one of the possible reasons behind. The second point relies on cities' fundamental understanding and attitude towards migrant integration, which are exposed by Osaka's practice. Whilst migrants have been visible since

the pre-war era by mounting active campaigns for equal rights, the city does not appreciate their political involvement. This denotes that, regardless of the long-standing presence of foreign population, Osaka does not consider migrants as a part of local population. It can be said that the city's experience with a large old-comer community and its spontaneous commitment to integrate foreign population have enabled Kawasaki to implement effective measures for migrant political participation.

### *Summary*

Although the target population, details, and extent of each integration policy are different, enumerating cities' measures would be worthwhile to observe their competence and progress of integration. The number of policy measures conducted by the cities is shown in Tables 2.6 and 2.7, with hierarchical rankings of the MIPEX score for Japan and the number of policy measures provided by the three cities in five policy areas. Although the degree, extent or binding power of policy measures vary among municipalities and the national government, these tables help understand not only each city's focus but also highlights the different focuses on policy areas that the national- and local-level authorities demonstrate.

Policy Area	Hamamatsu	Kawasaki	Osaka	Average of Three Cities	Japan
Anti-discrimination	3	3	4	3.3	0
Education	9	11	7	9	5
Health	6	6	5	5.6	2
Labor market mobility	4	1	0	1.6	3
Political participation	2	5	1	2.6	2
Average	4.8	5	3.4	4.3	2.4
Total	24	26	17	22.3	12

Table 2.6. Number of Policy Measures. Source: Author's analysis; MIPEX (2015)

	National level: Japan (MIPEX score) <sup>5</sup>	Local level: Hamamatsu, Kawasaki, Osaka (average number of policy measures)
1 <sup>st</sup>	Labor market mobility (65)	Education (9)
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Health (51)	Health (5.6)
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Political participation (31)	Anti-discrimination (3)
4 <sup>th</sup>	Anti-discrimination (22)	Political participation (2.6)
5 <sup>th</sup>	Education (21)	Labor market mobility (1.6)

Table 2.7. MIPEX Policy Scores on Japan and Number of Local Policy Measures. Source: Author's analysis; MIPEX (2015)

<sup>5</sup> 3 MIPEX policy areas (access to nationality, family reunion and permanent residence) are omitted in this table.

Looking by cities, it can be concluded that Kawasaki's integration strategy is the most advanced among the three cities. Kawasaki has introduced the most measures among three cities, closely followed by Hamamatsu. The number of Osaka's integration policies goes considerably low except for the anti-discrimination scheme. However, what should be considered is not only the number of measures, but also cities' different scopes and focuses. Kawasaki has its particular focus on migrants' education and political participation. Hamamatsu has an advantage in areas concerning migrants' socioeconomic rights, especially labour market mobility and health while the city's integration policies seem distributed to each policy area with balance.

Furthermore, Kawasaki and Osaka focus on areas that are shun by the national policy, which concern migrants' fundamental political rights and representation in the community as well as discrimination against migrants. This owes to the grassroots communities and organizations of the old-comer population who have continually lobbied the local governments. Hamamatsu's policy measures, on the other hand, seem to remain within the scope of the national MC Plan which emphasizes communication support, livelihood support and multicultural community building, and hence give an impression of responding to migrants' everyday demands. Kawasaki's measures pay heed to migrant integration with a long-run perspective and, along with its eager attitude in lobbying the national government, Kawasaki is the most ideal city of migrant integration among the three municipalities. Discussions on migrants' political rights and longer-term issues should be brought up in Hamamatsu sooner or later as the city will keep managing its migrant population. Osaka has not demonstrated its ability to implement sufficient measures vis-à-vis its large foreign population. It is hence significant that other advanced cities like Kawasaki and Hamamatsu actively engage with the intercity cooperation with other municipalities.

Looking at the average number of policy measures, one would notice that education is where municipalities put a particular emphasis on. This implies two factors; first, language support is one of the most straightforward approaches that local offices can make without concerning national education policies and curriculums. Since schools must abide by the national school curriculum, local integration policies tend to first support migrant students and their families through multi-language service. Migrants have access to multi-language consultation and information not only in education but also in other policy areas such as health and anti-discrimination. Language hence dominates cities' policymaking, and education, in which language support plays an important role, may have allowed municipalities to introduce more measures than in other areas. Second, education is an effective field that facilitates integration of migrants. Among all policy areas analyzed in this study, education involves a large number of second-generation migrants who will absorb Japanese language and culture as a part of their identity and familiarize with local communities. Their learning would also exert influence at home, which would smoothen the integration process of the whole migrant households. It is thus comprehensible that municipalities tend to focus on education in their integration strategies.

Although the number of localities' policy measures cannot be juxtaposed to the scores the MIPEX gave to Japan's national policies, it yet can be asserted that national and local integration policies reflect different competences and focuses that different levels of governance exert. According to Table 2.7., while the MIPEX gave the lowest score to education, this study found education as the field municipalities concentrate upon. In contrast, labor market mobility, which earned the highest score in the MIPEX, consists one of the least policy measures at the local level. These contrasting focuses highlight that local governments play a crucial role in advancing integration processes in the field.

However, in most of the policy areas, national policies, especially immigration policy, are the ones that determine obligation, availability and eligibility of services and rights for migrants. Where lacks the national framework may be where the local policy practice fills in. At the same time, it can be said that the national-level integration index as represented by the MIPEX may not completely reflect emphases of local integration. This observation somehow diverges from OSCE's (2017) findings based on the MIPEX and ICC Index that national and local governments share competence in areas such as health, education and political participation. Japan's extremely reluctant attitude towards migration and decentralized integration measures compared with OSCE states could be one of explanations for this outlier.

## Discussion

Analysing integration policies of three cities has demonstrated the potential of the MIPEX as a policy indicator. Although its purpose to assess national integration measures, the index was able to highlight regional patterns and differences of local-level integration policies. Specific findings indicate that different cities possess different measures and perhaps different values and frames underneath. Among them, what was relatively visible was that the presence of long-term migrants is likely to motivate local offices to develop their integration policies. Although the presence of longstanding foreign residents does not automatically lead to a developed integration policy as Kawasaki and Osaka have displayed, integration in cities with old-comer population tends to be advanced particularly in political participation and anti-discrimination, areas that the national government is not very keen about. In light of this, it can be concluded that the MIPEX was a sufficient index to measure integration policy.

This study has also strengthened the statement that city-initiated integration policies can be more effectual than national policies while showing the precariousness of the decentralization of integration strategy. The three cities have demonstrated municipalities' capability of arranging pragmatic policies to facilitate migrants' access to services of particular fields such as education and health, where their basic rights are defined under the national regime. However, regional differences among the three cities cannot be missed out; especially, the number of integration policy measures of Osaka on average was significantly lower than that of Hamamatsu and Kawasaki. This contrast could lead to a huge cleavage between municipalities that would cause inequality among migrants settling in different regions and cities. Although their different demographic and historical backgrounds attribute to this divergence, the ambiguity of the national-level integration strategy can be the foremost factor. The national government is therefore anticipated to release concrete guidelines to standardize features and fields for integration so that the content and quality of integration policies at the local level would be maintained. The OSCE (2017) asserts that nations with scarce integration policies can learn from the local-level policy agendas and debates and create a multi-level governance structure from early on. Japan also is capable of leveraging municipalities' experience and policy outcomes for more desirable and encompassing national integration policies. At the same time, policy evaluation and assessment also should take into account both national- and local-level policies and practices. Especially, for nations like Japan, whose integration policy-making has been led by local governments, national-level integration policy assessment and evaluation may not be the most appropriate means. Since integration thoroughly encompasses migrants' political, economic, social and cultural rights as well as welfare, integration policy should be measured both from national and local aspects, and a new

policy index should be developed to weigh up both national and local integration strategies for more accurate and exhaustive analysis.

### *Limitations*

This study has encountered some limitations by applying the national integration policy indicator into local integration strategies and revealing different characteristics of national and local authorities. One major issue is that the national-level indicator principally concerns migrants' political and legal integration. The MIPEX allots its large part for migrants' political participation, access to nationality, family reunion and permanent residence that tend to be under control of the national regime (OSCE, 2017). Local policy documents and projects analyzed in the study did not address migrants' access to nationality, family reunion and permanent residence. As pointed out by Hammar (1985) and Alexander (2007), this attributes to unlike characteristics of national immigration policy, which exerts direct control over the flux of migrants, and local immigrant policy that is welfare-focused.

Another limitation is the absence of concrete definition of integration. While this study has conducted analysis on documents targeting migrant population, none of official documents and projects of the three cities has employed the term 'integration.' The most frequently used term the researcher has come across was 'multicultural coexistence.' Their word usage might derive from the Japanese government's slogan of *tabunka kyousei*. Nevertheless, this concept remains vague and cannot be sufficient to define 'integration' in Japan (Yamanaka, 2008; Nagayoshi, 2011; Nakamatsu, 2014). Therefore, it is only natural that the Japanese national and local officials' concepts of multicultural coexistence are equivocal and perhaps confine the extent of integration depending on authorities. While its concept of multicultural existence has been examined as integration by the MIPEX, Japan's future potential or sustainability of the current understanding of 'integration' remains questionable with its lack of proper definition of multicultural coexistence.

Finally, asylum seekers and undocumented migrants as well as short-term residents were not considered in any policy documents of the three local cities. This is because their integration schemes target those who have already registered as long-term migrants. However, those excluded from the policy certainly exist in the community (Ministry of Justice, 2018a; 2018b). Both local and national integration policies that include asylum seekers, undocumented migrants and short-term migrants such as technical interns are therefore awaited.

### **Conclusion**

This study has investigated policy measures that three ordinance-designated cities in Japan have released to integrate their foreign population, by employing the MIPEX policy indicator. Among Hamamatsu, Kawasaki and Osaka, Kawasaki has developed the most number of integration policy measures followed by Hamamatsu by a narrow margin, while little effort has been observed in Osaka. These regional gaps and trends can be partially explained from their sociodemographic characteristics, such as the visible presence of longer-term foreign population, but in-depth research would be necessary to determine the factors and motivations behind cities' making of integration strategy.

Using the MIPEX for framework analysis, moreover, has highlighted different focuses and competences that national and local governances exercise. While national policies mainly handle migrants' access

to basic rights of labor, health, and political participation, local policies rather facilitate migrants' access to those rights especially in education and health and support their welfare while highlighting cultural diversity. To some extent, the MIPEX can be a sufficient policy indicator to assess and compare integration measures. However, Japan's decentralized integration scheme may have made it difficult for national-level integration policy assessment tools to capture an entire image of migrant integration in Japan. Examining both national and local measures would enable the exhaustive analysis on integration policies.

Looking at Japan, local cities have been playing a vital role due to Japan's decentralized guidelines. As researchers (e.g. Tsuda, 2006; Anagnostou, 2016) maintain, flexibility and creativity are the forte of municipalities that even allow them to outweigh the national government; however, the national-level policy development is palpably essential when considering the possibility of unequal integration between regions and cities, which recalls the idea of multi-level governance (see Bache and Flinders, 2004). Being recognized as multi-dimensional, cross-sectional and multi-process, migrant integration must be achieved in all areas while involving all levels of authority; it is hence important to continue research on this topic in order to thoroughly comprehend the ideal and actual roles of national and local authorities in migrant integration.

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#### *List of policy documents*

Hamamatsu:

- The 2nd Hamamatsu Intercultural City Vision (hereafter Hamamatsu Vision) (Hamamatsu City, 2018j);
- Hamamatsu Strategic Plan as of 2018 (Hamamatsu City, 2018b; 2018c; 2018f; 2018g; 2018h; 2018k);
- Hamamatsu City Ordinance for Foreign Residents Coexistence Council (Hamamatsu City, 2008);
- Hamamatsu City Human Rights Policy Promotion Plan (Hamamatsu City, 2015);
- Several webpages in which the city explains its particular projects, which are "Placement of School Support Staff for Foreign Children" (Hamamatsu City, 2017a), "Teaching Native Languages and Japanese" (Hamamatsu City, 2018a), "Social Welfare for Foreign Elderly" (Hamamatsu City, 2018d), and "Preschool Guidance" (Hamamatsu City, 2018i).

Kawasaki:

- Kawasaki's Promotion Guideline for a Multicultural, Harmonious Society (hereafter Kawasaki Guideline) (Kawasaki City, 2015c);
- Kawasaki City Local Referendum Ordinance (Kawasaki City, 2008);
- Kawasaki City Human Rights Ombudsperson Ordinance (Kawasaki City, 2015b);
- Kawasaki City Human Rights Promotion Basic Plan (Kawasaki City, 2015a);
- Several webpages that Kawasaki city describes their policy measures, which are "Links to Hospital and Medical Care" (Kawasaki City, 2014) and "About Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents" (Kawasaki City, 2017);
- Living Together: Toward Multicultural Coexistence Society (Kawasaki Board of Education, 2017).

Osaka:

- Practice of Basic Policy Guideline for Foreign Residents in Osaka City (hereafter Osaka Guideline) (Osaka City, 2017a; 2017b; 2017c; 2017d; 2017e; 2017f; 2017g; 2017h; 2017i; 2017j);

- Osaka City Ordinance against Hate Speech (Osaka City, 2016);
- Webpages that describe Osaka's policy measures, which are "Enrollment to Elementary and Junior High School" (Osaka City, 2018c) and "Welfare for Foreign Elderly in Japan" (Osaka City, 2018e).