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Abstract

The Japanese higher education system currently faces a massive demographic crunch, caught between a falling population of 18-year-olds and a continually expanding system of 4-year universities. In the past 25 years alone, the percentage of traditionally college-aged students attending 4-year institutions has roughly doubled. This chapter first addresses how these changes have had, and are continuing to have, profound changes on competition and recruitment within the higher education system, which are felt particularly keenly at lower prestige institutions. In particular, lower prestige universities are often finding themselves forced to relax entrance standards and graduation standards, and these changes can have strong negative effects on the readiness of new students for their university-level studies. The case study in this chapter will describe these pressures, using one institution to illustrate. The policies that have been put in place to increase recruitment and retention, and to deal with the effects these policies have on the quality of students, will be described and analyzed. (HRK / Abstract

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