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## Exploring *akogare* [desire] in the context of the internationalization of Japanese higher education

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Since the 1980s, the Japanese government has supported the "kokusaika" campaign to promote the internationalization of Japanese higher education. Their 12-year plan to welcome 300,000 international students per year was achieved in 2019, a year ahead of schedule. While much attention is paid to quantitative targets such as the above, realities of *kokusaika* are often glossed over. Financial difficulties, language/cultural barriers, and career decisions are some of the common challenges among students in international contexts. For this presentation, I will share some of the data and analysis from my ongoing study which aims to help paint multiple realities of kokusaika in the context of Japanese higher education. In particular, I will use a framework of akogare to explore and understand Japanese students' experiences of kokusaika. By doing so, I hope to invite the audience to imagine/re-imagine the future direction of kokusaika efforts in our university and beyond.

## Key Words "Internationalization of higher education" "Japan" "desire" "identity"