

## **Multiculturalism of Foreign Workers**

### 1. Motivation behind Research Paper

My group and I were motivated to research our topic because we were interested in multiculturalism, the problems that prevent places from achieving social harmony, and possible solutions to them. We specifically wanted to focus on cross-cultural understanding. Later, we participated in an intercultural understanding exchange meeting in Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU) in Beppu City in Oita Prefecture last November. Then, we interviewed some exchange students from APU to help deepen our research about cultural differences. My group and I asked them two questions: (1) What are the problems and inconveniences of living in Japan? (2) Beppu is said to be a multicultural city, so could you please elaborate on the good points about living in Japan.

### 2. Introduction

The aim of my global research project is to share foreign cultures to elementary school and junior high school students in Nara by creating a pamphlet. In Japan, there are four suggested steps that students must take in order to have cultural understanding. First, Japanese people have to start early. Since elementary school students have fewer opportunities to learn about different cultures, schools should increase the opportunities for elementary school students to increase their

exposure to other cultures. The second step is to develop students' interest in languages, beliefs and behaviors by communicating with Assistant Language Teachers (ALT) in English classes. The next step is to increase that international knowledge by participating in exchange meetings in high school or university. As a result, students can understand each other's similarities and differences through studying abroad and home stay experiences. The final step is to reach an understanding of different cultures' similarities and differences with a tolerant attitude. Most of the data was collected on the internet.

### 3. Results and Analysis

I wanted to investigate whether or not Japanese people's mindsets would change in how they deal with foreigners in the future through questionnaires. At first, we asked the students in the same seminar to answer the questionnaires. Based on their responses, we hope to make some changes in hopes of improving Nara Kokusai High School. We think students in Nara Kokusai have more opportunities to make contact with exchange students and ALT teachers than other students in Nara. Therefore, their opinions are likely to be more accurate because they have more experiences. Having said that, some of these experiences can be negative because of bad experiences with ALTs or exchange students. Regardless, they are primary sources and quite usable for this research. After collecting these opinions, we are going to put pamphlets in other schools and places where foreigners and Japanese people can interact, such as international exchange centers in Nara. As a result of the survey, we expect answers like "the impression towards foreigners in the city has changed" and "I learned from some of these difficult situations." Beyond that, we believe in a future where attitudes toward teaching about discrimination in the school

will change. In addition, we could also gain new perspectives from students. Overall, the number of students who learn about the differences in cultures with bias will decrease.

We did encounter some problems when conducting these surveys. For example, if a student responds with "I'm not interested in it." The survey's fundamentals fall apart. If students do not understand the content of the survey, then we cannot measure anything. The problem that we have to confront now is to find effective ways to spread knowledge about different cultures. However, we think we must create entertaining and explanatory texts to understand easily for everyone because it can't work if you understand with interest. These are the negative points that can be obtained from our survey.

Regarding a student's learning ability to understand different cultures, the way to learn as well as evaluation criteria are ambiguous. Because of the ambiguity of the definition, understanding them has many questionable things about the existence of the concepts, it is very difficult to show the ability. As mentioned above, even the recognition of what cross-cultural understanding is does not have to seek teaching guidelines about fostering the basis of international understanding in educational sites. It is likely to connect with easy schemes like "if you can speak English, you can interact with people from other countries and cross cultural understanding will be born." This idea corresponds to "contact hypothesis 2," which was widely advocated in the 1970s, however the prevailing theory is that cross-cultural experience alone does not lead to superior cross-cultural understanding or sensitivity in recent years. Currently, students are expected to pursue the goal of the guidelines, which is to "cultivate a foundation of international understanding without knowing the definition of intercultural understanding."

We predict there is a future in which people are able to live with people of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds without prejudice. If students are able to understand another culture, they can understand actions that they might find strange from the people of their own country. And also, they can get the ability to interpret different cultures and relate their own culture to other cultures, and the ability to get new knowledge of cultures and cultural behaviors. Getting new knowledge means getting new ideas and values, being able to accept ideas of others when interacting with people from other countries. We believe that doing so will alleviate conflicts. People will be able to be generous by respecting each other's culture and understanding others.

If this is realized, it will prevent conflict. Conflict is defined as "a direct struggle (social process) between two parties that acts on the other party's conduct itself." If the other party's actions are respectful of your national culture, you must understand and accept them. An example is given using responses from an interview conducted at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University last November. An example is given using responses from an interview we conducted at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University in November 2021. Using an example given by a female exchange student from Vietnam. Vietnamese people grab the others' hand when apologizing. Shortly after she arrived in Japan, she accidentally stepped on the foot of a Japanese student. When she grabbed a Japanese student's hand to apologize, the Japanese student was surprised by her action because he had never experienced something like that before. The exchange student was shocked because a Japanese student did not accept her usual behavior. We think if we had understood each other's culture, it wouldn't have happened. Like this, problems are represented in comic books and their causes and solutions are summarized in pamphlets. The cause of this problem

is that they did not know the culture in this case. An exchange student and a Japanese student should learn about different cultures between one culture and another. Also, a Japanese student needs to cultivate tolerance to understand what the opposite person has like in this culture. To cultivate that tolerance people must learn about various countries, acquire new ideas and values, and feel that there are other cultures like this in the world. The generation that begins to experience different cultures, such as elementary and junior high school students, must be made aware of the culture without prejudice. We hope that by learning about the causes and solutions to problems caused by cultural friction, they will learn how to relate to people from other countries in their future interactions.

#### 4. Conclusion and Future Problems

Through the interview at cross-cultural understanding in Asia Public University in November, we decided on the exportation theme. Then, we learned about some problems caused by cultural friction. At that time, we started to be interested in helping solve these problems. We decided to represent the problems we learned about as cartoons, and together with the cartoons, we could create a pamphlet about the causes and solutions to the problems to place it in schools in the prefecture. Also, this is the period when students in elementary school and junior high school begin to experience different cultures as English classes and involvement with ALT teachers increases. By creating them for their generation, they can accumulate cross-cultural knowledge without prejudice. By doing so, students will get new ways of thinking and values and try to think about problems with a wider perspective. Through the promotion of this activity, I expect that many people in younger generations will be able to become a global person. By learning about different

cultures from a young age, they will be interested in international jobs while they are growing. From this, more people will be discharged from Japan to other countries around the world. Even if they are not interested in solving international problems, they would perhaps develop an interest in these problems and help solve them by experiencing different cultures from an early age.

If you are interested in each other's culture, you can understand the other person's mind so these problems would not happen. We try to represent this as a manga, and summarize the cause solution in the pamphlet. Most problems between Japanese people and foreign people occur because they know each other's cultures. Exchange students enter the local college so they have to learn the different cultures between local culture and native culture. Also, local students need to get the tolerance that exchange students have for such a culture. The way of getting it is learning about various cultures and developing new ways of thinking and values and recognizing that there are many kinds of culture around the world. They can learn about cultures without having bias and negative images. The generation like elementary school and junior high school students who started to interact with a variety of cultures must understand that. By learning the cause that happened by different cultures and solutions, I expect that they learn how to interact with people from other countries. As I said before, we are trying to spread knowledge about various cultures. First, we aim to put the pamphlets at Nara Kokusai high school. One issue that we might face is whether or not students take the time to pick up and read these pamphlets.

## 5. Reflection

In the future, I want to spread cross-cultural awareness based on my experience as an extension of my exploration. I want to work in a trading company, then with spreading products, spread the culture related to them. There are unique cultures so I want to show them to people. These days, globalization is growing. If they can't understand cultures that are shown in our pamphlet, many problems will happen. For example, Japanese common knowledge could be impolite. If they don't accept diversity, world globalization can't improve. Cooperating with each other is required.

I want to study at Alcalá university in the future. There are many exchange students from all over the world so I will learn many cultures and Spanish culture the hard way. Using what I've learned, I am going to share the way to think and value based on culture shock from actual experiences. As the way to spread, the opportunities to contact between companies is not enough. Then, I will try to hold a cross-cultural exchange as an organizer. I basically want to talk about one culture: the similar point and the different point. If there are many workers who have their own background in the office, it is fine to do it at the office.

At the cross-cultural exchange, aggressiveness is needed. We can't communicate with people from abroad without having vocabulary. At the time, it will be a problem if they do activities with motivation. I would like to play music to enhance the mood, provide a vibe, make groups and do presentations among them. Even countries are politically at odds, it is not the problem that the national community communicates with each other. We must let go of the notion that we are enemies of each other. Then, tolerance is required. I would like to acquire this ability to cooperate with people around the world and contribute to globalization.

## 6. Work Cited

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