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***nghị 1***

*International Papers*

## **A SURVEY ON VIEW OF FINDING EMPLOYMENT AND REASONS TO CHOOSE A COMPANY BY STUDENTS OF DEPARTMENT OF JAPANESE FOR BUSINESS COMMUNICATION AT SRIPATUM UNIVERSITY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this paper was to clarify a view of finding employment and the reasons to choose a company by a questionnaire survey targeting 21 third-year students at the Department of Japanese for Business Communication, Sripatum University, Thailand. The questionnaire consisted of two questions and the number of valid respondents was 20 students. Cronbach's coefficient alpha was 0.99 in the first question and was 0.81 in the second question. The discussions were processed after the analysis of the respondents' answer behaviors. The research findings have revealed a variety of attitudes; personal satisfaction with labor, a job as a means of living, and self-fulfillment through the work, on the other hand, it was also found that career-minded attitudes were extremely low. As for the reasons for a company choice, the working conditions were prioritized, such as managerial stability or treatment in a company, and it also showed a tendency to value workplace environment rather than a company itself. From these findings, it is expected to improve the quality of career education through a set of career-related course subjects in the curriculum and to provide appropriate advice and guidance in each subject for each grade.

**KEYWORDS:** view of finding employment, reasons to choose a company, career education, internship, Sripatum University

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

According to the overview of the Japanese economic domain in Thailand, the direct investment on a monetary base was 79,629 million baht in 2016 (JETRO) and the amount of Japanese investment accounted for 22% in Thailand, namely, it took the first rank. In addition, the exports to Japan amounted to 215.3 billion dollars and the imports from Japan amounted to 194.7 billion dollars in the commercial relations centered on trade between the countries in 2016. Japan as Thailand's trading partner was ranked third in export and second in import (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan). Speaking of investment and commercial intercourse, with the effect of the Japan-Thailand Economic

Partnership Agreement (JTEPA) on November 1, 2007, it can be concluded that both of the two countries are increasing closeness of the economic relationship through investment and commerce. In such a context, it was confirmed that the number of Japanese-affiliated companies advanced to Thailand was 5,444 companies, and there were various kinds of industry sectors (JETRO, 2017; 6). As it can be also seen in the recruitment process by human resource dispatch companies or in the employment information on recruitment sites in Thailand, it seems that the demand for Thai human resources with Japanese language literacy is, regardless of a business category or a job type, very strong in Japanese companies.

A Japanese language major course has been established since 2015 at Sripatum University, Bangkheng Main Campus, Bangkok (herein referred to as SPU). The students, who are enrolled in major Japanese course for the Business Communication Department, must take compulsory subjects of *JBC229 Japanese Corporate Culture and Work Style* in the second semester of the second-year and of *JBC332 Japanese for Management* in the first semester of the third-year. Needless to say, these subjects are offered jobs in Japanese companies in mind. Subsequently, they have to take a subject of *JBC498 Japanese for Business Communication Pre-cooperative Education* in the summer semester of the third-year, and a subject of *JBC499 Japanese for Business Communication Cooperative Education* in the second semester of the fourth-year. In the industry-collaborative curriculum, it is required to participate in 16-week internships (a work experience program or occupational experience), and more than 80% of Japanese language usage rate is also required for interns in a company that accepts an internship program. Therefore, it will be a realistic problem for students to be considerations of internship in Japanese company with a quite high Japanese language rate. Although it is not indispensable for them to start working for a Japanese company after graduation, it is presumed that the employment in a Japanese company gives a conditionally advantageous opportunity to them in terms of a workplace where they can make the most of a specialized field or a career path as a professional in Japanese business. In that sense, it is natural that there is not only Japanese language education and business education, but also guidance of internship program based on an industry-academia partnership and of students' job-hunting activities including their awareness and understanding of employment, for educational purposes of the Japanese language major course.

Based on the points described above, the researcher recognized the necessity to conduct a classroom research on the students' view of finding employment and the reasons to choose a company from a standpoint of career education for students in Business Japanese major course and as a part of advancing an internship program or job-hunting endeavors.

## 2. SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH

In a career education involving internship programs in college and job-searching activities before and after graduation, it is thought that a certain significance will be recognized by investigating how a view of finding employment or a view on a job and work including attitudes to a career affects the reasons to choose a company, that is, it will be a good opportunity to think specifically about the purpose, contents, and methods of industry-university collaborative education. In that sense, the results obtained in this survey can be considered as valuable data that can be effectively used in career education for the students majoring in Business Japanese. In the meanwhile, a lot of human resources with Japanese language skills and its communication competence, of course, are employed in Japanese-affiliated companies operating in Thailand. In addition to this, it is also a fact that considerable degree of Japanese corporations is seriously considering the promotion of exceptional Japanese language human resources and executive candidates from a medium- and long-term perspective, and the needs will be also expected to increase more and more concurrently (JETRO, 2018; 72-75). At the other extreme, it is also expected to benefit for career education at university, that is to say, it is useful for a succession of career vision, career design, career plan, career action, career path, and career development in order to enable to make a job-hunting process for students from an independent-minded stance with the application of a proactive approach.

## 3. PREVIOUS RESEARCH

A number of surveys on a view of finding employment, occupation and work, or the consciousness towards to employment or job-hunting process were conducted by all kinds of institutions or organizations, regardless of a sector type (whether public or private). Firstly, the study trends are, here, introduced with a focus on the case studies in Japan. The Cabinet Office, Government of Japan (2018) has published a *White Paper* entitled 'Children and Young People' in order to clarify current status and issues in occupational self-reliance and employment support as an annual report since 2010. The young people's consciousness survey on employment reported 1) how young people (teenage and twenties) perceive the work, 2) what sort of things they emphasize on the occasion of choosing their occupation, 3) they hope to continue learning after finding employment or not, 4) what kind of perspectives they have for the future, and so forth in the *White Paper*. Secondly, the academic research in educational institutions have been performed by approaches from a variety of viewpoints. Owaki et al. (2009) carried out an investigation on the views of finding employment, places of employment, criteria for choosing occupations, ways to obtain information about employment, work experience, and so on. Nishimura & Taneichi (2011) had a semi-structured interview on a view of finding employment or job-hunting activities for 18 university students and analyzed the data by a modified grounded theory approach (M-GTA). Miyamoto (2011) researched the proceedings and changes in work awareness as the axis of three items; view of employment,

intention to choose an enterprise, and key factors to choose a company within the period from 1992 until 2012. Ogawa (2016) made a qualitative survey on working image and significance of working in case of thinking career design, and asserted the importance of nurturing a view of work or occupation by college students in career education at university. Takahashi (2018) had an objective overview of empirical research targeting the process of job-hunting activities by university students, reported their behaviors, and discussed possible prospects in the future. Thirdly, the survey conducted by a private organization included the results of the report on job-hunting search by Employment Advance Research Center (2018). Moreover, Minavi Corporation (2018) that is engaged in staffing services or placement services has continuously implemented a survey on employment awareness by college students on a yearly base since 1978, and the survey target in recent years is also the largest scale with more than 10,000 people across the country. In the question contents of this research, the researcher adopted some of the question items were used in the above survey as it is in the context of the reliability and validity.

Finally, with regard to the investigation on career choice by Thai university students, Mizukami (2005) statistically analyzed such variables as desired starting salary, desired employment place, desired occupation, things to expect for employment, etc. by using close-ended questions and text open-ended questions for 242 students at national and private universities in Bangkok. Although it is different from academic research, *Info Biz Thailand* by Nippon Info B Co., Ltd. (2017a; 2017b), an informational magazine that issued in Thailand included articles on the investigation results on the top 100 enterprises which Thai students hoped to work for and tabulation results by gender, by humanities course or science course and by reasons to choose the company, and summarized the analytical results and background discussions. As a side note, the top 4 positions were dominated by good salary and special treatment such as bonus, large-scale corporation, famous one and stable one in the reasons to choose a company, and was referred to 44 Japanese firms that Thai students hoped to have work experience as interns. Universum (2018), a consulting company in Sweden, did a survey on popular and preferred company in order to measure corporate value at more than 60 countries all over the world, and put ranking of 100 companies by 23 universities/4,749 students as results from the survey in Thailand on the website.

#### **4. OBJECTIVE**

The main objective of this small-scale classroom research was to clarify the sense of values or the way of thinking with regard to finding employment by the students majoring in Business Japanese at SPU; a view of finding employment, and was also to illuminate by what kind of reasons they chose a company with job-hunting process before and after graduation in mind; the reasons to choose a company when they start job-seeking. In addition to this, another objective was to obtain valuable indication or reference data on discussing and improving the quality of career education

through work-related advanced subjects in the curriculum of the Business Japanese major course and the instructional contents or the teaching methods of internship program in the industry-academia collaborative education.

## 5. METHODOLOGY

### 5.1 TARGET GROUP

The target group in this classroom research consisted of third-year students enrolled at the Department of Japanese for Business Communication, SPU in the academic year of 2016. There were 21 students (4 males: 19.0% and 17 females; 81.0%; rounded to one decimal place, hereinafter the same shall apply), who registered under *JBC332 Japanese for Management* (3 credits) in the first academic semester of 2018 (August - December, 2018).

### 5.2 INSTRUMENT

This research implied using a questionnaire method adopted closed-ended questions type with two questions in Thai language. The two questions were designed by multiple-choice questions. The first question had multiple responses with an option to choose one and more answers from 8 choices, and the second question included limited-multiple responses with only two answers from 20 items.

### 5.3 DATA COLLECTION

The questionnaire was distributed among 20 students, who attended the classes of *JBC332 Japanese for Management* on September 25, 2018 in the first semester of the 2018 academic year (1 absentee). It took about 10 minutes to answer the two questions. The valid respondents were 20 students (4 male students: 20.0% and 16 female students: 80.0%), thus, the percentage of valid responses was 100.0% without invalid answers. The Cronbach's coefficient alpha was 0.99 in the first question and 0.81 in the second question from descriptive statistics (Casio Computer Co., Ltd.).

### 5.4 DATA ANALYSIS

Although it was analyzed by the respondents' behaviors in the questionnaire, the number of choices answered by the respondents in total was 99 answers in the first question as shown in Table 1. The standard deviation (*SD*) was 1.67, as shown in Table 1. The content of each item is provided in Table 3.

**Table 1.** The number of respondents' answers in the first question

No. of Answers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total 99
No. of Respondents	0	1	3	6	1	5	3	1	20
Percentage	0.0%	5.0%	15.0%	30.0%	5.0%	25.0%	15.0%	5.0%	100.0%



The 6 respondents chose 4 items (30.0%) and the 5 respondents chose 6 items (25.0%), namely, there were 11 respondents, thus, it was over half of all the respondents (55.5%). The average answers by the 20 respondents was 4.95 per capita. Next, in relation to the breakdown of the two answers chosen from 20 items in the second question by the respondents, there were 14 patterns as given in Table 2. The content of the 20 choices is described in Table 4.

**Table 2.** The breakdown of the two answers chosen from the 20 choices in the second question

Pattern	Item No.	Respondent (%)	8	2 & 3	1 (5.0%)
1	1 & 3	3 (15.0%)	9	2 & 11	1 (5.0%)
2	1 & 4	1 (5.0%)	10	2 & 20	1 (5.0%)
3	1 & 7	1 (5.0%)	11	3 & 12	1 (5.0%)
4	1 & 9	3 (15.0%)	12	3 & 15	1 (5.0%)
5	1 & 10	1 (5.0%)	13	3 & 18	1 (5.0%)
6	1 & 12	3 (15.0%)	14	10 & 13	1 (5.0%)
7	1 & 14	1 (5.0%)	Total	20	20 (100.0%)

Whereas the number of chosen items was 14 in all, i.e. item No. 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18, and 20, respectively, the number of no-chosen items was 6 in all, i.e. item No. 5, 6, 8, 16, 17, and 19, respectively. The standard deviation (*SD*) was 0.85, as shown in Table 2. The most patterns were item No. 1 & 3, No. 1 & 9, and No. 1 & 12, and the number of the respondents was 3 respondents (15.0%) in each pattern respectively. All of the remaining 11 patterns were the respondents with only 1 person (5.0%).

## 6. FINDINGS

### 6.1 VIEW OF FINDING EMPLOYMENT BY RESPONDENTS

The aggregate results of the answers in the first question are shown in Table 3. The percentage figures in the Table contained numerical values divided by the number of answers of each item in all of the 20 respondents. The standard deviation (*SD*) was 5.73 in Table 3.

**Table 3.** The aggregate result of 20 respondents in the first question

Item	Content	No.	%	5	I would like to work with pride	15	75.0
1	It is sufficient only to earn an income	17	85.0	6	I would like to do the work that will help people	8	40.0
2	I want to work happily	19	95.0	7	I want to advance in my career	3	15.0
3	I want to work for my own dream	17	85.0	8	I want to contribute to the society	7	35.0
4	I want to balance between personal life and work	13	65.0		Total answers	99	

Although the differences among items were visible in ratio, all the 8 items were chosen regarding a view of finding employment. Of these, more than 80% of items was item No. 2; *enjoyment* (95.0%), item No. 1; *income* (85.0%) or item No. 3 *one's dream* (85.0%), and item No. 5 *working with pride* (75.0%) in order from the high thing of the items. Working was interpreted as personal satisfaction from item No. 2 and No. 5, the concept of labor was accepted as livelihoods from item No. 1, and a view on a work was perceived as a means of self-fulfillment from item No. 3. At any rate, it found that there was a diversity of consciousness or attitudes towards the purpose or significance of working. It might be said that a view of finding employment was, more or less, combined with these different attitudes in actuality. These results reflected intrinsic values for individuals, but then, as shown in item No. 4; *balance between personal life and work*, it showed a tendency of separating personal life and work by more than half 65.0%. With regard to a job as an extension of everyday life or as a part of daily life, the difference of employment consciousness by the respondents at the base was observed. From item No. 6; *work with benefit to people* and No. 8; *contributing for society* were 40.0% and 35.0% respectively, it is certain that finding employment exists for oneself, not for anyone else or the society. However, item No. 7; *career advancement-minded and willing* was extremely small at 15.0%. Even though a low interest in the motivation of career path or career development for the future, or a low interest in the way of promotion was observed, it is anticipated that a long-range career vision is lacked in the notion of finding employment.

## 6.2 REASONS TO CHOOSE COMPANY BY RESPONDENTS

The tabulated results of the answers in the second question are shown in Table 4. The standard deviation (*SD*) was 3.11 in the Table. There were 20 choices in the second question, however, the items which were not chosen were 6 items, i.e. item No. 5, No. 6, No. 8, No. 16, No. 17, and No. 19. The chosen items were listed in order of the percentage as follows. Item No. 1 (32.5%), No. 3 (17.5%), No. 12 (10.0%), No. 2 or No. 9 (7.5%, respectively), No. 10 (5.0%), and No. 4, No. 7, No. 11, No. 13, No. 14, No. 15, No. 18 or No. 20 (2.5%, respectively).

**Table 4.** The tabulated results of 20 respondents in the second question

Item	Content	No.	%	11	A company that can make use of its own capacities or expertise	1	2.5
1	A company that is stable	13	32.5	12	Companies without university or gender discrimination	4	10.0
2	A company that is likely to grow from now	3	7.5	13	A company where young people can be active	1	2.5
3	A company with a good salary	7	17.5	14	Companies that have diversified their business	1	2.5
4	A company where I can do the work (occupation) I want to do	1	2.5	15	A company with a good workplace	1	2.5
5	A famous company	0	0.0	16	A company where I want to work	0	0.0
6	Companies with many holidays	0	0.0	17	A familiar company	0	0.0
7	A company with a work system and good welfare benefits such as housing subsidies, etc.	1	2.5	18	Companies with a good corporate culture	1	2.5
8	Companies without company transfer	0	0.0	19	A company where I can continue work until retirement	0	0.0
9	A company enabling me to be active overseas	3	7.5	20	Companies with a well-equipped training system	1	2.5
10	A company that can experience various kinds of occupations	2	5.0		Total answers	40	100.0

It was, of course, obvious of prioritizing working conditions like item No. 1; *stability* (32.5%) and No. 3; *salary* (17.5%) in terms of key words in Table 4. On the other hand, it was found that the respondents did not adhere to *famous and familiar company* at all as shown in item No. 5 (0.0%) and No. 17 (0.0%). It was thought that companies were not chosen for external reasons. Besides that, item No. 16; *preferred industries* (0.0%) and No. 19; *enabling to work until retirement* (0.0%) were not chosen, thus, it was not definitive criterion to decide to choose a firm. Conversely, in spite of a small number of respondents, it was seen to make consideration of working environment as item No. 12; *non-discriminatory* (10.0%), No. 15; *good workplace* (2.5%) and No. 18; *corporate culture* (2.5%) rather than company itself. There was also a trend that indicated active intention such as item No. 2; *Company that is likely to grow* (7.5%), No. 9; *be active overseas* (7.5%), No. 10; *enabling to experience various kinds of jobs* (5.0%), No. 4; *the work that wants to do* (2.5%), No. 11; *enabling to make use of own capacities or expertise* (2.5%), No. 13; *young employees can be active* (2.5%), No. 20; *well-equipped training system* (2.5%), and No. 8; *no company transfer* (0.0%), or *accepting company transfer* (in the meaning that no one chose). From these 8 items, the respondents somewhat placed importance on personal and professional growth. In other words, it was apparent that a few

respondents sought for a company that was possible to challenge in career development. In that sense, it could be said that the reasons of choosing a company indicated the expectations of that company.

### **6.3 RELEVANCE OF 6.1 AND 6.2**

When compared to the reasons for choosing a company in the second question (Table 4) as the axis of item No. 1, No. 2, No. 3, and No. 5 accounted for over about 80% in the first question (Table 3), there were two features. One was a type of thinking about the reasons for a company choice with a priority given to one's own attitudes or awareness of occupation as shown in the responses from items No. 1, No. 3, No. 4, No. 7, No. 11, No. 12, No. 15, and No. 18 in the second question. The other one considered management activities and managerial conditions of companies in connection with the answers from items No. 2, No. 9, No. 10, No. 13, No. 14, and No. 20 in the second question. These two types were perceived as the results based on the criteria of personal choice or social choice in the context of the reasons for a company choice affected by a view of finding employment. In fact, however, it was thought that the relevance resulted from a combination of factors.

## **7. CONCLUSION AND SUGESTIONS**

As an overall conclusion, there is a trend to choose a company providing one's current satisfaction degree or one's sense of accomplishment, not external reasons, by a view of finding employment based on personal preferences focusing on labor conditions or workplace environments. On the other hand, somewhat positive attitudes oriented to self-fulfillment were observed in connection with the reasons for choosing a company. As a technical problem, this research did not design the columns of *Other* in both questions and ask for relative ranking with value scales. Moreover, in the second question, it was insufficient to analyze the reasons for a company choice, from various perspectives in multiple-choice questions limited only to two answers. Therefore, it could not be referred to individuals or detailed features in this paper. Additionally, further discussions were still needed on the relevance between a view of finding employment and the reasons to choose a company. However, on the basis of the precious conclusion obtained from the analysis and discussions in this small-scale classroom research and by providing feedback of research results to the students, it is expected, in the future, 1) to enhance the contents of career education through the career-related course subjects in the curriculum, and 2) to provide appropriate advice and guidance in each subject and for each of grades 2-4 in order to lead to a set of the processes from internship until job-hunting activities before and after graduation, and moreover, the step-by-step process from career vision towards career development with keeping future viewpoints and long-term perspectives in mind.

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