Identity Formation of Second Generation and Integration of Immigrants into Japanese Society

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Introduction

- Two main goals
- First goal: understand the integration process of immigrants in Japanese society
- Second goal: confirm whether or not second generation children growing up in Japan have identity crisis
  - Hafu: half Japanese and half Filipino
Social Integration

- Should not be one-way assimilation
- Inclusion and participation
- Existing structures need to be willing to bend and change
- Integration failure
  - Example: health services provided only in the main language → drive to persist existing structure > the impetus to integrate migrants
- Successful integration
Hypothesis

The integration process of immigrants into the Japanese society are heavily dependent on the laws and policies that are intended to regulate immigration, the attitude of the community, and organizations that promote the inclusion and participation of immigrants.
Social Integration Research Method

- Focused on one Filipina women named Claudia* (name has been changed for confidentiality purposes)
- Life History Method:
  - essentially a retelling of a string of events
  - allowed me to get to know my respondent intimately
  - reflecting on the past → relate events to social contexts →
    personal experiences with the wide social fabric
  - “entry point”
Laws and Policies that regulate immigration → entertainer visa → married Japanese man → move to Japan
Positive attitude of family and community → no discrimination → settling down in Japan
Organizations that support foreigners
  ○ Akita International Association
    ■ Japanese language classes → larger mobility
    ■ Found a job as an english teacher
    ■ Cultural exchange
Biggest Factor: Individual Attitude
  ○ selective factor
  ○ curious, eager, willing to integrate
Second generation (half-Japanese and half-Filipino) growing up in Japan face identity crisis

- background of the hypothesis
  - Mono-ethnic myth dominantly spread among Japanese society
  - Japanese nationality law: principle of “jus sanguinis”
Identity Formation Research Method

- Interviewed in Yokote area, Akita, Japan
  - Filipina women who have children
  - Japanese people supporting foreign residents in community
  - Local administration
- Because of time constraints, interviewing enough number of second generation was not available.
  → This research is mainly based on view of first generation about their children’s identity formation
Identity Formation Analysis

- Almost all the Filipina mothers answered their children recognize themselves as Japanese
- Influence by way of first generation’s adaptation to Japan
  - Marriage with Japanese men: Unstable legal status
  - Patriarchy: Lower position as Oyomesan in family in law

→ First generation is implicitly required to adapt to community as “Japanese” and as a result they come to Japanize themselves
→ Second generation born in the family is naturally expected to grow up as Japanese
Conclusions

● Social Integration Conclusion: Claudia’s story exemplifies that successful integration requires meaningful interaction between migrants and the receiving society, which means integration must be conceived as a two-way process
  ○ implications for the future
● Identity Formation Conclusion: Second generation living in Yokote do not have identity crisis because first generation already succeeded in incorporating themselves into Japanese society.