

Faculty of Sociology

Bright Futures

Bright Futures is a pioneering study investigating East Asian student mobilities—one of the most intense flows of educational migrations.

Bright Futures is a three-country collaborative project funded by German Research Foundation (Germany), the Economic and Social Research Council (UK), and the National Natural Science Foundation (China).

Visit us at

brightfutures-project.com

**Contact for Germany**

Prof. Thomas Faist, PhD
Email: thomas.faist@uni-bielefeld.de

Address

Bielefeld University
Faculty of Sociology
PO Box 10 01 31
33501 Bielefeld, GERMANY

**for parcels**

Universitätsstr. 24
33615 Bielefeld, GERMANY

Email

sekretariat.faist@uni-bielefeld.de

Telephone

+49 521 106-4639

Visit our web site

www.uni-bielefeld.de/soz/ab6/ag_faist/

Follow us on twitter

@thecomcad

Bright Futures

A Comparative Study of
Internal and International
Mobility of East Asian
Higher Education Students

Motivation

As many as 50 million young Chinese have migrated from their hometowns in the countryside and become urban residents as a result of seeking higher education, while Chinese students constitute the largest single group of international students in the richer countries of the world, making up 20% of the total student migration to these countries. Conversely, the number of Japanese students who are travelling for their education, whether to a different region or country, is on the decline – and has been since just after 2000.

Aim of the study

Bright Futures aims to investigate how Chinese and Japanese students and their families make decisions about migrating for education within their own country and overseas. Starting from a transnational vantage point, our analytical perspective connects educational migrations to transnational convergences, among higher education institutions towards global standards and among students towards the spread of educational and mobility aspirations. The research seeks to shed new light on the relationship between educational mobility and broader life course aspirations and orientations, and their regional and global dynamics.

Research design

We are conducting three-way comparisons on a representative sample of Chinese and Japanese students in British and German universities, with those who received their education domestically whether at home or in a different city, as well as Chinese students who migrated to Japan. In the UK and Germany, we also have a comparison group of British and German students.

Through such comparisons, we expect to analyze a number of theoretical issues such as selectivity in educational migration; how individual preferences are shaped for regional as opposed to beyond region migrations; and the differential impact of such preferences on broader life course orientations and expectations.

Field work

Data are collected through large-scale online surveys among representative samples of student groups, complemented by qualitative interviews with students and their parents, as well as ethnographic observation of student recruitment-related events. Field work will be completed by summer 2018.

Contribution

As well as producing large-scale survey data on Chinese and Japanese student migrants (to be published for scientific use), we hope our research will be helpful for future students and their parents in understanding more about the context for decision-making on migration for education and provide information that will be useful to institutions in improving the experience of international students.

Team

Germany

Prof. Thomas Faist (Professor of Transnationalisation, Development and Migration, University of Bielefeld)

Dr. Andrés Cardona (Senior Researcher, University of Bielefeld)

Mengyao Zhao (Doctoral Researcher, University of Bielefeld)

Takuma Fujii (Doctoral Researcher, University of Bielefeld)

UK

Prof. Yasemin Soysal (Principal Investigator and Scientific Coordinator, Professor of Sociology, University of Essex)

Prof. Héctor Cebolla-Boado (Associate Professor of Sociology and Social Stratification, UNED/Spain)

Dr. Sophia Woodman (Chancellor's Fellow, University of Edinburgh)

China

Prof. Qiang Li (Dean of School of Social Sciences, Tsinghua University)

Prof. Jingming Liu (Professor of Sociology, Tsinghua University)

Prof. Jinghuan Shi (Professor of Education, Tsinghua University)