

Supporting Friends from around the World

1. Motivation behind Research Paper

Do you know where your clothes were made? It was probably made in a Southeast Asian country. If you were to send a letter abroad, it might arrive in two days. If you take a look around you, you may notice that there are a lot more foreign people than there were in the past. Thanks to globalization, it has become easier for people to interact with other people around the world. Society is changing rapidly to be more global. This essay will focus on people who live in other countries and the struggles they face.

2. Introduction

The first task was to search for information to find out more about this problem. Since this is a lesser known topic in Japan, it was difficult for us to find any websites or resources that would help us with our groundwork. What we found out was that there was no official definition for the word "Refugee". However, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "Refugees are people who have fled war, violence, conflict, or persecution and have crossed an international border to find safety in another country." (UNHCR, 2022). As stated by The Migration Observatory at the University of Oxford, in the UK, asylum applications for international protection receiving a grant rose to a record-high of 72% last year (The Migration Observatory, 2022). In Japan, reported by the Japan Association for

Refugees, out of 2,413 people who applied for Refugee Status in 2021, only 74 people were accepted (Japan Association for Refugees), which is only 0.30% of people who were granted to get the support that they need. Japanese people may feel as though this is not an immediate problem, but I feel this is something that needs to be resolved.

3. Results and Analysis

To think of a solution, first, we had to bring awareness to this situation. Therefore, we went to Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University to find more information and further our research. This university is located in Oita Prefecture and nearly half of the faculties are non-Japanese, coming from 26 countries. We asked them if they as college professors had any chance to meet refugees, what kind of image or impression they have, or what they think of the problem that is currently happening, which is refugees getting discriminated against and being left out.

In this interview, the professor spoke about a stateless student who came to the school a few years back. According to the UNHCR website, the legal definition of a stateless person is, “a person who is not considered as a national by any State under the operation of its law”. Her parents were both refugees and in the middle of applying for an Immigrant Visa, as a result, not having the chance to acquire a nationality. Generally, without a nationality, people are not able to legally go in or stay in countries. In addition, they will not be able to apply for public health, education and so much more that support immigrants to have a “normal” life henceforward. However, to get into Japan, the student studied diligently to attain funding from the government and have a chance to get accepted into Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University.

I have learned that not only does being a refugee affect the adults, it also affects the children greatly, which is why I decided to try and find a way to support them. First, I looked at Germany's way of supporting refugees. In 1990, since they used to take in refugees from the former country Yugoslavia during war, Germany had many support groups and non-profit organisations to look up to. That is where I found an organisation that caught my attention. This organisation makes picture books that make it easy to learn different languages and cultures for children who are not able to get the education they need. Therefore, I decided to make a picture book myself and donate them to nearby public facilities, non-profit organisations and the city hall for refugees arriving in Japan. To make the book coherent for everyone, I decided to make the book in both Japanese and English.

I started off by taking part in a translation seminar from Kobe College. That is where I learned the difference between interpretation and translation. At this seminar, we learned that translation means to not only transcribe the words, but also include emotions and thoughts into the sentences. During this seminar, I truly felt that there is a big impact in what you say, and one small difference can either hurt or cheer someone up. The picture book starts off with a boy named "Leo" who ran away from his home country with his family to Japan. Here, he learns about Japanese culture and realises that many people around him are willing to support and be kind to them, even though they look different and have different backgrounds. Our message that we advocate to the readers is "Even though the world is big and there are lots of people, there will ALWAYS be someone who thinks that you are important."

By continuing this research, I was able to reach one of the goals "Spread awareness and Share Knowledge" by participating in the School Global Studies

Result Presentation. My team got chosen to be the representative of our group and had the opportunity to bring awareness to this situation and tell the story of struggling immigrants. Even though this school is only a small community, being able to bring light to this problem was a big achievement for us. We were given lots of advice and positive comments from students. It feels lonely arriving in a country that you barely know anything about and starting a new life. That is why I hope this picture book can make people feel more welcome and supported.

4. Conclusion and Future Problems

Our group faced three main problems. The first problem we faced was completing the picture book. Currently, we only have about 30% of it written and illustrated. We have to complete the Japanese version and then later translate it into English. At the moment, only Nara Kokusai High School's library has been chosen as a donor. In order to make a real difference in the lives of refugees, we need to increase the number of donors to spread our picture book. Finally, we believe that it is important to spread awareness of the dire situation refugees in Japan are in. Furthermore, we need to find and implement solutions to this problem. We have to make a change to help refugees who are here today and who are coming to Japan to have better lives. The power that we can influence might be little, but it will definitely have a good effect on this situation.

5. Reflection

Before starting this research, I knew that the problem of refugees existed but I did not think that it was a problem that affected me personally. Although it does not

affect me directly, there are many refugees that are living in fear and anxiety in Japan. . As a Japanese person, I would like to do something to help relieve their stress and turn Japanese society into a more supportive one for refugees and foreigners alike.g While I believe that I cannot have as significant an impact , I think that my actions will at least have an effect on one person. Furthermore, this one small deed can spread into helping an entire community of people. . At the moment. I cannot say exactly what actions I can take in order to have a good influence but after we finish our research and graduating from high school, I would like to think more deeply about the things that I can do by myself to create a better society.

6. Work Cited

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