

A photograph of a snowy winter scene. The foreground is filled with snow-covered evergreen trees on the left and bare, snow-laden deciduous trees in the center and right. A dark building is partially visible on the right side. In the background, a car is parked, also covered in snow. The sky is a pale, overcast blue.

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## *Message from the journal staff*

AIU's Student Journal of the International Liberal Arts has come together once again with the efforts of AIU students and faculty to assemble exemplary pieces of writing to showcase AIU's identity and qualities in the liberal arts. The student journal is a student-led editorial board with active student involvement every step of the way, so it is our pride to continue to present the works and the research of AIU students.

In the 7th volume of the Student Journal of International Liberal Arts, we have a wide range of topics relevant to today's internationally-connected world and the future ahead. Several articles have themes specifically relevant to Japanese society, showcasing the great skills in critical analysis students have developed. Finding issues in society and applying research for possible solutions is after all one of the core values of pursuing the liberal arts, so we are most pleased with this new volume of the student journal.

Now more than ever do we need to act as a community, so we hope you enjoy reading works by fellow AIU scholars and we hope this issue inspires you to contribute to this editorial endeavor with your own writings or as a member of the editorial team in future publications.

Best wishes,

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# The Analysis of Multicultural Policies by Regional Governments in Japan

Yuki Yamada

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## Author's Note

**Yuki Yamada** is a senior student in the Global Studies Program. His essay “The Analysis of Multicultural Policies by Regional Governments in Japan” was submitted for the Global Studies Capstone Seminar under the supervision by Professor Satoko Horii at AIU. His interest is in migration and refugee studies, especially focus on integration policies at local community. After studying integration of refugees and ethnic minorities in Czech Republic, he became interested in migration policies in rapidly diversifying Japan, leading to this analysis of Japanese multiculturalism.

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## Introduction

The number of registered foreigners in Japan was 2,829,416 as of June 2019, showing 3.6 percent growth from the previous record as technical trainees and foreigners with work-linked visas increase (Ministry of Justice, 2019). Another factor leading to further growth is the amendment of immigration law that took effect in April 2019, allowing blue-workers with certain linguistic and vocational skills to work in 14 industrial fields with serious labor shortages. The government planned to provide residence permits for five years to a maximum of 345,000 foreigners in the next five years (Obe, 2019). Despite such constant influx of foreign residents, the government does not recognize them as “immigrants” because they are temporary residents expected to return. However, this diverts

from the international definition that considers labor for a definite term as migrants (Okina, 2020). This gap has created a complicated reality where foreign residents who could be fit into categories of migrants are residing without much discussion on migrant reception policy. The only national guideline would be “The Regional Multicultural Society Promotion Plans,” which emphasized the necessity of promoting multicultural communities where members with diverse backgrounds live together as community members by recognizing cultural differences and building an equal relationship. It guides local municipalities to comprehensively promote multicultural policies based on national guidelines (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication, 2006). However, the problem is it assigns a task of migrant integration

to local municipalities, while the government itself does not show its stance on migrant reception. Under this situation, how to pursue multiculturalism would be up to local municipalities, which could lead to the regional difference in how the idea is implemented.

Another issue is the Japanese tendency to regard foreign residents as “labor force” rather than “community members.” According to a survey, over 80 percent of respondents consider foreigners to be significant as labors, while those believe they are crucial as regional community remained 20 percent (Nikkei, 2020). This implies the Japanese attitude of perceiving foreign residents as workforce rather than a member of society. This could be similar to the case of Germany, which confronts the reality that such a “myth of return” as unrealistic after the implementation of a rotation system of foreign workers (Miller, 1982). As represented in this case, focusing on short-term economic benefits and ignoring the socio-cultural aspect of foreign residents could result in a social burden to the host country. Therefore, there is a necessity to reevaluate foreign residents in Japan as “community members” rather as “economic agents”.

In order to address the two main problems, the researcher defines the following research question: How have the policies to incorporate foreign residents as “community members” been implemented in Japanese local municipalities under the idea of “multicultural coexistence”? This question aims to analyze how “multiculturalism” is interpreted differently by local governments and materialized as policies, and how those policies function to address the sociocultural

life of foreign residents. The case study of four Japanese local municipalities would demonstrate their understanding of multiculturalism and the outcome of their policies in achieving its original goals. This analysis is crucial in the current circumstance where those who could be regarded as “migrants” are increasing without public discussion. In the following chapter, the researcher explains the concept of multiculturalism, and reviews the development of attitudes of the Japanese government towards foreign residents, followed by the analysis of multicultural policies by four local municipalities. In the final section, the researcher discusses the general characteristics of multiculturalism by Japanese local governments.

### **The Development of Multiculturalism in Academics and Practice**

#### **The Development of Multicultural Policies**

The concept of multiculturalism first emerged around the 1960s as a new approach to deal with ethnic differences within a state. Until then, states took more oppressive measures towards minorities, often resulting in assimilationist policies. On the contrary, multiculturalism accepts the existence of different ethnic identity as a legitimate element of society, and implements policies that recognize minority rights. Its main purpose is to expand public understanding and assistance for the expression of minority identities and customs rather than just protect basic civil rights (Kymlicka, 2013). One key feature of multiculturalism is that it accompanies the process of revising laws and regulations to represent distinctive demands of minorities, and it is not limited to the uni-

versal application of laws. Kymlicka (2013) characterizes multiculturalism as a “process of citizenization” (p.103) in which nationalism and civil liberalism interact with each other. From this perspective, multiculturalism stands for the idea of framing different claims with value of social liberalism rather than suppressing them and containing them into a homogeneous form of citizenship. This process consists of three elements: “effective political participation, equal economic opportunities, and social acceptance” (p. 104).

From the 1980s, there was an ideological shift in multiculturalism, and neoliberal multiculturalism emerged. Its goal is to incorporate ethnic identities into the international market so that they could be used as social capital rather than focusing on “equality-seeking component of multiculturalism” (p. 111). 40 years after its emergence, there are some variations in effectiveness of promoting multiculturalism across countries. Kymlicka (2015) identifies that multiculturalist policies that are not “connected to national unity, human rights, anti-racism, and citizenship” (p.25) often become unstable. In addition, with the rise of neoliberal multiculturalism, the inclusion of both citizenship status and market status are also crucial in effectiveness of multiculturalist policies (Kymlicka, 2013).

### **The development of integration policies in post-war Japan**

In Japan, the idea of introducing foreign workers was first discussed in the 1980s by the internationalization (*kokusaika*) initiative. Its purpose was to develop an international understanding of local residents, im-

prove the community’s international image, establish communal identity in international society, and promote local economy and industry (Ministry of Home Affairs, 1987). Due to the 1991 amendment of immigration law that allowed descendants of Japanese migrants in South America to come to Japan, the number of foreign residents in manufacturing areas of Japan increased rapidly. The necessity to deal with increasing foreign workers pushed local governments to implement their own measures to improve sociopolitical environment for them (Takaya, 2007).

The Regional Multicultural Society Promotion Plans encouraged local municipalities to develop their own policy plans based on the idea of “multicultural coexistence”. In this guideline, “multicultural coexistence” would help “people with different nationalities or ethnicities recognize cultural differences and establish equal relationship to live together as members of local community” (MIC, 2006, p. 5). The government recognizes the necessity to implement policies that perceive foreign residents as community members and inhabitants on the national level, focusing on two policy areas. One is the assistance of communication to enhance foreign residents’ understanding of Japanese language and social systems. The other policy area is residence assistance, including housing, education, medical care, and disaster prevention (MIC, 2006).

In July 2012, the Alien Registration System was replaced by the Resident Registration System, which enabled local municipalities to comprehend basic information about foreign residents and provide municipal services. According to the survey as of



April 2016, 94 percent of prefectures formulated multicultural coexistence plans. At the local municipality level, all government-designated cities have announced their plan, while 45 percent of other municipalities have done so. Another characteristic is that of municipalities with its share of foreign residents among its citizens beyond the national average, approximately 85 percent have drawn their plans (MIC, 2017).

### **Methodology**

The review of the development of a multicultural approach toward foreign residents in Japan demonstrated the significance of local municipalities as providers of administrative services to foreign residents. Therefore, the researcher conducted a case study of Japanese local municipalities to explore the understandings of “multiculturalism” and its influence on integration policies by local governments. The researcher stands on the perspective that the absence of central policies encouraged local governments to individually deal with foreign residents, leading to the development of their own approach. At the same time, the researcher expects the lack of recognition of “migrants” by the national government leads to the limitation of multiculturalist policies that local governments can implement. As Kymlicka (2013) explains, multiculturalism academically includes the revision of laws about the process of citizenization, which would be difficult without recognition from the central government. Considering this reality, multiculturalist policies by local municipalities would not be able to fully achieve citizenization, resulting in the dis-

parity between the concept and its contents.

Four Japanese local municipalities were selected as a case study from the following categories: (1) a government-designated city with the highest rate of foreign population, (2) a municipality other than government-designated city with the highest rate of foreign population, (3) a municipality from members of Council of Municipalities with Large Migrant Population, and (4) a municipality with the highest rate of foreign population and also a member of the Council. The distinction between government-designated cities and others would be important because the administrative and financial capability are different under the local autonomy law (MIC, n.d. -b). In municipalities with a higher proportion of foreign residents, issues related to the foreign population would be prone to emerge as policy issues. Therefore, through the analysis of their policies, the researcher aims to understand the general trend in how the Japanese local governments interpret the concept of multiculturalism and materialize the idea into policy plans. In addition to these, the researcher chooses two municipalities from the Council of Municipalities with Large Migrant Population because the analysis of their policies would be beneficial in understanding the development of administrative approaches to foreign population by Japanese local governments.

Based on these rationales, the researcher chooses (1) Osaka City, Osaka (2) Warabi City, Saitama (3) Hamamatsu City, Shizuoka, and (4) Oizumi Town, Gunma as targets. During the selection process, the list of top 20 municipalities with a high proportion of foreign residents published by

Local Administration Bureau (2019) was used for categories (2) to (4), and the compiled data by NLI Research Institute (2017) was used for category (1). From the next chapter, the researcher analyzes policies implemented by these four municipalities by using city websites and policy papers.

### **The Review of Multiculturalist Policies by Local Municipalities in Japan**

#### *The Case of Osaka City, Osaka*

Osaka City shares the highest proportion of foreign population among government-designated cities. As of 2019, there were 145,857 foreign residents in the city, sharing 5.3 percent of the total population. Among the foreign residents in Osaka, the majority (44.8 percent) are Korean nationals, but this percentage continues to decline as the number of other nationalities increases. The shares of Chinese and Vietnamese nationals have been rapidly increasing in the last decade, contributing to the further diversification of ethnicities there (Osaka City, 2020).

The city is known as a municipality with a large number of Korean nationals whose rights were severely suppressed under the assimilationist policies of the Japanese government (Okano, 2006). In order to protect the rights of non-Japanese nationals, the first guideline was formulated, in which (1) protection of human rights (2) realization of a multicultural society, and (3) participation in local society were assigned as goals. It was revised in 2002 to include detailed internationalization policies, such as assistance to exchange students, interaction programs to nurture international awareness among citizens, and further distribution of information

(Osaka City, 2004). In the template for the new Osaka City Multicultural Guideline, the city sets a goal to realize multicultural society in which diverse values and cultures are recognized, and no one would be disadvantaged based on their nationality, ethnicity, gender, or origin. To achieve this goal, the guideline focuses on four areas: (1) protection of human rights, (2) a society where everyone can live safely (3) respect for diverse values and cultures, and (4) diversity as a means to create an attractive city (Osaka City, 2020). Based on these, Osaka announced the main direction of their multiculturalist policies. As for language assistance, it aims to strengthen the skills and knowledge of office workers, reflecting the increasing nationality of foreign residents. In addition, they are planning to distribute more information by social networking services so that foreign residents themselves can share information through their network. In the field of education, the city recognizes the necessity to establish a comprehensive system of Japanese language classes in order to meet the growing demand. Even though the classes are organized mainly by volunteers, it is becoming difficult to handle their capacity, and the government seeks cooperation with other organizations (Osaka City, 2020). This demonstrates the limitation of local-level programs that are dependent on local volunteers.

One feature of Osaka City is its emphasis on the protection of human rights as one of the goals. The revised policy guideline aims to guarantee equal treatment between nationals and non-nationals in social security services, residence, and employment. It focuses on the elimination of discrimination based on

nationality in those fields, by implementing its own programs and also collaborating with the prefectural government and other related sectors (Osaka City, 2020). Such emphasis on protection of human rights could be understood as the influence of its history of dealing with Korean national residents, which facilitates the recognition of equality among nationalities. From this case, the situation surrounding the largest ethnic group that resides in the area for a relatively long period could be one factor that influences the understanding of multiculturalism by local officials.

#### *The Case of Warabi City, Saitama*

The foreign population of Warabi City was 8.90 percent of the total population as of 2018, which was the 10th highest in Japanese municipalities. As for the nationalities of foreign residents, Chinese are the majority, followed by Vietnamese and Koreans. Southern Saitama has been the popular residential area for foreign residents for several reasons, such as geographic closeness to Tokyo, relatively moderate living costs, and historical background as areas with Korean nationals (Sankei, 2020).

The city has not formulated its original policy guidelines for integration of foreign residents, but it is currently working on the first version of Warabi City Multicultural Policy Guideline (Warabi City, 2020). Even though they do not have specific guidelines, they provide assistance for foreign residents to solve troubles between Japanese and foreign residents. For instance, to encourage foreign residents to follow the regulation regarding garbage collection, the city office prepares leaflets written in five languag-

es, and provides oral explanation in easier Japanese (Fujisaka, 2019). Another issue is the education of children with foreign backgrounds. As of 2019, the city has the highest rate of foreign students enrolled in elementary and junior high school in Saitama Prefecture, and there are many students lacking basic Japanese language skills. For their smoother communication, the city education center provides special language classes, and also consigns the prefecture to allocate teachers specialized in Japanese language to elementary and junior high schools (Fujisaka, 2019; Warabi City, 2019).

In order to support programs by municipalities, Saitama Prefecture formulates new guidelines to promote multiculturalism at the prefectural level. It defines multicultural society as a society where everyone, including foreign residents, can exhibit their ability as community members. By overcoming three main obstacles (language barrier, institutional barrier, and psychological barrier), it aims to vitalize local society with the social participation of foreign residents. As for the linguistic barrier, the prefecture provides opportunity to learn Japanese language and distributes information regarding municipal services in multiple languages and easier Japanese. Furthermore, it tries to solve the institutional barrier in education, medical care, or accommodation by offering information in multiple languages and cooperating with other related sectors. With regard to psychological barriers between the locals and foreign residents, the prefecture considers the Olympics as an opportunity to encourage mutual understandings and social participation by foreign residents. In addi-



tion to the assistance for foreign residents, the prefecture attempts to advertise itself internationally and support universities and businesses to accept exchange students and highly skilled foreign professionals (Saitama Prefecture, 2017). From these policies, the emphasis on foreign residents as potential participants to vitalize the local community and economy could be suggested.

The prefecture defines its role as formulating policy plans for multiculturalism and plays a complementary part to implement wider range of policies. It also functions as an intermediary to connect local municipalities and other actors, such as national government and educational institutions. With support from the prefecture, municipal governments are expected to formulate guidelines and provide administrative services to foreign residents as the closest service providers (Saitama Prefecture, 2017). Therefore, prefectural governments are indispensable actors for relatively smaller municipalities as providers of complementary policies and intermediary between the national and local governments.

#### *The Case of Hamamatsu City, Shizuoka*

Hamamatsu City underwent the influx of foreign workers to deal with the labor shortage in manufacturing sectors from the late 1980s. At the end of 2018, the foreign population was 24,336, approximately three percent of the population. As for the nationality of foreign residents, Brazilians, whose number is highest in Japan, is the majority, while the ethnic composition is becoming diverse with an increase of Asians (Hamamatsu City, 2018).

With the necessity to deal with its foreign

workers, the city has been actively engaging with other municipalities as the leading municipality dealing with the coexistence with foreign residents. One of the programs was Council of Municipalities with Large Migrant Populations, established in 2001. It consists of municipalities with large “new-comer” populations, and aims to share their programs and provide policy proposals for the national and prefectural government (Council of Municipalities in Large Migrant Population, 2001). Such cooperation across municipalities could be a strategy to supplement the lack of national policies. It would also be a way to pressure the central governments to revise the legal framework and provide unified policies to reflect the reality of increasing cultural diversity at the local level.

In 2012, the city announced the first version of Hamamatsu Intercultural City Vision in which “city development utilizing diversity” was identified as the main policy initiative. In addition to programs to assist foreign residents, the city aims to create new cultures and vitalize the region through cultural diversity brought by these residents. This was revised in 2018, and the following three areas were selected as targets: “promotion of activities of foreign residents in local communities”, “cultivation and support of future generations”, and “creation of safe and secure society” (Hamamatsu City, 2018, p.15). By focusing on these areas, Hamamatsu’s Intercultural City Vision attempts to create “an intercultural city built together that continues to create and grow based on mutual understanding and respect” (p.17). As represented, the idea of an intercultural city has been an important concept

in its policy-making process. In fact, the city became the first Asian city to join the Intercultural City Network led by the Council of Europe in 2017, and researched the city of Barcelona, one of the leading intercultural cities. In the revised guidelines, the city emphasizes the similarity in the approach taken by the two cities, such as “foreign residents are important partners in city development”, “creation of new community values deriving from the cultural diversity”, and “respect for rights and fulfillment of obligations” (p. 14).

Based on these policy goals, this vision implements programs to include foreign residents as community members and utilizes cultural diversity to create new community culture. One of the key areas is the integration of younger generations by providing proper school education and career opportunities. For instance, the city has established “Hamamatsu Model” to eliminate the cases of school refusal among foreign residents by cooperating with related organizations. The municipal offices conduct guidance on entrance to schools, oversee the latest situations of school attendance, and consult with families with children who refuse to go to school. In addition, the city also provides language assistance and counselors to encourage foreign students’ adaptation (Council of Local Authorities for International Relations, 2014). Cooperation among different sectors organized at the city level could be regarded as one of the characteristics of integration policies in Hamamatsu City that contributes to its effectiveness.

Another feature would be the incorporation of foreign residents as the providers of support to other members and function as

bridge builders between Japanese and foreign residents. For instance, the city organizes programs to introduce some foreign residents as role models for others through media and events. In the field of job opportunities, the city cooperates with other organizations to organize career seminars for high school students in which young workers with a foreign ethnic background would introduce their own experience (HICE, 2019). Through these programs, local residents and foreign youths are able to recognize real-life examples demonstrating how foreign residents are inhabiting the community as residents and how they pursue their life.

#### *The Case of Oizumi Town, Gunma*

Oizumi Town has been known as the example of municipalities dealing with multiculturalism for a long time. Among the total population of 41,987, approximately 19 percent is made up of foreign residents as of 2019 (Oizumi Town, 2020). The Brazilian population is the majority of the foreign population, but there is an increase in influx from Asian countries, such as Nepal and Vietnam, as exchange students and technical trainees, making ethnic composition more diverse.

The formation of Brazilian town in this region began after the amendment of immigration law in 1991 to solve the labor shortage. Although they were supposed to engage in short-term labor, they resided longer than expected. As the settlement trend became clear, how to incorporate foreign residents who lack knowledge of Japan as community members was an urgent task (National Association of Towns and Villages, 2007; Oizumi Kankou Kyokai, 2018). Reflect-

ing this issue, the town implemented a wide range of programs and is now regarded as a model for other municipalities aiming to establish a multicultural community.

In the field of language assistance, the town focuses on providing information necessary for living in multiple languages by hiring staff members who can communicate in other languages, and publishing Portuguese brochures to announce information. Cultural Interpreter Project is an advanced program whose purpose is to realize the smooth distribution of accurate information in their native language and to regard foreign residents as community members who actively participate. It appoints foreign residents as cultural interpreters who would distribute information announced by the town to their friends and acquaintances. This contributes to the distribution of accurate information through community networks, and nurturing of multiculturalist awareness among both foreign and Japanese residents (MIC, n.d.-a). As demonstrated in this project, Oizumi Town provides programs that encourage foreign residents to participate as inhabitants who would create the community together with other members.

Another feature is that Gunma Prefecture provides comprehensive multiculturalism policies. In the latest version of their guideline, the prefecture aims to change its former recognition of foreign residents as “those who need assistance” and utilize the diversity of foreign residents as a way to vitalize and globalize the region (Gunma Prefecture, 2018). In 2020, it announced the revised “Gunma Model,” which aims to establish a multicultural prefecture where both Japanese and foreign residents can collaborate

and build a sustainable society. It consists of three main pillars: smooth and proper acceptance of foreign labor, the establishment of a new multicultural prefecture, and a society where Japanese and foreign residents can make the fullest use of their talents.

Based on these guidelines, the prefecture plays a key role in supporting local municipalities to deal with multiculturalism. For instance, at One-Stop Consultation Center for Foreign Residents of Gunma, counselors in five languages are available in case of problems in municipal offices. In addition, there is a Volunteer Medical Interpretation system in which registered interpreters in 11 languages trained by the prefecture would accompany foreign residents to medical institutions in order to overcome language barriers (Gunma Prefecture, 2020). These actions at the prefectural level allow each municipality to recognize the direction of policies they need to take, and share their responsibilities and burdens to provide more comprehensive services to their residents.

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

The review of four local municipalities suggests some similarities and differences in how each local government interprets multiculturalism and formulates their own programs. All municipalities have formulated their integration policy guidelines for foreign residents either at the municipal (Osaka City and Hamamatsu City) or prefectural level (Warabi City and Oizumi Town). The target municipalities have a higher proportion of foreign residents and relatively a long history of dealing with ethnic diversity, which might encourage the lo-



cal governments to accept the existence of foreign residents as community members.

Their understandings of multiculturalism were based on the definition provided by the Ministry in 2006, but there were some differences. All municipalities recognize the necessity of cooperation between Japanese and foreign residents, but one characteristic was their intention to utilize cultural diversity in the community to vitalize the region, demonstrating the neoliberal interpretation (Kymlicka, 2013). This could be associated with the population decline and aging society in the majority of the Japanese municipalities today. In fact, all municipalities referred to the declining population and labor shortage as the background information, suggesting their motivation to perceive increasing cultural diversity as a potential solution to the population problems in the region (Gunma Prefecture, 2018; Hamamatsu City, 2018; Osaka City, 2000; Saitama Prefecture, 2017). Based on this understanding of multiculturalism, all the municipalities offered basic assistance, such as the provision of information in multiple languages, so that foreign residents could get used to the Japanese regulations and institutions. Furthermore, in three municipalities (Osaka City, Hamamatsu City, and Oizumi Town), the local governments are beginning to recognize foreign residents not only as targets of assistance but also as active participants in the community. These measures suggest that social acceptance and equal economic opportunity, which are two of the three elements of citizenization (Kymlicka, 2013), are addressed to some extent. On the contrary, none of the municipalities referred to the political rights of the foreign

residents, demonstrating the difficulty of achieving full citizenization of foreign residents in the community and the necessity of national-level policies. Despite such limitations of local-level policies, they suggests the significance of Japanese local governments as the direct provider of administrative services to foreign residents and a coordinator to seek actions from other related organizations, including those within educational institutions and the private sector. Moreover, prefectures assume a complementary role to organize cohesive policies as a whole region and support areas that each municipality is struggling to address, especially for smaller municipalities. Another important role of prefectures and municipalities is to function as an intermediary of local communities and the national government by delivering policy proposals at the prefectural or municipal levels. Therefore, it could be suggested that the lack of national-level migrant integration policies became the factor that pushes local municipalities to actively promote multicultural policies and collaborate with other actors to enhance policies at a higher level.

In addition to these similarities, the comparison of multicultural policies also demonstrated some variations in which aspect of multiculturalism each municipality emphasizes. For instance, Osaka City recognizes the protection of human rights of its foreign residents, which are introduced as the requirement for stable multicultural policies by Kymlicka (2015). The city has a long history of dealing with discriminatory practices toward Korean nationals, suggesting that the ethnic composition of the region is one factor that influences the munic-

ipality's understanding of multiculturalism.

One notable point is that Hamamatsu City introduces interculturalism as an ideal, and it also strengthens the connection with other intercultural cities. According to Kymlicka (2016), considering interculturalism and multiculturalism as interchangeable could be a problem because multiculturalism assumes the revision of concepts and practices of nationhood by the central government, while interculturalism often remains within the local level. With the absence of national-level policy, it might be plausible that integration policies by Japanese local municipalities would become closer to interculturalism rather than multiculturalism. Therefore, it would be worth observing the direction other Japanese municipalities would trace as they formulate or revise their integration policies and how it would affect other local governments.

From these findings, this research concludes that the absence of national policies increased the role of local municipalities as promoters of multiculturalism in Japan. Each

local government formulates its own policies reflecting the ethnic composition and history of ethnic diversity in the community. They also play a major role in organizing collaboration with other actors and functioning as an intermediary between local communities and the national government to realize higher-level changes. These approaches to multiculturalism could be useful in recognizing foreign residents in the area as "community members." At the same time, the lack of national-level policies becomes an obstacle in achieving citizenization, which was the original purpose of multiculturalism, and the fields of policies are often limited to social acceptance and employment opportunity. Since this research was conducted by bibliographic survey, the sources were limited to official documents and secondary sources released on the municipal websites. Therefore, for future research, using interviews to the municipal officials or fieldwork would be beneficial in accessing the latest and more in-depth information.

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# Korean Schools in Japan: Ideological Indoctrination, or Struggle for Ethnic Identity?

Ryo Takahama

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## Author's Note

**Ryo Takahama** is a junior student in the Global Studies program at AIU. His essay “Korean Schools in Japan: Ideological Indoctrination, or Struggle for Ethnic Identity?” was written in the Advanced Research Writing, with a special focus on conflicting values between diplomatic strategies of Japan and the human rights of ethnic Koreans in Japan. As human security is one of his main academic interests, he worked on the essay in order to see the historically controversial issues not only from the viewpoint of international relations but also from human rights. Professor Lee Friederich supported his study in terms of research method and academic writing.

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## Abstract

Approximately 700,000 ethnic Koreans reside in Japan, and there are about 70 Korean schools to educate 8,000 students in Korean language, history, and culture. Although the schools have served to forge their ethnic identity since the foundation, the Japanese government, in 2012, decided to exclude Korean schools from a tuition aid program, whereas it is available for other foreign schools. This paper provides a critical analysis of the government's decision, explaining why the Japanese government has historically maintained its hard stance on Korean schools. To look further at the heart of the issue, the subsequent research examines the public's understanding and perceptions about the current situation of Korean schools. With the result of the research, I concluded that the Japanese government should foster public awareness of the issue and reverse the decision on the condition that the transparency of the curriculum at the schools will be increased.

**Keywords:** Korean School, Korean minorities, Tuition Waiver Program, Ethnic education, North Korea, Human right-based education, Transparency

## Introduction

If you step into the school, the student life resembles just about that of any other high school in Japan: in a history class, students are silently completing worksheets with textbooks; a female teacher is so enthusiastic to keep wandering around the classroom with a big smile on her face; at break, a few female students are, with excitement, chatting about handsome boys in the hall; once classes end, they take turns on cleaning duties as stated by a chart that assigns a role to each of students; after school, some of them rush to club activities such as dancing, band performance, and playing sports. The only significant difference is that on the wall hung two portraits of the former North Korean leaders, Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong-Il (Flore, 2018).

Despite the striking similarities, the school is not at all the same as other schools in Japan; it is a Korean school in Japan. Established by ethnic Koreans in Japan, there are approximately 70 schools from elementary school to university throughout Japan, with estimated 8,000 students in total (Keck, 2013). They are the descendants of those with family origins from Korea, but they are not what we imagine Korean people are. According to Flore (2018), a student of Korean schools remarked that “at home, his family speaks Japanese, cooks Japanese food, and listens to Japanese music, but at school he is required to speak Korean, wear traditional Korean clothes, and participate in certain Korean cultural practices” (para.4). Undoubtedly, they identify culturally as Japanese and familiarize themselves with lives in Japan, although they hold Korean ethnic roots.

As multiculturalism of Japan has been

cultivated in the wave of the increased globalization, the significance of education that allows children to learn and maintain their identity and values has been magnified, especially for ethnic minorities. In fact, more and more local governments, nongovernmental organizations, and researchers are making significant efforts to transform conventional education policies into more inclusive ones (Tokunaga, 2017). Korean school is, of course, within a part of the movement. Yet, the reality is completely different: on the contrary, now, the Korean schools are in an existential crisis. According to the Japan times (2017), one of the largest Korean schools, located in Osaka, was closed down in March 2018, as they “had its funding cut off by the central and other governments” (para.1). To comprehend why multicultural education is difficult to realize for children of Korean enclaves in Japan, this paper will mainly focus on the government’s symbolic decision about Korean schools in 2012. Through the thorough analysis, this paper also aims to unveil the complexity of the issue and highlight hidden inconsistency between two conflicting values: human rights-based education and political decisions reflecting on national security and public understanding. To discover a meaningful solution, the subsequent primary research section will try to explore possibilities of striking the right balance between them as well.

## Literature Review

*The Ongoing Debate over The Tuition Support Program for High School Education*

In the wave of growing demand for



free higher education, in 2010, the government of Japan launched a program “Tuition Waiver and Tuition Fund Support for High School Education.” According to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) (2010), the tuition support program aims to “substantially provide an equal educational opportunity for all” (para. 1), supporting low-income households with a high school student irrespective of whether the school is national, public or private. More notably, because the tuition aid program began in response to the global trend of exempting tuition fee for high school, the coverage was limited not only to Japanese schools. Among the beneficiaries of the program are foreign schools in Japan, such as international schools and other ethnic schools. Considering that foreign schools fall under the category of “miscellaneous schools” authorized by local government, it was a landmark decision to extend the coverage to children with different educational backgrounds (Nakajima, 2011).

Despite the original intention to increase educational opportunities, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe decided to exclude Korean schools from the tuition program in 2012, while the program covered other foreign schools designated as miscellaneous schools (Press, 2018). Nationality does not account for the decision because other foreign schools such as Brazilian and Chinese schools are still eligible for the program. Naturally, the decision to exclude drew sharp criticism from inside and outside Japan. For example, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights raised its concern that the exclusion of Korean schools from

the tuition waiver program can constitute discrimination (LAZAK, 2014). However, still to this day, the Japanese government has clung on the decision. What makes the government take a strong stance against Korean schools in particular? As well as delving into the historical background of the Korean schools, this paper will pinpoint what is behind the government’s decision and reveal the essence of the issue with critical views.

For ethnic Koreans in Japan, the history of Korean schools is a chronicle of oppression and endurance. During Japan’s 35-year occupation of Korea, “hundreds of thousands of ethnic Koreans were brought to Japan as forced labors or migrants” (Buerk, 2010, para. 8). Even after the end of the second world war, as many as 600,000 ethnic Koreans ended up staying in Japan due to the subsequent Korean War, which left them stateless in the former colonizer Japan. Labeled as the unwanted legacy of the colonial era, they had to live tough and deprived lives; nonetheless, they never relinquished the hope of eventually repatriating to their homeland (Ryang, 2016). Despite the hard oppression of the ethnic education by the Japanese government during this timeframe, the first Korean schools were established as early as in 1948, serving to reclaim the Korean culture by teaching their children their ethnic identity, language, history and culture (HURAK, 2017). In the decades since, Korean Schools received support from Chongryun, or pro-Pyongyang agency in Japan, so most of the schools became affiliated with Chongryun, consequently taking sides with North Korea.

Ironically, the very relations between the

schools and North Korea drove themselves into a corner. Over the decades, North Korea is a source of fear, anxiety and fury for Japanese people. As well as repeated nuclear tests and rocket launching, the revelation of the abduction of Japanese citizens by North Korean spies has reinforced antipathy toward North Korea. The Minister of MEXT stated that “it is not possible to expect people’s understanding for Korean schools at this point considering the fact that the abduction issues have not seen much progress and that the school’s intimate relationship with Chongryun has an influence on their education content, human resources, and fiscal policy” (LAZAK, 2014, p.24). In fact, a poll demonstrates that more than 70% of Japanese people feel fear for North Korea as a military threat, and it is perceived as a much more dangerous country than any other neighbor (The Genron NPO, 2019). Such public distrust of North Korea might reinforce a notion that Korean minorities should submit to the unfairness. Furthermore, since “Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has taken an avid interest in resolving” the abduction issue, the government has maintained a hard stance on North Korea, with the result that the students of Chongryun-affiliated schools were excluded from the tuition aid program amid increasing tensions between North Korean and Japan (Keck, 2013, para. 8). In this sense, by hindering pro-Pyongyang schools from gaining financial support funded by taxpayers’ money, the Japanese government might be trying to showcase the determined effort to solve the abduction issues, thereby receiving broad backing of the public.

Also, the content of the education itself

caused suspicion. Ken Kato, the director of Human Rights in Asia, mentioned that students at the schools are ideologically brainwashed; there are two portraits of past North Korean leaders, Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il, at the front of the classroom; female students have to wear school uniforms made of modified Korean traditional dress; and the students annually go on a school trip to Pyongyang (Ryall, 2019). The curriculum at the schools, thus, is considered as indoctrination with pro-Pyongyang ideology, so “many Japanese still view the schools with extreme suspicion and claim they are used to develop spies for Pyongyang” (Keck, 2013).

It is understandable that the Japanese government condemn North Korea for intentionally increasing the military tension in East Asia, and that Japanese people have held strong hatred against the authoritarian regime. However, critics must ask, is it really justifiable that children should be to blame for North Korea’s tyrannies? From the perspective of human rights-based education, it is not reasonable to deny ethnic education for political reasons.

Moreover, according to Nakajima (2011), the main reason for choosing Korean schools is to provide a safe environment where children do not have to struggle with identity conflicts. Nakajima conducted interviews with parents whose children attend Korean schools because it is essential to approach this issue “without paying too much heed to the political discourse.” The result shows that seeking and maintaining ethnical identity is a genuine wish for all people, and therefore Korean schools in Japan can be seen “not as simply the product

of indoctrination, but rather more as part of process of self-decolonization that Koreans in Japan opted for” (Ryang, 2016, p.6).

The aforementioned discussion articulates the gap between the government’s standpoint and critiques, providing the historical backdrop of the Korean School and the real voices from parents whose children attend the schools. This issue is very likely to be discussed too simply as a matter of North Korea; therefore, the perspectives from the students in the middle of this issue may be abandoned in many cases. In fact, few polls on this issue have ever been taken in the context of education, not national security. Since the government’s obstinate stance of this issue is based on what they call public opinion, it is important to re-analyze public understanding and perceptions about this issue from another perspective. Thus, my research section will take an online survey on how Japanese people perceive this issue, and will explore possibilities of finding a realistic solution.

## **Methodology**

### *Guiding Question*

To find the heart of the issue of the Korean schools in Japan, I conducted an online survey that aimed to measure the public’s understanding and perception about the issue in Japan. Hence, the guiding question of my primary research was: how do people in Japan understand the issue related to Korean schools in Japan, and how do they perceive the treatment of Korean schools on the part of the Japanese government?

### *Settings and Participants*

Since the focus of this research was to analyze how not only Japanese people but other nationals who have residence in Japan consider this issue, the target group was Japanese nationals and those who have had education in Japan for three years or more. It is important to include other nationals who had education in Japan as well as Japanese nationals, as this issue is closely related to such minorities as are not categorized as Japanese people but pay tax for the government of Japan. There were 78 participants in total, composed of 51 females, 26 males and one person who did not want to share gender. I received 63 responses from people in their twenties, followed by 12 teens or younger, two participants in their forties and one in their fifties. As many as 95 per cent of the participants are graduates from Japanese high schools, including technical schools, while the rest of them graduated from international schools in Japan, or high schools located outside Japan. All the surveys were conducted voluntarily and anonymously with Google Form.

### *Data Collection*

In order to reach as many participants as possible, the survey had been posted on Facebook for a week, from 2. July to 9 July. Of eight questions in the survey, seven are multiple choice and one is open-ended. Although I speculate that many of the participants are AIU students or graduates, there are some participants from other educational institutions because this survey was posted not only in AIU community but also in an intercollege community whose members joined United Nations Youth Volunteer program in 2019.

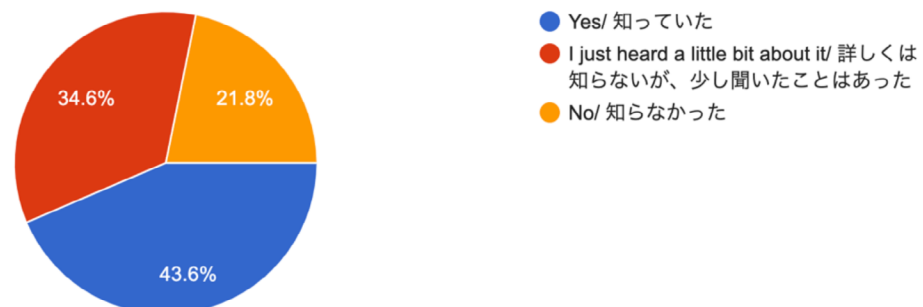
*Findings: Public's Acknowledgement of Korean Schools in Japan*

Since there are only about 70 Korean schools throughout Japan and they are rarely featured in daily news in Japanese (Nakajima, 2011), I assumed that many people do not even know about the fact that Korean schools exist inside Japan. However, the survey demonstrates that over 40 percent of the participants knew about the schools in advance, and moreover, around 35 percent chose “I heard a little bit about it.” Since some details of the Korean School were provided in the survey before the

questions, it can be speculated that those who fall into this option had known the existence of the Korean schools in Japan but had not known much about the schools, such as the issue of the exclusion of Korean schools from the tuition aid program. In other words, taking into consideration 21 percent of the participants who answered that they did not know about the Korean schools, the overall result implied that about one in two people did not understand the today's bleak situation of the Korean schools.

Figure 1: The public's acknowledgement about Korean Schools in Japan

78 responses



*The Overview of The Public Reaction to The Government's Decision*

Another focus of this survey was to assess the public perceptions about the government's decision to exclude Korean schools from the tuition aid program in 2012. Thus, I set a Likert-scale question that measures the extent to which participants support the government's treatment of the Korean school (1/Agree - 5/Disagree). The chart below shows to what extent the participants

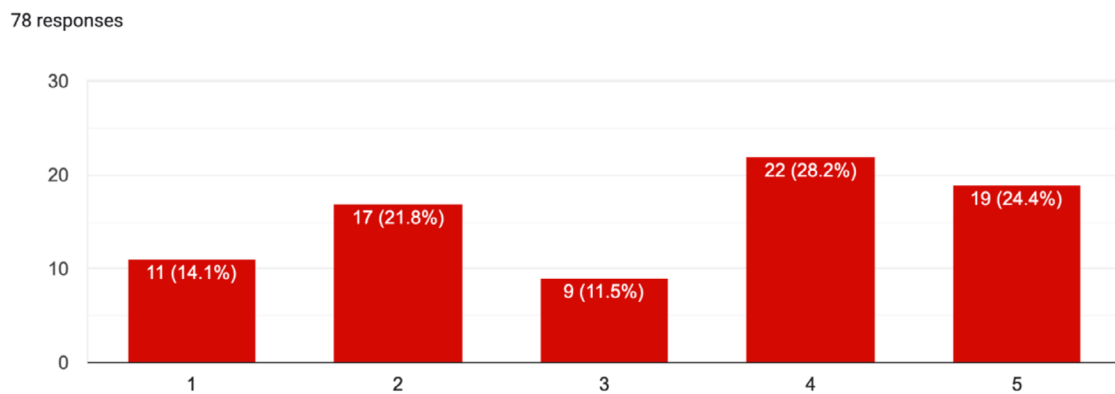
support the exclusion. Overall, the result underscores how controversial the issue is: As many as 61.3 % of the responses are between scale 2 to scale 4, which clearly implies that many participants did not totally agree or disagree with the government's decision and had difficulties taking a strong position.

Despite the debatable result, it is safe to say that the number of the cons exceeds that of the pros. Specifically, while the pros (scale 1 and scale 2) account for 35.9 %, the cons

(scale 4 and scale 5) account for 52.6 %. This suggests that although some proportion of people uphold the government’s decision, the majority is against what the government is doing now. It is of importance to reiterate

the gap between the public opinion and the reality, as the official rationale of the decision is because it is impossible to expect Japanese people to approve of providing financial support for Korean schools (LAZAK, 2014).

Figure 2: The public’s understanding about the current situation of the Korean schools



### Argument/ Discussion

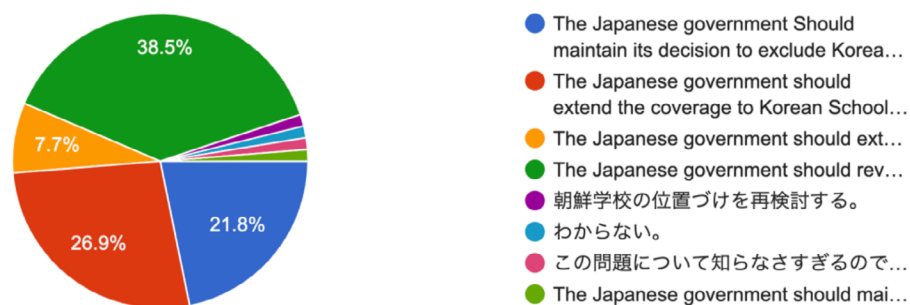
#### *The General Overview of Public Opinions about Possible Solutions*

The main objective of the survey was to find what the participants think the Japanese government should do regarding the government’s decision to exclude Korean schools from the tuition aid program. As a result, while only 21.8 % of the participants think the Japanese government should maintain the decision, as many as 73.1% of the participants think the Japanese government should extend the coverage to Korean schools with or without a certain condition. Furthermore, 38.5 % of the participants answered that the Japanese government should reverse the de-

cision completely, which marked the highest proportion of all the choices. The overall result is remarkable because this data points out that around three-quarters of people feel something needs to be done by the government in order to improve the current situation of the Korean schools. Considering that nearly 90% of the participants think that educational opportunities to learn one’s own culture, history, and language should be guaranteed regardless of national origin, race or creed (Appendix A, Question 4), it would be fair to say that many participants cannot ignore the concerns over the violation of rights to education in the status quo.

Figure 3: The public opinions about possible solutions

78 responses



- The Japanese government should maintain its decision to exclude Korean schools from the tuition aid program (21.8%)
- The Japanese government should extend the coverage to Korean schools on the condition that the curriculum will be reviewed (26.9%)
- The Japanese government should extend the coverage to Korean schools on the condition that the subsidies will be reduced (7.7%)
- The Japanese government should reverse the decision, providing equal opportunities for students in Korean schools (38.5%)
- Others (5.2%)

According to my secondary research, the government decided to exclude Korean schools from the tuition support program because it is not possible to gain public consensus of providing subsidies to the Korean schools (LAZAK, 2014). As mentioned briefly in the finding section, however, the resulting data clarifies the fact that the government's policy is estranged from the public's opinion. Although approximately one in five people are in favor of the government's decision, the number of those who hope for other alternative solutions is much larger by about 50%. Comparing the secondary research with the result of the survey, it is clear that the rationale for the government's decision is not valid, and therefore the government should reshape its policy toward the Korean schools from consideration of human rights.

#### *The Relationship between Understandings and Positions*

That said, it is an overly simplistic view to insist that from the result, the government should overturn the decision to exclude Korean schools from the tuition aid program, thereby offering them full financial support unconditionally. In fact, Figure 2 illustrates the difficulties in getting it settled once and for all, and no less than 35.9% of the participants agree with the government's decision, if anything. Besides, it can be assumed that a large proportion of the participants were AIU students in their teens or twenties (Appendix A, Question 2), and that they tend to think more of ethical diversity than the general public of Japanese people. In that sense, the overall rate of those who are against the government's decision might

be biased from this environmental reason.

More notably, by analyzing the correlation between the acknowledgment of the issue (Figure 1) and the perceptions about the government's decision (Figure 2), it turned out that of the 17 participants who did not know about the Korean schools, 12% of them answered in favor of the decision; of the 27 participants who knew the existence of the schools but did not appreciate the issue vis-à-vis the schools, 29% of them answered in favor of the decision; and of the 34 participants who had good knowledge about the Korean schools, 50% of them answered in favor of the decision, while 32% of them answered in opposition to the decision. In a nutshell, the better people understand the issues related to the Korean schools, the more likely they are to support the government's decision. Although I do not mean to prioritize each opinion according to their understanding, it is noteworthy that the background knowledge had a significant influence on whether they agree or disagree with the government's decision to exclude Korean schools from the tuition aid program.

#### *A Possible Solution*

The thorough analysis reiterates the need for striking the right balance between the pros and cons, as opposed to simply judging which is wrong. In an open-ended question of the survey, some participants claimed that this survey missed the point because the decision by the Japanese government is a matter between states, not a matter of human rights; however, I would say, such a view itself overlooks the heart of this issue. This is because the problem is

how we should deal with the gap instead of sticking to a single perspective. In reality, there are many Korean students who lost opportunities to learn their own identity because of the finding slash from the Japanese government and local governments. Yet, at the same time, it is also true that nearly half of the participants did not disagree with the government's decision (Figure 2).

In order to bridge the gap and make a possible compromise, it is essential to examine the reasons why the participants agreed with the government's decision. According to the primary research, many answered that they agreed with the government's decision because they suspected that Korean schools indoctrinate students in pro-Pyongyang ideology. That is, the major reason why they think the schools do not deserve the subsidies is its curriculum. Although teachers and administrators of the Korean schools claim that the biased curriculum has been revised in recent years and "now students even learn some South Korean history" (para.7), the truth has not come out yet, and therefore, many people still regard the Korean schools as suspicious (Keck, 2013).

With these facts in mind, if I make a few suggestions, the first implication would be to increase the public awareness of the Korean schools and the related issues. As Figure 1 demonstrates, the proportion of those who did not appreciate the issue accounts for over 50 %, which clarifies that people have few opportunities to know about the historical backdrop and the current situation of the schools. By teaching students about the schools in Japanese schools, more and more people will be aware of the issue, with the



result that the public understanding of the Korean schools is deepened. Another implication is to promote the interaction between the schools and the Japanese society, while guaranteeing the preservation of the ethnic education. Back in the 1950s to 1970s, the primary purpose of Korean schools was to prepare their children for eventual resettlement to Korea, but that is not the case today. Ryang (2016) reported that the majority of ethnic Koreans in Japan have “no intention of repatriating either to the North and the South” (p.9), for most of them have already realized that “North Korea was a land of material shortage and political repression” (p.8). That being the case, it is necessary that Korean schools show efforts to acclimate themselves to the Japanese society by engaging in civil societies. For example, several Korean schools in Kanagawa prefecture conducted school tours for Japanese citizens so that the participants better understand what Korean school is like and what students learn there (Ishibashi, 2018). By increasing transparency of its administration and curriculum, the Korean schools will be acceptable for more people, which eventually leads to a change in the government’s stance on the schools. Hence, on the condition that the Korean schools follow the two recommendations, which are based on the primary research, I believe that the Japanese government shall include the schools as recipients of the tuition support program.

## **Conclusion**

This paper has sought to identify the reason why the Japanese government has maintained its hard stance on Korean schools with a special focus on the symbolic decision to exclude Korean schools from the tuition aid program in 2012. Specifically, while presenting important background information, the secondary research captured the framework of the issue and synthesized key arguments from multiple perspectives. The following primary research addressed a burning question: how do people in Japan understand the issue related to Korean schools in Japan, and how do they perceive the treatment of Korean schools on the part of the Japanese government? The result articulates the huge gap between the government’s rationale and the public perceptions, albeit the complexity of the issue was reaffirmed. In the discussion section, this paper provided a possible scenario with two suggestions derived from the secondary and primary researches, as well as arguing the importance of striking the right balance between the pros and cons. Through conducting research on this topic, I could develop my understanding of ethnic Koreans in Japan and their circumstances. Arguably, there is no such a thing as an easy solution, but I sincerely hope that the Japanese society will be more tolerant of various ethnic educations, and the Korean schools will become a foothold for bridging between Japan and Korea in the future.

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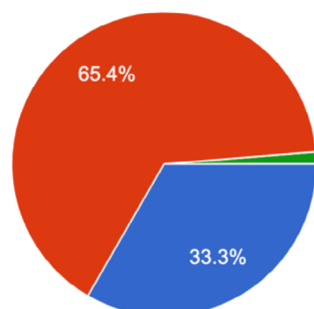
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## Appendix A

### 1. Your Gender/ あなたの性別は何ですか？

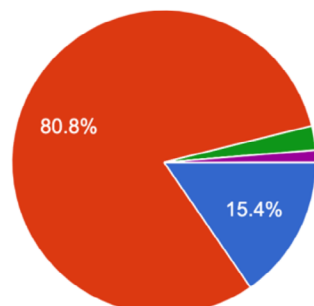
78 responses



- Male / 男性
- Female / 女性
- Other / その他
- Do not want to share / 回答したくない

### 2. Your Age/ あなたの年齢を教えてください。

78 responses

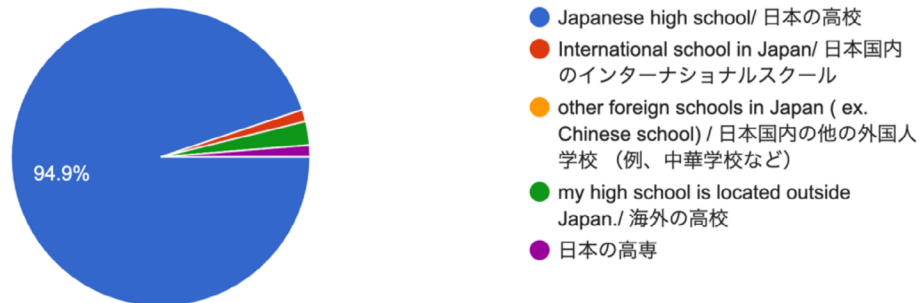


- teenager or younger / 10代、またはそれ以下
- 20-29 / 20代
- 30-39 / 30代
- 40-49 / 40代
- 50-59 / 50代
- 60-69 / 60代
- 70 or older / 70代以上

### 3. Your Educational Background of high school/

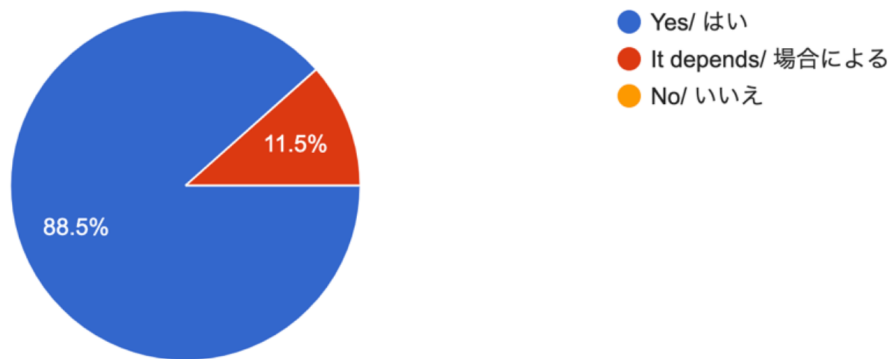
あなたの出身高校について一番当てはまるものを以下から選んでください。

78 responses



### Question 4. Do you think that educational opportunities to learn one's own culture, history, and language should be guaranteed regardless of national origin, race or creed?

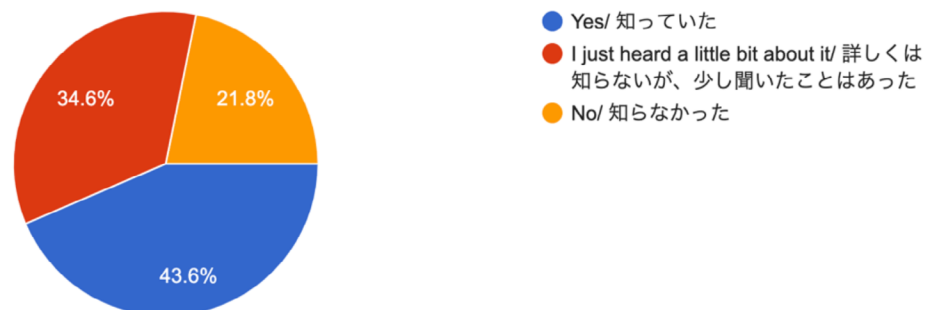
78 responses



### 5. Did you know about Korean schools in Japan?/

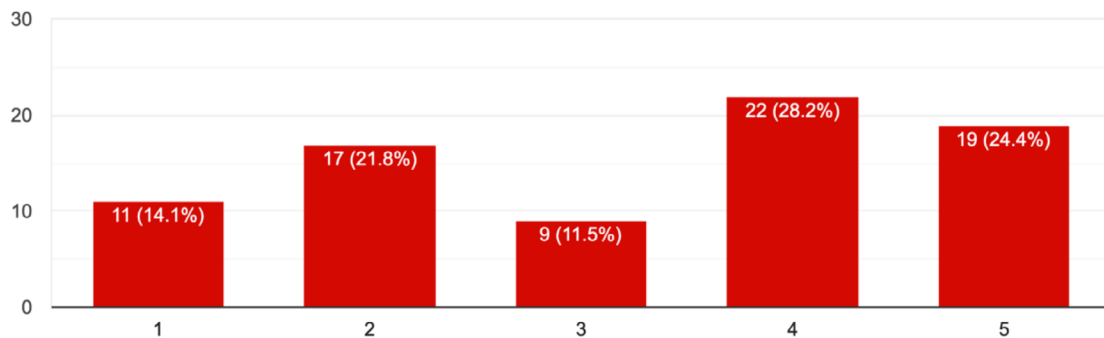
あなたは、日本にある朝鮮学校について知っていましたか？

78 responses



Question 6. To what extent do you support the government's decision to exclude Korean Schools from the tuition aid program? Please answer on the scale of 1-5 (Agree – Disagree).

78 responses



Question 7. Why do you think so in the question 6? Please answer the reason.

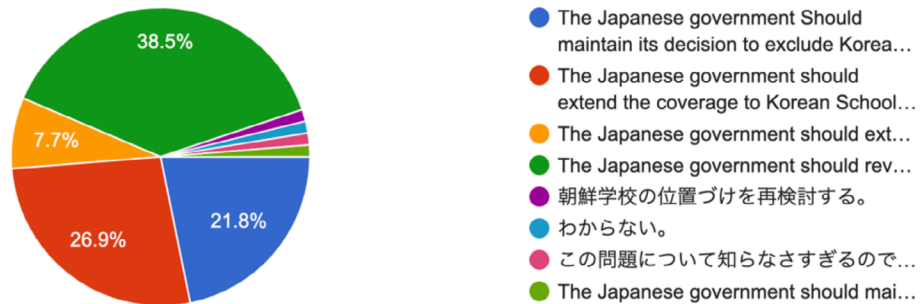
(Below are the extracts of the answers for the question No.7.)

- I think it's responsibility for government to pay attention to the poor
- I generally believe in the education being most important aspect in life, and governments should assure this. However, I do understand that the government must use their assets to tackle other political issues.(in this case, the asset would be the school and the children)
- Even though each country have their own interpretation of history, all of the children including both Japanese and Koreans have to be provided equal opportunities and access to the education. And also, I do not understand why the prime minister Abe pointed out only Korea as inappropriate target of the tuition support program. China has also controversial issues with Japan in terms of historical interpretation. It is insufficient to state that the Korean school should not be included in the tuition program just because of the the abduction issues.
- I understand it is not fair and against racial equality but part of our income ( taken away as taxes) are used to support the schools. The people who go there are not responsible for the issues between Japan and North Korea but still the school is conducted under the belief that is strongly rooted in the country and it can give the future generations the idea that what their government is doing now is acceptable, which in some cases not. Giving financial support mean that indirectly the Japanese government is supporting the belief which is causing trouble for Japan.
- As long as there is no gov oversight, the schools should not get access to tuition programs as North Korean ideology is antidemocratic and North Korea is still a hostile state. With balanced curriculum encompassing North Korea culture, language, etc. but at the same time objective and rational assessment of the contemporary North Korea, then these schools should get gov support
- If those students are Japanese citizens, they ought to have the right to enjoy the same benefits that the Japanese government gives to its people.
- Because educating and bringing up the students in schools have nothing to do with the conflict between the two nations
- I understand that the prime minister really concern about the political relationship with North Korea but children learning at the Korean schools have right to know their mother country and its culture in the country, and to acquire the same educational support with Japanese children.

8. Based on the above, what do you think the Japanese government should do?/

上に示された全ての要素を考慮したうえで、日本政...問題について取るべき行動は何だと思えますか？

78 responses



- The Japanese government should maintain its decision to exclude Korean schools from the tuition aid program (21.8%)
- The Japanese government should extend the coverage to Korean schools on the condition that the curriculum will be reviewed (26.9%)
- The Japanese government should extend the coverage to Korean schools on the condition that the subsidies will be reduced (7.7%)
- The Japanese government should reverse the decision, providing equal opportunities for students in Korean schools (38.5%)
- Others (5.2%)

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# Media Representation: White People in Japanese Television Advertising

Moena Akiyama

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## Author's Note

**Moena Akiyama** wrote this essay in the ENG150 Advanced Research Writing course. Her major is Global studies (Transnational Studies), and she is especially interested in the field of media studies. She chose this topic because she learned that Japanese television advertising tends to overrepresent Whites among foreigners and because she wished to discover whether advertising affects Japanese viewers' stereotypical perception of foreigners as being White.

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## Abstract

This study focuses on the issue of racial imbalance on the representation of foreigners in Japanese TV advertisements, and how it affects the viewers. Although there are several content analyses on foreigners in Japanese ads, there was a lack of empirical evidence on how such ads affect the viewers. As the number of foreigners is increasing in Japan, understanding how media representation of foreigners affects the viewer is becoming more essential. Therefore, the survey examined how TV advertisements affect people's perception of foreigners and how people are aware of the biased representation of foreigners on TV ads. The results showed that people who often watch Japanese television have a higher tendency to categorize foreigners as White people. Also, the majority of participants are aware of the overrepresentation of Whites on TV advertisements. Overall, the researcher concludes that Japanese TV advertisements might affect people to generalize foreigners as Whites.

**Keywords:** Media representation, Japanese advertisements, stereotypes, foreigners, race



## **Introduction**

### *Foreigners in Japanese Society*

“How often do Japanese people interact with foreigners?” When the NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute aimed to find the answer to this question, 51% of their 2,751 random Japanese respondents said they have never interacted with foreigners (Eiraku, 2019). Since the Japanese population has been declining for nine consecutive years from 2010 to 2019 (“Japan’s population,” 2020), the Japanese government has been trying to support the shrinking work force and the aging population by inviting foreign workers through establishing a new visa system. After this system was introduced in 2019, foreign workers in Japan have arisen for 13.6% in over a year (“Record,” 2020).

Even though the number of foreigners who come to Japan is increasing annually, most Japanese people are left to count on the information provided on the mass media to learn about foreigners. Mass media is the technology used to reach a mass audience such as newspapers, magazines, television, and radio (Cambridge dictionary Press, n.d.). Since mass media can reach many viewers, the image of foreigners they deliver can influence how the general Japanese public understands about foreigners. Japanese people will have more opportunities to communicate with foreigners shortly, so it is essential for Japanese citizens not to misjudge foreigners based on their image on the media.

However, advertisements tend to overrepresent White people and generalize foreigners as Whites. According to Sezer (2019), Japanese advertisements use White people in no less than 14% of its advertis-

ing, while the demographic percentage is only around one percent of its non-Japanese population. For instance, a Japanese advertisement company cast a White American woman for a commercial for “Trivago,” a booking website, but neighboring countries like Korea and China employ Asian actors as their representative (“Trivago,” 2017). In addition, the Japanese airline All Nippon Airways (ANA) aired a controversial “racist” commercial in which a Japanese actor wore a fake nose and blond hair to play a foreigner (Gander, 2014). This advertisement is just one of the cases in which Japanese media have generalized foreigners as Whites. Among many media outlets, television is the dominant medium in the Japanese advertisement industry (“Advertising expenditures,” 2019). Even though there is an increase in Internet use among the younger generation, television viewing is still the most popular medium among Japanese in general (“TV Still,” 2019). Therefore, it is crucial to understand how television advertisements represent foreigners and how they impact the Japanese viewer’s image towards foreigners.

## **Literature Review**

A complex background and multiple arguments are surrounding Japanese commercials and their representation of foreigners. This section will analyze how the representation of foreigners in Japanese commercials affect viewers by focusing on the racial diversity in Japanese broadcasting advertisements, reasons why Japanese advertisements tend to overrepresent White people, and the types of media effect. Researchers have argued that Japanese media

overrepresent White people over other races because of Japan's history with Western countries and because of their colonial past (e.g., Prieler, 2010; Yamada 2016). When the racial hierarchical idea reached Japan, Western-based beauty standards excelled as well (e.g., Darling-Wolf, 2004). Today, the overrepresentation of White people and contemporary Japanese beauty standards are affecting each other. While there are many types of media effects, some of the essential ones that relate to the overrepresentation of White people are mentioned in this section.

#### *Types of foreigners in Japanese television advertisement*

Michiko Yamada, a media expert at Aichi University, examined foreign elements in 1,606 television advertisements in terms of European written and spoken words, foreigners, and foreign locations and sceneries (2016). The results showed that 284 advertisements (17.7%) featured foreigners. Among advertisements that depicted foreigners, commercials featuring only White people were seen the most (109 ads or 38.3%). None of the advertisements showed only Black people, whereas six ads (2.1%) showed both Blacks and Whites. Japanese celebrities and foreigners appeared in 44 ads (15.5%), 48 advertisements (16.9%) showed Japanese and foreign non-celebrity people, and 18 ads (7.0%) showed people who are other than White, Black or Japanese. Besides, Prieler (2010) also analyzed racial groups in Japanese broadcasting advertisements featuring people. The result showed that among 2557 samples, White was the dominant group of people shown the most (365 ads or 14.3%),

followed by Blacks and East-Asians (52 advertisements or 2.0% each). 22 ads (0.9%) showed foreigners other than White, Black, or East-Asians. From the results of these two research pieces, we can conclude that White people are dominantly represented among other ethnic or racial groups. Then what are the reasons behind Japanese commercials having to overrepresent White people?

#### *Causes of Overrepresentation*

Some researchers have claimed that the Japanese commercial's overrepresentation of White people is derived from the Japanese perception of themselves and Japan's colonial history (e.g., Hambleton, 2011; Prieler, 2010; Yamada 2016). Hambleton (2011) states that television commercials overrepresent White people because portraying foreigners who are ethnically different from Japanese people helps construct Japanese identity. This "cultural nationalism" tactic draws almost exclusively on comparison with the outside world, especially with the West. Also, Prieler (2010) stated that during the U.S. occupation in the 20th century, Japanese people adopted Western ideologies, including the racial hierarchy. It can be argued that the adoption of White supremacy and Western countries' dominance over Japan and Japanese colonizing history made Japanese people feel inferior to Western people and superior to those from Africa and Asia. Similarly, Yamada (2016) explains that Japan's loss in World War II made Japanese people perceive the U.S. as a "new, rich, advanced society" (p. 2), which lead to the U.S. lifestyle being admired by the Japanese public. Yamada (2016) also stat-

ed that “Having a foreigner in an advertisement represents foreignness which, in turn, is indicative of Western culture and countries that Japan admire (pp. 2-3).” This historical event and the connotation of non-Japanese as a role to define Japanese identity could be the cause of an advertisement company preferring White people over other races.

The racial hierarchy was not the only ideology introduced to Japan after World War II but a new beauty standard was also introduced. Darling-Wolf (2004) found that the Japanese beauty standard shifted from having traditional racially Japanese features (almond-shaped single-lid eyes and small noses) to racially-White features (rounder eyes with double eyelids and taller noses) after World War II. Having pale skin is also considered attractive in Japanese society today, which seems to be another case of a Western-based beauty standard. However, it is also true that this beauty standard has a long history since the Nara Period (AD 710–94). Even though pale skin has been a symbol of Japanese beauty, many Japanese advertisers use White models to promote skin-whitening creams and use them as an example of people with beautiful skin (The Fair, 2013). In 2019, a Japanese noodle company Nissin aired a controversial commercial in which Naomi Osaka, a tennis player who is half-Haitian and half-Japanese with dark skin, was depicted in the animation with pale skin and White facial features (McCurry, 2019). This case suggests how Japanese people normalize White features over other racial features. Given that Western society influences Japanese beauty standards, we can conclude that White people’s overrepresentation can

supplement this influence of Western-based beauty standard on Japanese culture. Nonetheless, this beauty standard in contemporary Japan may play the role of advocating advertisers to use White people or White-featured half Japanese models more frequently.

### *Media effect*

The tendency to overrepresent White people affects not only Japanese females, but also foreigners and how the public perceives them. Some of the most significant impacts of mass media are on cognition and behaviors of the viewers (Potter, 2012). What people have watched in the media becomes their knowledge about something they cannot learn from experience, which influences their cognition. Frequent representations of Whites can lead to the generalization of foreigners as White, while people from China, South Korea, and Vietnam account for the majority of foreigners living in Japan (Yamashita, 2019). Also, the media can even influence how people behave. When Japanese people are unfamiliar with ethnic minorities due to underrepresentation, they might treat those people differently than others. Baye McNeil (2018), an African American writer living in Japan, wrote a column about how he has empty seats around him on the train because Japanese people avoid sitting next to him. Media is not the sole cause of this kind of discriminatory action. But their subtle stereotyping of foreigners as White is one reason, and it is a critical issue to discuss. While there are several analyses on the race of foreigners in Japanese commercials or research on the complex background and multiple arguments surrounding

Japanese commercials and their representation of foreigners, empirical research has not been conducted by many researchers.

## **Methods**

### *Guiding Questions*

To find out how television viewing habits affect people's perception of foreigners, and if people are aware of the biased representation of foreigners, I conducted an online survey targeting Japanese people. I asked multiple questions to participants based on my guiding questions: How does television viewing habits affect Japanese people's perception of foreigners? How aware are Japanese people of the stereotypical representation of foreigners and overrepresentation of White people in Japanese advertisements?

### *Setting and Participants*

All of the participants in this survey identified as Japanese. This survey started by asking general demographic information about the participants' age, gender, and asked whether they have experienced living abroad for more than a year. Among the 55 respondents, 40 were female, 13 were male, and two identified as "Other". In terms of age, there were ages ranging from 15 to 45, where 78% of the respondents were ages between 19 and 21. About 33% of respondents have lived abroad for more than a year, and 67% of them have never been overseas.

### *Data Collection*

I posted this survey online on 2 July, 2020, for a duration of six days. There were six sections and 13 questions in total (see Appendix A). There were five multiple-choice

questions, four linear-scale questions, and four short answer questions. The first section asked about the general information, and the second section asked about media viewing habits. In the third section, participants were asked to watch an advertisement from ANA in which a Japanese male disguised as a foreigner by wearing a fake nose and blond wig. Under the link to the video, there was an open-ended question asking for their opinion about the video. In the fourth and fifth sections, I asked about their views of Whites as a stereotype for foreigners, and the ratio of White people and non-White people they see in Japanese advertisements. In the last section, I showed data from a research conducted by Yamada (2016) indicating that the percentage of White and non-White people in Japanese commercials were eight to two, and asked for their reaction towards this data.

## **Findings**

### *Television viewing habit and perception of foreigners*

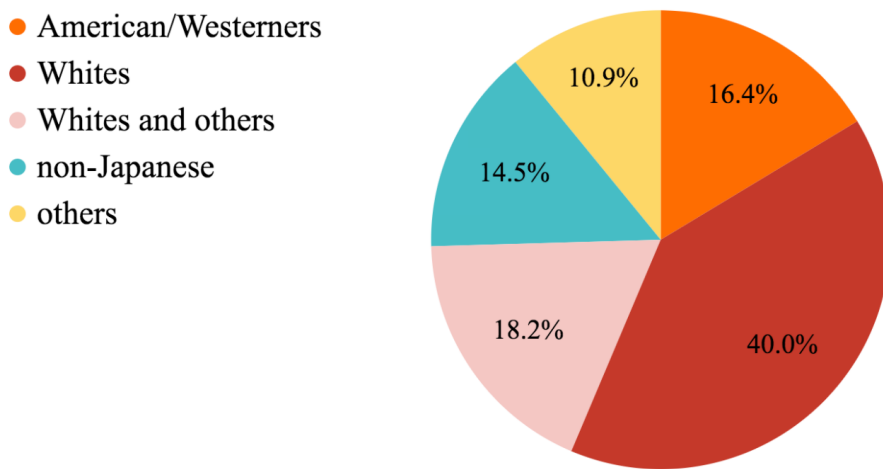
To investigate my first guiding question, "How do television viewing habit affect Japanese people's perception of foreigners?" I compared the results of participants' media viewing habits and living abroad experience with their responses for question number eight "When you hear the word "foreigner," what kind of racial group do you imagine?"(see appendix A). To analyze the short answers, I categorized the responses into five tiers: American/Westerners, Whites, Whites and others, non-Japanese, and others. Others include answers which does not indicate either White, Westerners, or non-Japanese. The short answer question's

overall result indicates that there is a strong correlation of Whites as foreigners among respondents. About 75% of respondents used the word White or other words such as Whites or Americans, which are often associated with the image of White people in

Japan. There was no difference in the type of answer among different genders. Since the majority of age ranges were from 19 to 21, it was difficult to determine how people of different ages are affected by the media.

Figure 1

*Responses to Question No.8*



*Experience of living abroad and perception of foreigners*

When considering the Japanese perception of foreigners, I hypothesized the experience of living abroad would affect how people categorize foreigners. From the result of the survey, it is visible that people who have lived abroad for a year tend to categorize

foreigners as non-Japanese more than those who have not lived abroad for a year. However, White is the dominant category for describing foreigners among both groups. The experience of living abroad might change the perception of foreigners, but its significant effect was not discovered in the survey.

Figure 2

*How People Who Have Lived Abroad Answered to Question No. 8*

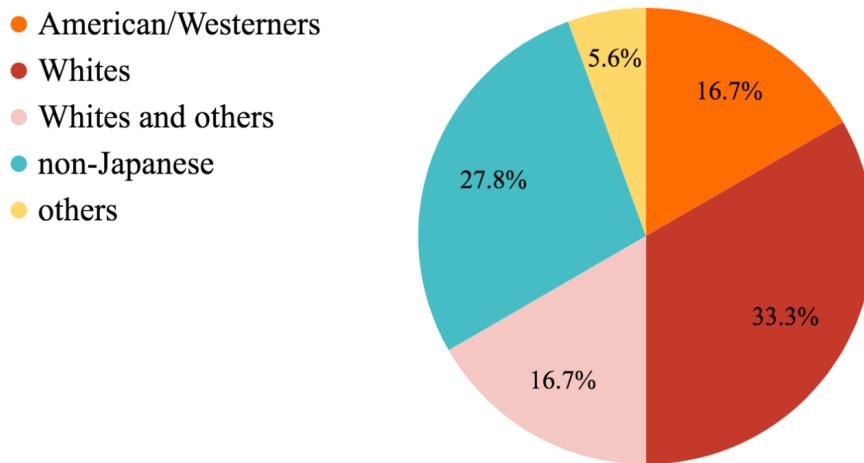
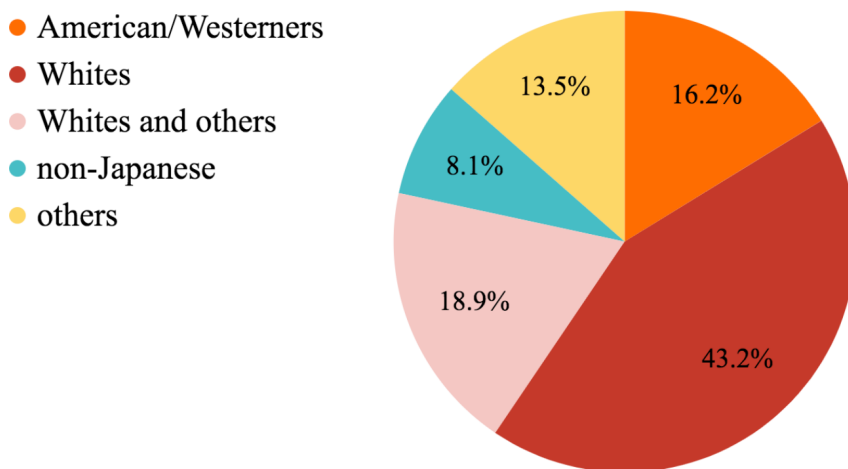


Figure 3

*How People Who Have Not Lived Abroad Answered to Question No. 8*



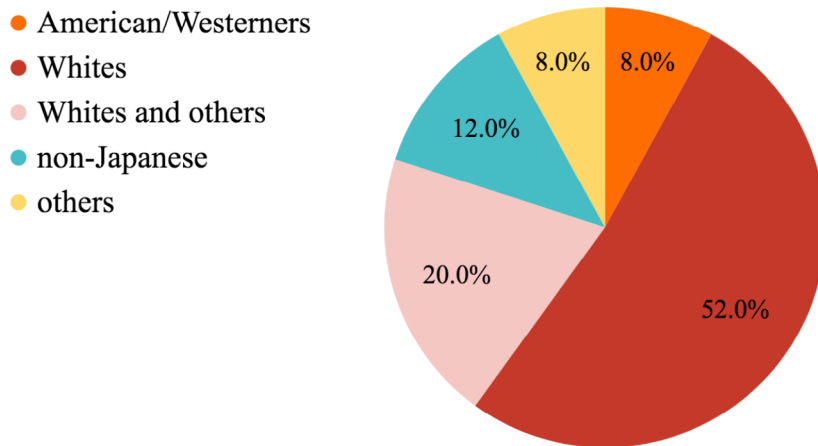
*Foreign media and perception of foreigners*

Foreign media is another factor that affects the perception of foreigners among Japanese people. My hypothesis was people who often watch non-Japanese media tend to describe foreigners as people with a variety

of race. However, the result was that people who regularly watch foreign media tend to generalize foreigners as White, and people who do not often watch non-Japanese media tend to describe foreigners in various ways.

Figure 4

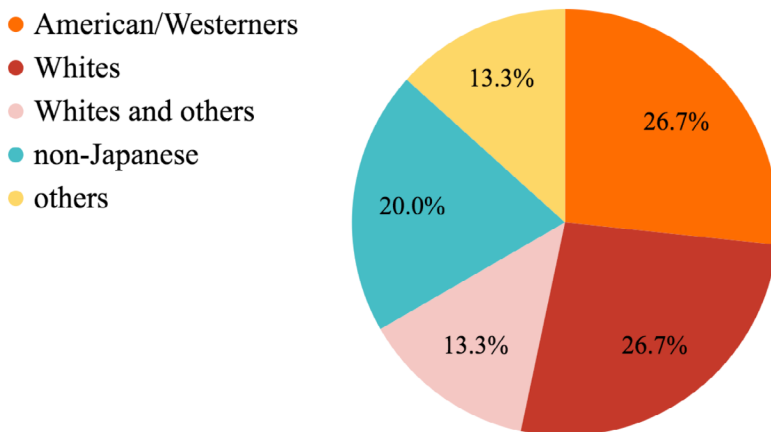
*How People Who Often Watch Foreign Media Answered to Question No. 8*



*Note.* In this graph, people who often watch foreign media indicates people who chose the answer 4 or 5 for question no. 4

Figure 5

*How People Who Do Not Often Watch Foreign Media Answered to Question No. 8*



*Note.* In this graph, people who often watch foreign media indicate people who chose the answer 1 or 2 for question no. 4



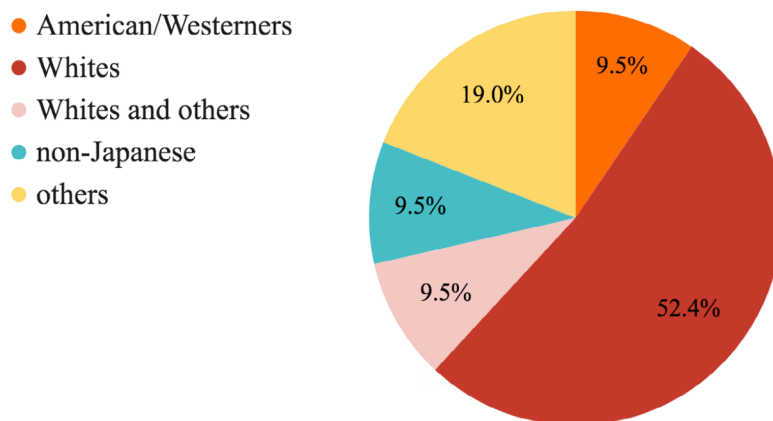
*Resent Japanese television viewing habit and perception of foreigners*

In my hypothesis, Japanese people who often watch Japanese television will have a more certain stereotype of foreigners as White. According to the survey, about 52%

of people who regularly watch Japanese TV used White or synonyms to describe foreigners. Therefore, there might be a strong correlation of how Japanese television affects the viewers' stereotype of foreigners.

Figure 6

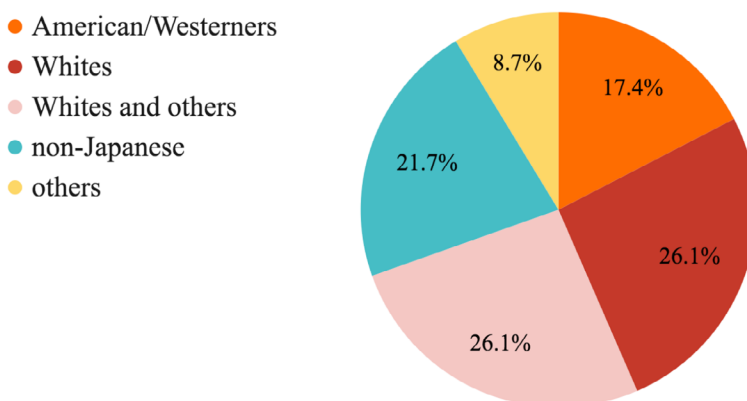
*How People Who Often Watch Japanese Television Answered to Question No. 8*



*Note.* In this graph, people who often watch Japanese television indicates people who chose the answer 4 or 5 for question no. 6

Figure 7

*How People Who Do Not Often Watch Japanese Television Answered to Question No. 8*



*Note.* In this graph, people who do not often watch Japanese television indicates people who chose the answer 1 or 2 for question no. 6

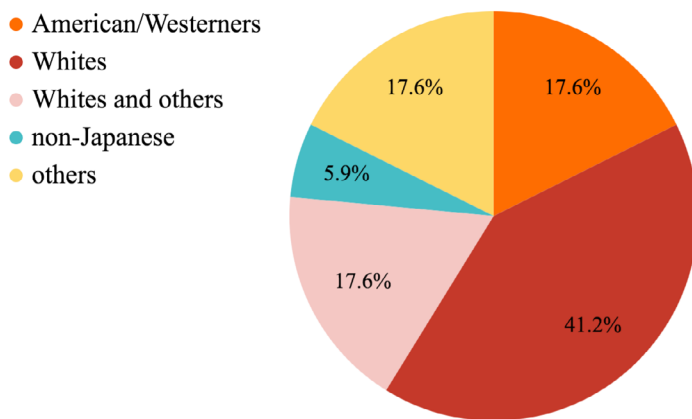
*Foreigners in television advertisement and perception of foreigners*

People who often see foreigners on television advertisements tend to categorize foreigners in words that is not associated with Whites, American/Westerners or non-Japanese (others), while people who do not often see foreigners did not categorized foreigners other than White, American/Westerners, or non-Japanese. However, categorizing foreigners as White or American/Westerners

was the dominant answer in both groups. In the second section of the survey, there was a question asking whether participants had ever watched Japanese television daily. Only about seven percent of participants have answered “No,” and there was no significant difference in how they describe foreigners, so there were no significant data which illustrate the correlation between Japanese television viewing habits in the past and how people perceive foreigners today.

Figure 8

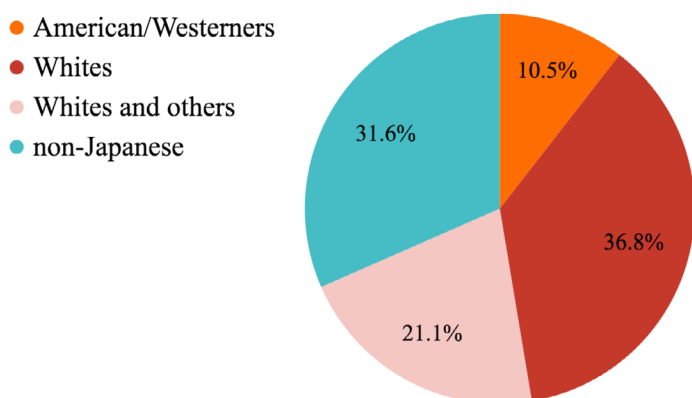
*How People Who Often See Foreigners on TV Advertisements Answered to Question No. 8*



*Note.* In this graph, people who often see foreigners on TV advertisements Japanese television indicates people who chose the answer 4 or 5 for question no. 7

Figure 9

*How People Who Do Not Often See Foreigners on TV Advertisements Answered to Question No. 8*



*Note.* In this graph, people who do not often see foreigners on TV advertisements Japanese television indicates people who chose the answer 1 or 2 for question no. 7

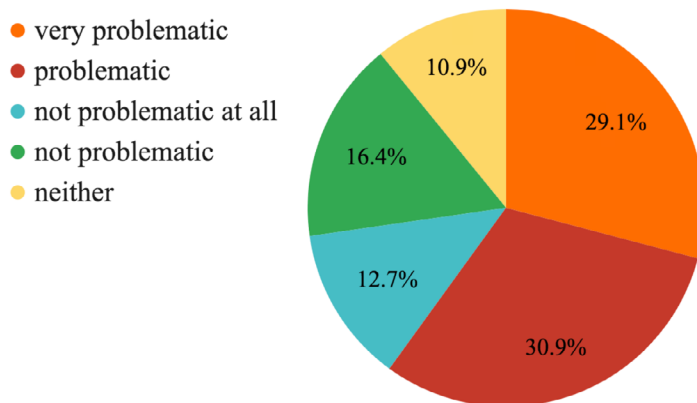
### *Awareness of stereotypical content*

To find the answer to my second guiding question; “How Japanese people are aware of the stereotypical representation of foreigners and overrepresentation of White people in Japanese advertisements?”, I asked participants what they thought about the video they watched in the previous section. As a result, 37 out of 54 responses included a critical comment on the stereotypical content or mentioned about the stereotype of foreigners. I also asked what do they think of the depiction of a Japanese man wearing a fake nose

and blond wig. About 60% of participants answered to questionable or very problematic but about 30% of participants responded to not problematic or not problematic at all. These results indicate that people are aware of the stereotypical depiction of foreigners, but there were diverse opinions on whether such depiction is problematic or not. In addition, having White features such as having pale skin and blond hair is commonly recognized by participants as a stereotype of foreigners in Japan (see appendix B).

Figure 10

*How People Respond to Question No. 10 (What did you think about the man wearing a fake nose and blond wig in the video?)*



*Note.* In this graph, people who often see foreigners on TV advertisements Japanese television indicates people who chose the answer 4 or 5 for question no. 7

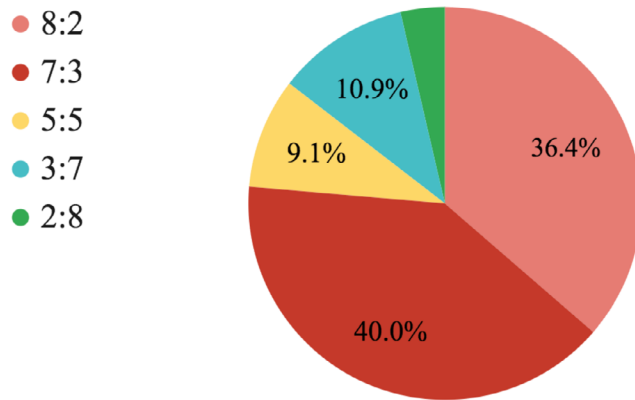
### *Ration of White and non-White*

In the fifth section of the survey, I asked what participants think is the ratio of White people and non-White people in Japanese commercials, which only features foreigners. About 76% of participants answered that they believe the proportion of White people is higher than non-White people. In the last

section, I introduced data showing that the actual ratio of White and non-White people in Japanese is eight to two. I asked their reaction towards this data, and most participants commented that they were not surprised by the data. The results indicate that many Japanese people are aware of the overrepresentation of Whites in the Japanese TV advertisements.

Figure 11

*How People Respond to Question No. 12 (What do you think is the ratio of White people and non-White people in Japanese commercial which only features foreigners? [White: non-White])*



### Discussion

The primary research investigated two main points. The first one is how does television viewing habits affect Japanese people's perception of foreigners. The second one is how aware Japanese people are of the stereotypical representation of foreigners, and overrepresentation of White people in TV ads. The study results showed that Japanese people who often watch Japanese television tend to generalize foreigners as Whites. As the secondary research revealed, Japanese advertisements tend to overrepresent White people among other ethnicities due to its historical and ideological background. This evidence indicates that Japanese ads affect Japanese viewers to have the stereotypical perception of foreigners as White due to their imbalanced representation of foreigners.

Although the primary research suggests that people who often watch Japanese television tend to identify foreigners as White, it would be misleading not to acknowledge that

Japanese TV is not the sole cause of stereotyping foreigners as Whites. As the different answer patterns appeared between people who have lived abroad and have not lived abroad for more than a year, personal experiences other than media viewing habits affects people's perception of foreigners. As expected, among people who have lived abroad for more than a year, the number of people who described foreigners as "non-Japanese" was greater than those among who have not lived abroad. Still, categorizing foreigners as Whites was the dominant answer in both groups. This result indicates that regardless of studying abroad experience, Japanese people have a strong correlation with foreigners as White. In addition, there were different answer patterns between people who often watch foreign media and those who do not. Contrasted with my hypothesis, the result showed that people who often watch foreign media tend to generalize foreigners as White. Nevertheless, majority of people in

both groups generally had the stereotype of foreigner as White. Even though Japanese television viewing habits are not the sole cause of stereotype, the result of this research indicates a possible connection between Japanese television advertisements and how people generalize foreigners as White.

Furthermore, as mentioned before, people who often watch foreign media tend to generalize foreigners as White. This result might suggest that people tend to watch Western media often, and thus their image of foreigners is strongly associated with White people. However, not being able to identify where the foreign media comes from limits what the result indicates. It is because foreign media could mean any media from outside of Japan, such as American media, Chinese media, or Brazilian media.

This research revealed that, despite the media viewing habits or living abroad experience, participants generally have stereotypical images of foreigners as White. Also, over 90% of participants agreed that having a White feature is the stereotype of foreigners in Japanese society (see appendix B). This result could instigate other researchers who are interested in the field of Japanese society to investigate the causes of this stereotype among Japanese people. Furthermore, this research also revealed that the majority of participants are aware of the overrepresentation of Whiteness in Japanese TV ads. This signifies that people pay attention to what they see on advertisements and it becomes their cognition. As expected, the majority of participants expressed that they think the stereotypical depiction of foreigners in the TV advertisement is problematic. However, some

of the participants showed that they do not believe it is problematic at all. It will be interesting to conduct further research to examine what causes different stances on this matter.

Additionally, as media have a long-term effect, people inevitably perceiving things today are affected by their media viewing habits in the past. It would be interesting to investigate the correlation between television viewing habits in the past and how people perceive foreigners today. Also, most participants in this study were university students, so researching a wider age range will allow researchers to compare whether the effects of television viewing habits differ among people of different generations. Furthermore, the majority of participants in this study were students at a small liberal arts university in Japan in which students study in English and participate in study abroad. Therefore, this study does not represent the general Japanese people around the age of 20. If we conduct this research to students at other universities, we might receive a different kind of result, but it will give more general information.

### **Conclusion**

This paper began by addressing how Japanese people are in a situation where they will have more opportunities to interact with foreigners. Even though most foreigners in Japan are from neighboring Asian countries, there is a racial imbalance in how television advertisements represent foreigners. While previous researchers have addressed how Japanese TV ads prefer White people, there was a lack of empirical evidence on how such advertisements affect the viewers. The study assessed whether Japanese television

ads affect people's perception of foreigners and whether Japanese people are aware of the stereotypical representation of foreigners and the overrepresentation of White people. The result indicated that people who often watch Japanese television tend to categorize foreigners as White. Also, the research shows that regardless of living abroad experience or foreign media viewing habits, there is a strong tendency among Japanese people to generalize foreigners as White. The majority of respondents are aware of stereotypical representation and overrepresentation

of foreigners in Japanese ads. To further understand this subject, researchers should conduct this research on the larger population of television media viewers and assess its effect on people's perception while considering other possible factors. Nonetheless, this study discovered that there is a connection between Japanese TV commercials and their influence on people's perception. As more foreigners are coming to Japan, it is better for Japanese corporations to include more diversity in their TV advertisements.

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## Appendix A

### *Survey Questions*

#### Japanese commercial and stereotype towards foreigner

##### *Section 1*

1. あなたの年齢を教えてください。/How old are you?
  - a. Free answer
2. あなたの性別を教えてください。/What is your gender?
  - a. 男性/Male
  - b. 女性/Female
  - c. その他 /others
3. あなたは一年以上海外に住んでいた経験がありますか? /Have you ever lived abroad for more than a year?
  - a. はい/Yes
  - b. いいえ/No

##### *Section 2*

4. あなたは海外のメディアを視聴しますか? (例、海外テレビ番組、YouTube、海外ニュース) /Do you watch foreign media? (e.g. TV shows, YouTube, news)
  - a. 1----2----3----4----5  
(1=全く視聴しない/not at all 4=頻繁に視聴する/often)
5. あなたは今まで頻繁に日本のテレビを視聴していたことがありますか? /Have you ever watched Japanese television on a daily basis?
  - a. はい/Yes
  - b. いいえ/No
6. あなたは現在どのくらいの頻度で日本のテレビを視聴しますか? How often do you watch Japanese television recently?
  - a. 1----2----3----4----5  
(1=全く視聴しない/not at all 4=頻繁に視聴する/often)
7. あなたはどのくらい頻繁にテレビ広告で外国人を見かけますか? /How often do you see foreigners on TV commercials?
  - a. 1----2----3----4----5  
(1=全く見かけない/not at all 5=頻繁に見かける/often)



8. あなたは「外国人」という言葉を聞いた時にどの人種の人々を連想しますか？/When you hear the word “foreigner”, what kind of racial group do you imagine?
- a. Free answer

### Section 3

Please watch the following commercial and answer the following questions

次のCMを視聴し以下の質問に答えてください。

- Video URL [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CrJIN4bn\\_7M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CrJIN4bn_7M)

9. ビデオに対する率直な感想を聞かせてください。What did you think about the video?
- a. Free answer

### Section 4

10. ビデオの中で男の人が偽の鼻と金髪のカツラをかぶっていたことに対してどう思いましたか？What did you think about the man wearing a fake nose and blond wig in the video?
- a. 1----2----3----4----5  
(1=問題ではなかった/not problematic at all, 5=とても問題があった/very problematic)
11. 白人の特徴（白い肌、高い鼻、金髪）は日本人が持つ外国人に対するステレオタイプに当てはまると思いますか？Do you think having Caucasian feature (pale skin, tall nose and blond hair) is the stereotype of foreigners in Japan?
- a. はい/Yes  
b. いいえ/No  
c. その他/Other

### Section 5

12. 日本のテレビ広告に出演する白人とそうでない外国人の割合はどれくらいだと思いますか。（白人：白人以外）/What do you think is the ratio of White people and non-White people in Japanese commercial(which only features foreigners)? (White : Non-white)
- a. 2:8  
b. 3:7  
c. 5:5  
d. 7:3  
e. 8:2  
f. Other

Section 6

13. \*ある調査によると外国人だけが出演している広告の中で実際の割合は8 : 2 でした。(白人 : 白人以外) この数値を知りあなたはどう思いましたか?

According to a research\* the actual percentage is approximately 8:2 (White : Non-white). What was your reaction towards this data?

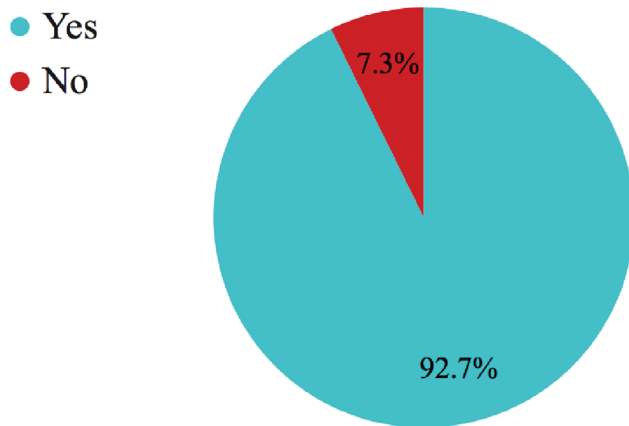
a. Free answer

\*Yamada, M. (2016). Foreign Elements in Japanese Advertisements. 文明21=Civilization 21, (37), 1-9. <https://ci.nii.ac.jp/naid/120006240954/en/>

Appendix B

Figure 12

How People Respond to Question No. 11 (Do you think having Caucasian features is the stereotype of foreigners in Japan?)



Short Written Answers

Answers to question No. 8 (When you hear the word "foreigner", what kind of racial group do you imagine?)

|                                 |
|---------------------------------|
| 日本人じゃない人(アジア系の顔じゃない人)           |
| Black and white people          |
| アメリカ人                           |
| 日本人以外の人                         |
| 人種というより、アメリカ人、ヨーロッパ人。アジアではないかも  |
| 人種の正しい示し方がわからないのですが、アングロサクソン人です |
| 白人                              |
| 肌が黒い人                           |
| 日本人顔(アジア系)以外の人種                 |
| 白人、アジア人、黒人の順                    |

|   |
|---|
| 色々な人種が思い浮かんだけど、1番多かったのは白人系                    |
| 白人  |
| 白人  |
| 白人  |
| アメリカ、韓国、フランス                                  |
| 西洋人   |
| 日本人以外   |
| 白人  |
| 白人/黒人   |
| アメリカ人？  |
| アジア以外   |
| 白人  |
| コーカソイド、特に北ヨーロッパ                               |
| 西洋人   |
| 日本以外の国の人                                      |
| ぱっと思い浮かぶのは白人でした。あとはちょっと考えるとアジア系、アフリカ系の人も浮かびます |
| 欧米人   |
| 白人  |
| 欧米の方  |
| アメリカ  |
| 白人、黒人   |
| 金髪のアメリカ人                                      |
| 白色人種  |
| 白人もしくは黒人                                      |
| 真っ先に出てくるのは白人                                  |
| 白人  |
| 白人  |
| アジア、欧米、アフリカ全て                                 |
| 日本人以外の方、でも基本的には白人や黒人の方を連想する                   |
| I don't think of any specific race            |
| 白人や黒人の方。                                      |
| 日本人以外の方全員                                     |
| 白人、中東系  |
| 白人  |
| 白人  |
| 理想は色々な人種、色々な国の人                               |
| 日本以外の国とか地域の人達全般                               |
| 白人  |
| 日本人ではない人                                      |
| コーカソイド系                                       |
| 欧米  |
| 白人  |

|               |
|---------------|
| コーカソイドが強いと思う  |
| 白人            |
| アジア人、白人、アフリカ人 |

*Answers to question No. 9 (What did you think about the video?)*

|   |
|---|
| 外国人イコール金髪で鼻が高いみたいなイメージはよくあるやつだなあと思った  |
| Interesting   |
| “Such a Japanese reaction” のところで日本人の特徴をとらえてるなと思い、面白かったです。   |
| 面白いと思いました。  |
| おもしろくてすき笑   |
| 升野英知が面白い  |
| おもしろい！  |
| 2人とも日本人じゃんと思いました  |
| ハグの提案に対し、返答に窮していたのは確かに日本人らしいなと思った。  |
| 面白いと思った。  |
| おもしろい (interestingの方で)  |
| 最後の白人の格好をした部分が問題になるといえばなりそうだなと思いました   |
| 「世界へ」で非日本人感を出したかったのだろうが、その行為自体が難しくなっている気がする。バカリズムが仮に黒人に扮していたらもっとバッシングをくらっていただろうし、アジア人に扮したとしても日本人との区別ができない。故に分かりやすいかつ批判されないであろう白人という選択肢を取ったのだと思われるが、安易だった思う。 |
| 普通のCM   |
| ターゲットがよくわからないCMだけどバカリズムが変な顔なのは笑える   |
| 最後になぜバカリズムさんの顔を西洋風にしたのか疑問に思いました。「日本のイメージを変えよう」が、欧米式に合わせようというようにも受けとれそう。   |
| ステレオタイプすぎるくらいの「外国人」のあるある仮装が突然出てきて笑いました。   |
| 海外に行っていなかったら何も感じないだろうが、やはり差別的表現と言われても文句は言えない  |
| Cringy.   |
| CMが読み込めなかった...ごめんなさい  |
| インターナショナルな方向にというメッセージだと思いますが、西洋人のイメージでしかそれが表現できてなくて！少し浅はか、残念な表現かもしれないですね。   |
| なぜ途中で外国人の容姿にしたのかよく分からない。  |
| 劇団ひとりが高い鼻・金髪で扮装したのは、外国人=コーカソイドというステレオタイプを生み出す悪い影響を与えそう。また、コーカソイドに失礼   |
| 世界に目を向けていても、独自の国民性を潜在的に持っていることを表していてとても面白いと思いました。   |
| なぜ日本人向けの日本人によるCMなのに英語で話しているんだろうと思いました   |
| 最後のシーン外国人誇張してるみたいでなんか違和感でした   |
| 日本人が持つ外国人ステレオタイプを利用しているなあ   |
| ステレオタイプが多い(日本人はハグをしない、鼻が高い金髪の外国人のイメージ、など)   |
| 日本人のイメージは変えなくてよくない??  |
| 見た目を変える必要は無かったんじゃないかと思った  |
| 身体的な特徴の違いで外国人を表してるなと思った。(一種ルッキズム、?)   |
| ジャパニーズのイメージを変えるところまでは分かったけど、金髪プラス鼻をつけたのはちょっと違うとおもった。  |

|   |
|---|
| 日本人からみた典型的な外国の人々のイメージが表されていると思った。   |
| 鼻がわざと違和感のあるくらい高くされていて少し違和感。それが外国人の象徴のよう。西島さん かつこいい。   |
| 正直、見慣れた日本の芸能人が英語を話しているのには違和感を覚える  |
| 外国人＝金髪鼻が高いという典型的なイメージを使ったcm。ハグする＝外国人という形式も一部の 人たち限定。  |
| 「日本人のイメージを変える」という文言が白人に対する劣等感を反映している気がした。実際、見 た目を変えて、白人の身体的特徴に近づけているように思った。   |
| 最後のシーンで見た目の全く違うことで、日本の固定観念を乗り越えようというメッセージはわか る。しかし、他のアジアやアフリカのモデルでも良いはずなので、そこに関しては外国人＝白人とい う固定観念が現れていると思う。  |
| 最後らへんの外国人の変装が面白いけど、鼻高すぎてちょっとデイスってるように見えた  |
| I don't see the reasons why the two Japanese guys have to speak in English. And the nose thing is kinda inappropriate because not all the "foreigners" look the same. |
| 最後、右側にいた人の鼻が高くなっており外国人をイメージしているように見えた。  |
| 右側の人の「外国人」像が金髪で鼻が高い人のみかと思い、不快感を覚えた。   |
| 外国人＝ブロンド、鼻が高いというステレオタイプが如実に反映されていて物議を醸しそうだと感じ ました。  |
| いきなり鼻を高くして髪もブランドによくないと思う  |
| 最後必要??笑   |
| 後半部分、右の人の容姿が変わるところにおいて髪の色や鼻の高さから白人を想起させるが、半分馬 鹿にしているように感じた  |
| CMとしては好きだけど、外国人だから金髪っぽい?みたいな感じで、日本人の過半数が金髪=外国人 になっている事が私は好きじゃなくて、イメージとかだけで表そうとするのは良くないかなと思って しまった感じです...  |
| 失礼、あと英語が微妙、あと全然面白くないしこれを面白いと思って作っている会社の気が知れない ネガティブなイメージ。日本人としてのアイデンティティーを卑下しているような印象を受けまし た。   |
| 外国人とハグを安易に結びつけるバカリズムさんの顔が金髪、鼻が高くなったのは外国人=金髪とい う偏ったイメージを押し進めていると思う。  |
| 日本人の外国人の対する象徴的なイメージである鼻が高く金髪で目が青いというものがとても誇張 されていて違和感を覚えた。明らかに日本人と外国人の間に大きな壁があるように感じた。  |
| 英語ヘタやなというか共感羞恥心に駆られました。あとカツラと鼻に関しては馬鹿にしとんかと思っ ました。差別かなと思いました。   |
| 正直に言うと、日本でこういうコマーシャルすごくよく見るし、AIUに来る前だったらなんの違和感 もなく見ていたと思う。一番不快感を感じたのはここでの"外国人"の表し方がいわゆる花鼻が高く てブロンドで、ハグとかをよくするって言うよくある特定の国とか人種しか表現されていないこと。                            |
| 意味がわからない。日本人が外国人みたいになるということ?何を意図しているのかつかめない。  |
| 白人の特徴をおおげさにしたような描写に違和感を感じる。   |

Answers to question No.13 (According to a research\* the actual percentage is approximately 8:2 [White : Non-white]. What was your reaction towards this data?)

|  |
|--|
| 外国人であることがCMの内容にとって大事であるのであれば、日本人はそういう人たちを外国人だ と感じやすいと思うので、広告としてはわかりやすくしていいと思う。 |
| Agree  |
| 私もそれくらいだと思ってたので妥当な結果だと思います。  |
| ある一つの調査に過ぎない可能性もあるのでなんとも言えません。   |
| 意外!!ハーフの人も含まれてるのかな?  |



驚きです。黒人のスポーツ選手がよく出ているイメージがあったため。

私はこれに対して差別だとは思いません。解くに何も思いません、

きっとその方がイメージが視聴者的にいいのだろうなあと予想します

白人の方が魅力的に見える、人を惹きつけるという日本人の考え方は健在しているのだなと思った。

納得した。日本人の白人コンプレックスはなかなか拭えないだろうなどの実感を持った。

日本にはやっぱりまだまだステレオタイプが強く残っているなと思いながらも、自分もそのステレオタイプにある程度囚われているなと思った。

帰る必要はあるかもしれないが行き過ぎだけはやめてほしい

非常に偏りがあると感じる。

外国人といえば白人だという先入観的なものが日本人には染み付いていると感じる

思ったより偏っているが、最近はその割合も変化したのではないかと思う

外国人=白人というのはイメージしやすいので妥当な数値だと思います。最近では白人以外も意図的に増やそうとしているのかなという印象も受けます。

外国人→欧米白人と結びつける日本人が多いのかなと思いました。

あまりおどろかない

白人コンプレックスの文化を感じます。

白人が日本の文化やモノに対して大きなリアクションをとったり感動する所をわざわざ写すなど、日本人の多くが持つ承認欲求を顕著に表しているとおもいます。

メディアから自分も影響を受けてると感じる。

近代的な西洋文化優位がまだまだ根強くあるんだと思います。文化的にまだまだ支配的だから仕方ない。今後変わってくるとしたらその変化は興味深いですね。

ある意味日本人の憧れのような像なのかと感じた。

日本に住んでいる外国人の多くは東・東南アジア人やブラジル人。彼らへの理解を深めるためにも、白人以外の起用をしたほうが良いと思う

白人の出演割合が多い

白人を優位なものだとする考えに繋がる可能性があるので良くないと思いました

思ったより多くてびっくりしました...！

思っていたより高い

白人至上主義が蔓延していると思う。

いつのまにか外国人のイメージがこうやって作られたんだなって思います。

自分も同じように思った。固定概念みたいなものがあると思う

思っていたよりも高かったが、納得はいく

金髪、パッチリとした青い目、白い肌、高い鼻が世界の中でもbeauty standardになってることが数値に反映されてるんだと思った。

白人に対して憧れや都会的といった印象を持つ人が多いため、メディアが積極的に起用するのではないかと思った

実際見てもやはりそんな感じだと思う

世界の割合に合わせた方がいいと思う。実際は白人の方が4倍もいるわけではないと思うので。ただ、白人は比較的外見が綺麗なため、見栄えのためには仕方がないのかもしれない

ステレオタイプとメディアが相互的に影響を与えてるのかなと思いました

日本の「ウチ/ソト」意識が、人種のミクスチュアが当たり前の現代社会に適応しきっていない典型例だと思う。「ガイジン」イコール白人というイメージがあり、その優生意識が在日韓国人やブラジル系移民などへの差別にもつながっていると思った。

白人至上主義とまでは言わないが、そのような傾向は強くあり、日本と関わりの深いアジアなどの地域の方には無関心なのかなとも感じられる。

あまり好印象ではない、グローバル社会のはずなのに未だに白人主義が残ってる気がする、ちょっと悲しい。肌の色とか、奴隷の歴史とか、白人の自分たちの方が黒人よりステータスが高いとかの考えが一部の人の間ではまだある気がする

Fair

人種差別に当たると思います

想像通りだなと思いました。

多様性を重視し比率の差を縮めるべき

色んな人種を出すべきであると思うし、ステレオタイプから外してもいいと思う

びっくりしないです

多いなと感じる。たしかに日本人が思う外国人＝白人みたいな印象がある

本当にそう思う。正直なところ、白人は起用するけど黒人は使いませんとかってある。ユニクロのCMは白人が多くて、GAPは黒人も白人もアジア系の人もある。そんな風に会社の起用すらも白人系、黒人系、全人種愛しますとは全く違う。悲しいです。

白人以外が2割いることに驚いた。外国人を「外国人」として扱うCMによって悲しむ人が必ずいるんだろうなーと思って悲しい気持ちになりました、

ステレオタイプを助長していると思います。

非常に白人の比率が高いと思った。世界人口や日本にいる外国人などの国籍や人種の割合を考えてもおかしいのではないかと思う。

特に驚きはなく、体感的にもあまり白人を広告の中で見たことが無いので納得の数字だと思った。

そらそうやろなと思いました。というか2割白人以外がいるのがびっくりしました。

すごく問題だと思う。特にコマーシャルとかテレビ番組は子どもや若い世代がかなり意識的&無意識的に見るものだし、そこで表現されていない人種に対して興味を持つ事も知る機会も少なくなると思う。コンポ頑張りましょう！！応援してます👍

なぜそのようになっているのか知りたい。多くの企業が白人を起用したがつているのか、そもそも白人の割合が外国人のモデルや俳優として日本に多いのか？

人種の多様性が伝わらないと思う。

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# Bilinguals and the Shifting Source of Language: Personality or Attitude

Melissa Ann Modi

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## Author's Note

**Melissa Modi** is a sophomore in the Global Business program. Her essay “Bilinguals and the Shifting Source of Language: Personality or Attitude” was written for the Advanced Research Writing under Professor Lee Friederich’s supervision at AIU. Melissa’s interest has been in bilingualism and the cognitive minds of bilinguals since she entered AIU, where she has met various bilinguals with diverse backgrounds.

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## Abstract

The paper researches the phenomenon where bilinguals act differently depending on the language they use. Researchers claim that there is a source for this shift. There have been two theories regarding this matter, the personality theory and the attitude theory. An online survey was conducted on 32 compound bilinguals at a small liberal arts university in Japan to determine the shifting source in them. Despite the personality theory being denied in several aspects of the attitude theory, the primary research showed a strong tendency towards the personality shift. Nevertheless, with further research and reassessment of the research results and personality constructs, a third shifting source emerges. In the end, with more room to discuss my findings, this paper concludes that the shifting source is due to the emotional connection to language; thus, the shifting source is emotions.

**Keywords:** bilingual, personality, attitude, language, emotion



## Introduction

“Ambitious” and “passive,” this is the exact comment I received from one of my friends. She mentioned how she feels like talking to different people when the language differs. No matter how confusing this may appear, my personality also usually varies, depending on the language I speak. This inconsistent behavior is not only an issue of my own. It turns out that many bilinguals suffer from their self-contradictory actions: Noam Scheiber (2014) claims, “My Hebrew self turns out to be much colder, more earnest, and let’s face it, less articulate.” Scheiber even mentions that he has quit talking to his daughter in Hebrew anymore because of this. Instead, he finds himself talking in English because he is much more “patient and understanding” (Robb, 2014). These mismatching evaluations within a single person are considered as a mystery of bilinguals.

Today, there are conflicting ideas about this mystery. Some researchers claim that the change observed in bilinguals is a change in the personality – “the difference in characteristic patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving” (American Psychological Association, 2019). On the other hand, others believe that the shift is a change in attitude – “a mental and emotional entity that characterizes a person” (Lloyd, 2018). These two terms may seem ambiguous; however, there are distinct features for each term. Personality, which describes the qualities of a person, is used to define the person. It is complicated and hence, challenging to change. To be precise, personality is usually introduced as the “Big Five Personality,” constituted of the five main personality traits: openness, conscientiousness,

extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (Lim, 2020). Contrarily, attitude is the opinion or worldview one holds towards something or someone. Compared to personality, attitude is “prone to change;” it is heavily dependent on personal experience. In short, attitude is a part of the personality (Lloyd, 2018). An example of attitude affecting one’s personality is an individual who prefers peace and calmness would hold a passive attitude in group discussions. As a result, that individual may be regarded or mentioned as a person with high agreeableness and patience.

In the year 2020, when more and more attention is paid to globalization, there seems to be a range of citizens we tend to miss out on, bilinguals. This paper focuses on these people who deserve more acknowledgment of their personality when it comes to its impact on their spoken language. This paper presents two arguments regarding the shifting source of bilinguals, personality and attitude. To determine the real shifting source of bilinguals, a survey was conducted to hypothesize that “the shifting source in bilinguals is attitude.” Then, with the possible causes of each shift explained, the paper illustrates and analyzes the primary research, which was conducted among bilinguals, undergraduate students on the main island of Japan, Honshu. In the end, with the preliminary studies and primary analysis, this paper concludes by inducing the shifting source of bilinguals.

## Literature Review

### *Introduction to the Two Theories*

There are two main theories discussed regarding this shift in bilinguals: personality theory and the attitude theo-

ry. Concisely, the former theory claims that the shift is in the personality, while the latter claims the shift is in attitude.

### *Possibility of Different Sources*

Cherry (2019) mentions that personality is composed of countless aspects. “Consistency, psychological and physiological constructs, behavior, and expressions” are some of the aspects that make up one’s character. Attitude is indeed a significant aspect that takes up many parts of the personality; however, the other factors cannot be ignored. Considering that there are such vast numbers of aspects of personality, different theories can be found other than these two theories. Nevertheless, until today, no researcher claims that other factors could be the shifting source. Hence, this literature section will only discuss the two theories, personality theory and attitude theory, due to the amount of evidence and claims they hold. This paper explains the two theories, personality theory and attitude theory, and compares the two theories to determine my opinion. These two theories helped me to construct my hypothesis for the primary research to be conducted.

### *What is the shift? – Personality Theory*

Personality is a mixture of “characteristics or qualities” each individual possesses. These qualities exist in “varying levels;” however, the primary quality stands out as the individual’s personality (Lloyd, 2018). For instance, an individual with high agreeableness may not always be regarded as a “kind person.” If the individual shows extremely low extraversion, their personality could be “introverted,” rather

than kind. Some researchers claim that personality is the factor shifting in bilinguals. This shift is said to be due to the language syntax and grammar, and the brain structure of bilinguals. Chalari (2013) states that the Greek grammar and syntax, which positions verbs in the beginning and establishes massive information in those verbs, make Greeks “loud and interruptive.” On the other hand, the German language places the verb of the end and makes Germans “logical” (Johnson: Do different languages confer different personalities? 2013). In such ways, language syntax and grammar could be a factor of altering personality.

Another claim is that the age acquiring the language affects personality. Dmytro Grybach (2019) argues that compound bilinguals<sup>1</sup> are likely to have dual personalities. The age they learn the language is when their brain is “plastic,” which allows the right hemisphere to perceive “emotional aspects.” Hence, compound bilinguals adopt an “emotional connection” with the language, ultimately “developing a distinct character” in each language (Grybach, 2019). On the other hand, subordinate bilinguals<sup>2</sup> activate the “left hemisphere” of the brain. This portion controls the “logical and rational thinking,” which drives them to “rational and systematic approaches” for each language. (Grybach, 2019). According to neurologist Joy Hirsch, compound and subordinate bilinguals prove their brain activations are slightly different (Chatterjee, 1997). Hirsch suggests that the subordinate and compound bilinguals’ “speech-processing areas” are activated differently; hence, she states that the language-acquiring age is cru-

<sup>1</sup> Individuals that learn two languages from their birth. They usually have several linguistic codes.

<sup>2</sup> Individuals that acquire the second language at a later stage in life. It only has a single linguistic code.

cial to bilinguals' minds (Chatterjee, 1997).

Lastly, in connection with the language-acquiring age, "fluency" is an essential factor that cannot be ignored when considering the shift in personality (Buckby, 2016). A teacher from D'Angon Academy for Language Acquisition mentions the "vulnerability" of the bilinguals in each of the languages affects their communication (D'Angon Academy for Language Acquisition, 2013). They suggest that bilinguals' confidence in using the language affects their speech performance, ultimately changing their personality.

#### *What is the shift? – Attitude Theory*

An English and Spanish instructor from D'Angon Academy for Language Acquisition believes that personality is not the shifting source of bilinguals. They state that this is because a personality shift would be too unhealthy and massive. All bilinguals would be diagnosed with a multiple personality disorder, in other words, dissociative identity disorder (DID) (D'Angon Academy for Language Acquisition, 2013). Cleveland Clinic (2016) mentions that people with DID experience depression, amnesia, and even hallucinations from the significant shift in personality. Bilinguals are not reporting any of these symptoms, and they instead claim that the change is indeliberate. Thus, the attitude shifting would be a somewhat more appropriate change in bilinguals.

Additionally, Sylvia Chen and Michael Bond (2010) used the Big Five Inventory personality test and observed the shift in personality, to strengthen the attitude theory. In this research, 76 Chinese-English compound bilinguals who study at Hong Kong Univer-

sity were to assess their personality from a scale of 1 to 5. According to the Big Five Inventory personality test, the individuals received results of their personality in the five aspects: openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. The personality tests were conducted in both languages, Cantonese and English, with some terms open in between. Surprisingly, the results showed a mere difference of 0.124 in the criteria (Chen & Bond, 2010). The insignificance of this difference of 0.124 was confirmed through research conducted by Robinson, who performed an identical test on monolinguals (Grosjean, 2020). Monolinguals were to assess themselves twice through the Big Five Inventory personality test. The results showed that the mean difference between the two tests on monolinguals was 0.45, approximately four times larger than the counterpart of bilinguals' test results. These two experiments, conducted by Chen and Bond, and Robinson, proved that the personality shift in bilinguals is merely nothing. Researchers conclude that the shift in bilinguals experience is a change in attitude, due to the switch itself being insignificant.

#### *Comparison of Two Theories*

Overall, the previous argument claims that personality change occurs in bilinguals, while the current argument claims the attitude to be the changing source. Researchers who believe the prior claim suggest that language (grammar and syntax), the language-acquiring age, and fluency are the factors of the shift in personality. Conversely, researchers state that a personality shift is too significant, and the Big Five Inventory

test results justify the shifting source as the change in attitude. The personality theory appears less compelling compared to the attitude theory. Nevertheless, the evidence for the attitude theory merely proved the shifting source not to be personality; there were no reasons for the source to be the attitude. However, despite the lack of clarification, I believe that the shift in bilinguals is the attitude and not the personality. The personality theory is based on thought-evidence, and the attitude theory seems to hold strong evidence that denies the possibility of the personality theory. For investigating the actual shifting source in bilinguals, I conducted an online survey. The hypothesis is that “bilinguals shift is a change in attitude.” Through primary research, the survey will verify which the actual shifting source is, personality or attitude. Additionally, if the hypothesis is correct, it will support the attitude theory with substantial evidence. In the following section, the methodology for my primary research conducted among 32 compound bilinguals will be described and analyzed.

## **Methodology**

### *Guiding Question*

As mentioned in the literature review, both claims arguing for the shifting source to be either attitude or personality show incompetent aspects and compelling sides to their arguments. To figure out the real shifting source in bilinguals, I conducted an online survey for bilinguals. The study constituted two questions based on the guiding question: Which is the real shifting source in bilinguals, either personality or attitude?

### *Settings and Participants*

As mentioned earlier, all participants in this research were students at a small liberal arts university in Northern Japan. All of the participants are bilingual, mainly compound bilinguals. The majority of compound bilinguals were Japanese-English bilinguals, while some spoke Spanish or Portuguese instead of Japanese. The online survey ensured the participants' shift by asking whether they genuinely recognized their change. With this question, the participants who answered “yes” were the ones answering the next section. This procedure narrowed down the participants to 22 from 32.

### *Data Collection*

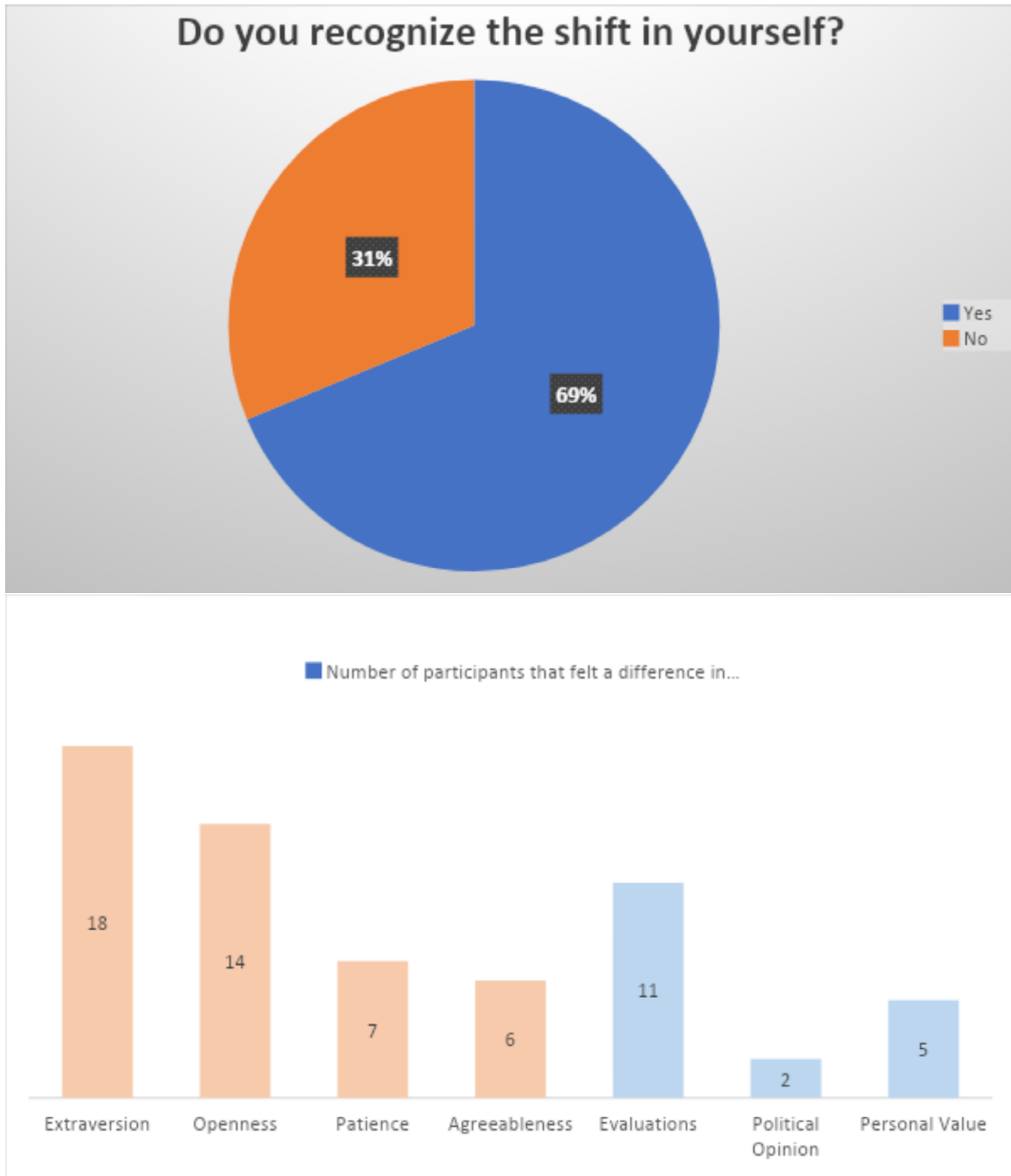
The survey was available for one week, from the 2nd of July to the 9th of July, 2020. There were two sections to this survey; the first section was a yes or no question, and the second was a multiple-choice section. The first section would narrow down the type of bilinguals, specifically to bilinguals who experience the shift. In this section, the participants were narrowed down to 22 participants from 33. From the 22 participants, the survey inspected the shifting source by setting a multiple-choice question. This online survey, which enabled a large sample to be collected, was conducted entirely anonymously and described what sort of shift the bilinguals genuinely experience.

### *Findings: Higher Accuracy of the Participants*

The first section of the survey questioned whether the participant recognized the shift in themselves. This is due to the

inaccuracy of the term “compound bilinguals.” With this question, the compound bilinguals who experience the shift were narrowed down. Throughout the inves-

tigation, 22 respondents answered to notice their change in each language; this amounts to 69% of the total respondents.



*Finding the Actual Shifting Source*

The second section was only answered by the participants who answered “yes” to the previous question: in other words, only

the compound bilinguals that recognized the shift in themselves continued in the survey. This second section was a multiple-choice question. The 22 participants were to choose

whichever situation in which they experience the change in switching in language. Seven choices were available, out of which four options were traits of personality: extraversion, openness, patience, and agreeableness. The other three options, change in evaluations, political opinion, and value, were characteristics of attitude. Amongst all of the seven changes, extraversion transitions were observed the most, recording 18 bilinguals. Secondly, the shift in openness was discovered with 14 people experiencing it. The third frequent response was the shift in their evaluations; 11 bilinguals claimed to experience this shift. The next two traits were both personality aspects, the change in patience, and agreeableness. However, these two aspects had fewer responses of seven and six people respectively.

In short, the top five trait shifts that were observed were mostly changes in personality traits; other than the difference in evaluation, all four aspects were personality changes. Hence, many responses suggest that the shift amongst compound bilinguals is a shift in personality, rather than attitude.

#### *A Third Possibility*

Also, to this survey, there was another section that showed interesting results. Despite the survey being fond of the personality shift theory, some comments from the respondents indicated a different possible result. Some respondents' answers in the free comment section included some words like "My values do not change," which denied the possibility of attitude shifting. Moreover, the comments displayed how the majority of bilinguals believe that the shift

is in personality. Many comments, such as "I feel there is a difference in my personality," were observed throughout the survey. Hence, the additional comments, likewise the multiple-choice results, also suggested that the personality is the shifting source. However, some comments were mentioning a change in the "volume of their voice and the number of jokes." These shifting traits are considered as significant factors of neither personality nor attitude.

In the next section, this paper analyzes these responses further on what the shifting source is. The respondents' altering sources, such as their patience and extraversion, will be used to suggest whichever shift is occurring among bilinguals. At the same time, the additional comments that support neither theory will be discussed in detail.

### **Discussion**

#### *A Third New Source*

##### *Overview of the Discussion – A New Third Source*

Through the primary research on 32 bilinguals, the results described the personality theory to be valid. There is a more definite possibility for the personality theory to be correct than the attitude theory. The majority of bilinguals responded that the shifts were in aspects such as extraversion and openness. However, this result slightly contradicts the claims of the researchers. The researchers who believed in the attitude theory claimed that the personality theory could be denied because the shift in personality is too immense. Their claim is based on the concept of attitude being merely a part of the personality. In other words, if there

is a personality shift, there would also be a shift in attitude present. To be more concise, there is some shift in personality due to some source that is not an attitude shift.

For these reasons, the possibility of a different source, other than personality and attitude, cannot be denied. Thus, I would like to suggest a possible different, third new source that may be a candidate. This section examines the possible sources, analyzes and reflects them with the result of the primary research, and finally concludes by detecting a possible shifting source. This discussion section will mainly reassess the survey results, display the possible third shifting source, and finally come to decide the source by analyzing.

#### *What Could the Shifting Source Be? – Looking Back at the Results*

As defined, personality is composed of the “characteristic patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving” (American Psychological Association, 2019). It is an enormously complex part of human beings; Cherry (2019) also mentions that personality is composed of countless aspects. To be specific, the examples of such aspects are “consistency, psychological and physiological constructs, behavior, and expressions” (Cherry, 2019).

To determine the candidates for these aspects, I will reassess the respondents’ additional comments. First, the additional comments which mention the personality shifting are excluded for higher accuracy. As a result, the remaining comments mention traits that were neither a personality nor an attitude trait. The majority of these additional comments mention how the “volume

of voice,” “number of jokes,” and “amount of gestures” differ depending on the language.

With the definition and constructs of personality and the comments from respondents, the third new source is thought to be either behavior or emotion. Due to the comment traits being mainly striking characteristics, behavior, “an organism’s activities in response to external or internal stimuli,” was determined (American Psychological Association, 2019). Behavior is easily observed, and identifiable; an example of behavior would be a baby “crying” for 2 hours (Project IDEAL, n.d.). Next, emotion, the “complex reaction pattern,” was chosen because the individuals’ “expressed behavior” can become emotion (American Psychological Association, 2019). Massive and continuous expressions of a behavior can be considered an individual’s emotions; behavior can become an emotion. For instance, a baby crying for two hours may be “sad” because of neglect. Emotions are constituted of six basic emotions: happiness, sadness, fear, disgust, anger, and surprise (Cherry, 2020)

#### *Behavior or Emotion?*

Behavior could be a possible source responsible for the shift in bilinguals. Indeed, the “jokes” and “gestures” observed in bilinguals are traits of behaviors, and the “voice volume” is determinate on behavior as well; all traits are dependent on how much that behavior is expressed. Hence, the behavior may change when bilinguals change the language they use. Nevertheless, emotion may be a more reliable source than behavior because emotion directly causes behavior (Baumeister et al., n.d.). Researchers sug-

gest that emotion is a “causation” of behavior (Baumeister et al., n.d.). For instance, anger could cause one to fight, love might make one more active, and fear might cause an individual to scream and run. This theory is quite well-established in psychology; some researchers claim that behavior is the “proper function” of emotions (Baumeister et al., n.d.). If emotions are the cause of the behavior, the shifting source would not be behavior; the emotion that causes it should be assumed to be the shifting source.

According to Hiebler-Ragger et al. (2018), human emotions form personality; to be specific, the primary emotions form personality. There is a secure link between personality traits and primary emotions; such examples are extraversion and agreeableness being related to emotions such as “care” and “playfulness.” On the other hand, negative emotions like fear and sadness are tightly related to neuroticism (Hiebler-Ragger et al., 2018).

Bilinguals are said to experience priming, which “one stimulus influences” how people respond to a “subsequent stimulus,” when they change the language they use (Johnson: Do different languages confer different personalities? 2013). For instance, a bilingual may feel “closer” or “at-home” with one language they use, while the other language may prime the feelings of “school” or “work.” This emotion that primes with the secondary languages could be affecting the bilinguals, ultimately, slightly affecting the personality. Also, it was previously mentioned that bilinguals are thought to establish an individual emotional connection with each language. Grybach (2019) mentions that compound bi-

linguals establish “emotional connection” with each language, which makes them create “distinct personalities.” This mechanism of bilinguals and how the emotional connection with language create a “shift” in bilinguals.

Emotions are directly related to personality, moreover, is the source of causation of behavior. On the other hand, the behavior is merely considered as a degree of expression. In short, behavior cannot be the shifting source because emotions control behavior. Additionally, emotions are strongly related to personality; thus, the emotional connection with language is likely to be the source of bilinguals’ shifting. As we reflect this to the primary research results, the third source being emotion could be explained clearly.

#### *Summary – What is the Shifting Source?*

Overall, the shifting source in bilinguals cannot be precisely determined; however, the possible shifting source could be defined. Through primary research, the results showed that the personality was shifting. Nevertheless, due to the attitude having a mere shift, other sources that affect personality cannot be denied. When this possibility is considered, the suggested shifting source could be emotion. Emotions are directly related to personality and even formulate personality (Hiebler-Ragger et al., 2018).

Furthermore, emotional connections are believed to develop distinct characters for each language. Emotional priming is also considered a cause of bilinguals’ shift in the two languages (Johnson: Do different languages confer different personalities? 2013). Ultimately, it may be possible that the emotional shifting is causing the



personality of bilinguals to shift slightly.

### **Conclusion**

In summary, this paper looked into the shifting source of bilinguals, whether it is personality or attitude. The two major theories, the personality theory, and attitude theory, each provided abundant evidence despite the psychology field being unexplored. To figure out the shifting source in bilinguals, a primary research study was conducted among 32 bilinguals at a small liberal arts university in Japan. The result suggested that another third source that affected the personality shift was present. Due to the unexpected results, the author reassessed the results. The construct of personality and additional shifting-symptoms in bilinguals were analyzed, and the researcher concluded the possibility of the third source, emotion. In short, the possible shifting was emotion due to the emotional priming and connection that bilinguals had.

Finally, I would like to mention that this finding of the bilinguals' shifts being emotion is a significant discovery from cur-

rent research. Considering the symptoms of bilinguals during the shift, it is somewhat "exaggerating" to say that there is a change in personality. Hence, although the personality shift is observed, it could be said that the emotional connection and priming bilinguals hold towards each language affects their personality in the end.

Further research on this topic could provide bilinguals with more assurance of what the source is. With a more in-depth analysis of each construct of personality, analysis of these constructs and symptoms in bilinguals, and the reevaluation of bilinguals' observations, there could be more accurate results of the shifting source. Today, where there is a limited amount of knowledge of the human brain, it is difficult to conclude whether the shift is emotional. However, this paper has proved that there are new possible aspects that could be explored in bilinguals; further research may look into the emotional connection and priming that bilinguals have. The comparison with monolinguals and the wonders of psychology could take us to another more profound discovery in bilinguals.

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## **Appendix A**

### *Results of the survey*

1. Do you recognize the shift in yourself? (It can be either pointed out by others or autonomously perceived) (32 responses)
  - People who feel the shift – 22 people
  - People who do not feel the shift 10 people
2. What sort of shift do you recognize out of these situations below? Please try and ask yourself, “When I change the language I use, do I feel...” (Out of 22 people)
  - Difference in extraversion – 18 people
  - Difference in the openness – 14 people
  - Difference in the evaluation of something/someone – 11 people
  - A difference in my political opinion – 2 people
  - A difference in patience – 7 people
  - A difference in my personal values – 5 people
  - A difference in the agreeableness – 6 people
3. If you have any other additional comments, please write it here.

#### *Respondent 1*

A lot of people say that they can be more open and aggressive in English than Japanese, but in my personal view, because of the nature of Japanese, I sound more ag-

gressive as a person when I am speaking Japanese. Because generally Japanese is a fuzzy and indirect language, when I try to communicate the same things or express myself in the same way in Japanese I appear more aggressive, both to myself and to others. On the other hand, when I speak English I appear more soft spoke and understanding because the nature of English has a stronger tolerance to direct or self expressive language. This may seem counterintuitive but I think it makes sense.

*Respondent 2*

Additionally, the volume and note of my voice changes, and my emotions become easily sent on my words. My speaking speed and the amount of gestures change as well. However, in my case, the evaluations and values generally do not change.

*Respondent 3*

I speak English and Japanese.

*Respondent 4*

I become more aggressive and straightforward in Spanish.

*Respondent 5*

My values do not vary depending on the language. However, the voice volume, tone, use of manners, and the amount of jokes differ.

*Respondent 6*

My voice changes.

*Respondent 7*

I speak three languages and in each language I feel there is a difference in my personality.

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# The EU's Initiatives in Development Cooperation in Sub- Saharan Africa: From the Perspective of Dependency Theory

Yuuka Shirahase

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## Author's Note

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## Abstract

This paper aims to investigate the EU’s foreign policy towards Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) that is adopted under the name of “development cooperation” and clarify how it exemplifies the dependent structure between the EU and SSA. As a theoretical framework, the dependency theory is addressed in order to analyze how the theory corresponds to the EU’s development initiatives in SSA. The paper begins with explaining the concept of development cooperation and the dependency theory. Then, it analyzes the EU’s development policies in SSA, focusing on two policy fields: financial aid and trade, and examines how the EU’s initiatives sustain a dependent structure. In the last part, it critically discusses EU-SSA relations through the theoretical framework. The paper raises the alarm at today’s “development cooperation”, which gives a critical insight into the approach to the development challenges in SSA as well as other developing regions.

## Introduction

Development cooperation is one of the most significant concerns for the international community today. It is necessary to support some parts of the world that need special assistance to achieve commonly held ambitions in the world such as peace, stability, and sustainable development. Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), which consists of 48 countries with diversity, is considered the least developed region in the world. The European Union (EU) is one of the influential actors who provides multidimensional supports to SSA because of its strong and strategic connections with the region.

Despite a considerable amount of aid and support from outside, why are a lot of developing countries, especially SSA, still suffering from poverty, inequality, and other pervasive problems associated with underdevelopment? Moyo (2010), in her book “Dead Aid”, insists that the aid is far from promoting growth but makes developing countries poorer and delays their economic progress. Akomolafe (1994) and many dependency theorists, moreover, question the European approach to SSA, arguing that European countries maintain Africa’s underdevelopment through their egoistic policies and exploitation, which make developing countries dependent on the developed countries.

As described above, there is a continuing debate on the contradictions in international development cooperation. While some researchers assume that the underdevelopment of SSA is attributed to internal problems such as poor leadership, others argue that external influences such as the structure of global economy and development aid lay

at the basis of the problems. Under the controversial circumstances of development cooperation, a question will arise: How can the dependent structure be observed in the EU’s initiatives for development cooperation in SSA? This paper will explore an answer to this question by looking at the EU’s development policies in the SSA. The research leads to better understandings of the external factors that constrain development in developing countries, as well as clarifies the root causes of a huge development gap among countries. It adopts the dependency theory in analyzing the implication of “development cooperation” on the hypothesis that EU’s initiatives in the two policy fields: aid and trade sustain the dichotomy between developed and developing countries and reproduce the dependent structure.

First, the paper explains the conceptualizations and theoretical framework, dependency theory. Then, it analyzes two policy fields of the EU and its influences on SSA by examining how the dependent structure can be viewed in the policies. Lastly, the paper critically discusses EU-SSA relations on development cooperation.

### **Conceptualization —Development and Development Cooperation—**

Although there is no universal definition of the multidimensional concept of development, this paper considers the broader conceptualization of development. It defines development as “multidimensional undertaking to achieve a higher quality of life for all people”, referring to the UN Agenda for Development (UN, 1997). Regarding the multidimensional meaning of development,

it is worth remarking that Marxian notion of development is conceived as “the ability of the people to exploit, manipulate and control their physical environment, as well as themselves and other individuals outside of themselves ... for the betterment of everybody and that of humanity” (Jeffry, 2013, pp. 117-118). Sumner (2008) also states, “development as a dominant discourse of Western modernity”, suggesting that development has been a mechanism for the production and management of the Third World through the imposition of the Western ethnocentric notion of development (p.14).

The paper uses the term, “development cooperation” to refer to any measure designed specifically in favor of developing countries’ development, including resource transferring, international trade, or climate negotiations focused on support for developing countries.

### **Dependency Theory**

#### **—Theoretical Framework—**

Dependency theory had developed in the late 1950s as a critical reaction to the conventional approaches to development, modernization theory. Modernization theorists conceive underdevelopment as something that has an internal origin (Jeffry, 2013). They argue that developing countries could also develop if they follow the phases that developed societies went through (Turhan, 2018). In response to this theory, dependency theory argues that the process of development in the global economic periphery is conditioned by growth in the core countries (Vernengo, 2009). In other words, the underdevelopment in developing countries is the result of the in-

corporation of the Third World into the capitalist world system dominated by the Western industrialized countries (Jeffry, 2013).

Dependency Theory considers the reason for underdevelopment is exploitation (Turhan, 2018). The underdeveloped countries produce primary commodities, which are exploited by the developed capitalist countries. In contrast, those developed countries produce manufactured goods for themselves as well as the periphery countries (Baran, 1957, p. 142, as cited in Turhan, 2018). Since the primary goods are low-priced compared to manufactured goods, core countries deprive the periphery countries of a chance to build up an accumulation of capital, forcing them to remain underdeveloped (Baran, 1957, pp. 142–143, cited from Turhan, 2018). Moreover, the promotion of an export-oriented plantation system in large parts of the peripheral world accelerates the need for imports of other luxury manufactured goods, fling the peripheral countries into the dependent structure (Vernengo, 2009). Besides, there is also a structuralists’ point of view, which states that the international division of labor formulates the world structure in which industrialized countries always benefit from international trade, whereas it always works against underdeveloped countries (Turhan, 2018).

In short, there are three common characteristics that most dependency theories share: international system as a core-periphery<sup>1</sup> dichotomy, emphasis on external forces of developed countries to developing countries, unequal relations between those two sets of states (Jeffry, 2013). This structure exists in various forms, including economics, media control, politics, fi-

<sup>1</sup> Core countries usually include so-called developed countries such as Western Europe, the United States, and East Asia. Peripheral countries refer to so-called developing countries, and usually include regions such as Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

nance, culture, and other dimensions of human development. The dependent structure can be observed in reality with the following characteristics: when the politics over-rely on the donor countries via financial support; when the local markets in the dependent states over-rely on the import and export from the dominant countries; when the unequal relationship is generated in diplomacy as well as in negotiation processes.

### **EU's Development Cooperation in SSA**

This chapter discusses two main policy fields of the EU in SSA: financial aid and trade. These policies are implemented under the name of “development cooperation” that usually aims at promoting development of SSA. Indeed, the policies seem to be brilliant efforts to deal with the development challenges in SSA. However, the policies can actually maintain and reproduce the dependent structure, and can also reflect the EU's multiple interests.

#### *Financial Aid – How the Aid Reproduces Further Dependency –*

Aid refers to the financial transactions either in the form of loans or grants that are made or guaranteed by one government to another (Ukpong UA, 2017). It is a form of assistance directly from a government (bilateral aid) or indirectly from financial institutions or multilateral assistance agencies such as World Bank (multilateral aid) to other countries in need (Ukpong UA, 2017). Foreign aid can be defined as any transfer of public funds that meets two criteria: its objective is noncommercial, and the interest rate and repayment period for borrowed countries

are softer than commercial terms (Ukpong UA, 2017). Since the establishment of aid in the Breton Wood system in 1944, foreign aid has been significant development cooperation as well as the instruments of foreign policy by advanced societies to strengthen their connections with developing countries.

The EU and its Member States are the largest donors to the African continent. Approximately 20 billion euros of development aid is directed to Africa in a year, and around 20% of the aid is managed by the European Commission (The Africa-EU Partnership, n.d.). Among multilateral donors to Africa, EU Institutions are the second-largest donor after the World Bank. The amount of aid is about 27 times larger than UNDP and IMF between 2015-2017 (OECD, 2019). Moreover, looking at the top ten bilateral donors by share of aid to Africa, nine out of ten are EU countries (OECD, 2019). In 1957, the first European Development Fund (EDF) was established. EDF is the main instrument for providing EU aid for development cooperation to the former colonies, such as ACP<sup>2</sup> countries (Sicurelli, 2010). The current EDF, which runs from 2014 to 2020, includes 30.5 billion euros in total (Venturi, 2016).

Although the massive influxes of aid can be an excellent support for the development of SSA to a certain extent, those funds may sustain or even reproduce the dependent relationships by making SSA ensnared into debt distress, aggravating the corruption, and taking control of the region through conditionalities.

#### *Aid as a Debt Distress*

Although the interest rate of develop-

<sup>2</sup> The ACP is a grouping of African, Caribbean and Pacific states with which the EU has a special relationship. ACP includes 79 countries (48 Sub-Saharan African countries, 16 Caribbean countries, 15 Pacific countries).



ment aid is set to be extremely low, the enormous amount of the fund that SSA receives can lead to substantial debt obligations. One in three SSA countries are said to be in debt distress, and about 30 African countries spent more on debt payment than they did on public healthcare in 2019 (Debuysere, 2020). Akomolafe (1994) claims that year after year, Africa is sending more than \$10 billion to Euro-American banks and governments for the payment of interest on the aid. Many African countries use more than half of their whole budget for debt servicing, instead of combating poverty, famine, and many other urgent issues in the region (Akomolafe, 1994). In this way, the effects of debt burdens in SSA go beyond the financial hardship and result in a humanitarian crisis, maintaining the region's dependence on further assistance from developed regions.

#### *Aid as a Promotion of Corruption*

A large amount of aid can be one of the factors to further the corruption that has already been widespread in SSA, which would enlarge inequality within the country and hinders economic growth in the region. Lyons (2014) argues that foreign aid means the promotion of corruption and dependence. As proof, Lyons (2014) points out the apparent correlation between the increase in the amount of aid and the corresponding increase in corruption in Africa. Moyo (2010) gives a deep insight into the aid to SSA: Receiving a long-term and low-interest loan or donation means, for African countries, retaining a lot of natural resources. In other words, it promotes corruption and dispute, and undermines national savings as well as invest-

ments for business activities (Moyo, 2010). There was a case that the former president of Zaire (the former Democratic Republic of the Congo) was estimated to misappropriate the \$5 billion, which is comparable to the total external debt of the country, only for private purposes (Moyo, 2010). Donors have also recognized that financial transfer to SSA may often result in an inefficient outcome and reproduce dependency; thus, they have been encouraging good governance and economic management in the form of conditionality, which will be explained below.

#### *Aid as Way to Control SSA – Conditionality –*

Conditionality is the use of conditions usually imposed by international financial institutions or donor countries when they provide financial aid, including loan or debt cancellation. The conditions are intended to improve political and economic environments in the recipient countries. For example, privatization, devaluation of the national currency, democratization, and liberalization are often included in the conditionality (Ukpong UA, 2017). The EU's development aid is often subjected to conditionality such as democracy, human rights, good governance, and the rule of law (Zamfir, 2017).

In particular, the EU has become an essential partner of Africa in election observation to promote democracy, and most African countries have received EU missions (Zamfir, 2017). Nevertheless, whether these tools of democracy assistance lead to political reform or good governance remains questionable. Pemunta (2018) argues that EU's election assistance and observation in Cameroon have been on an ad hoc basis without

providing an institutional framework that regulates elections. Thus, there is no sustainable democratic transition, but Cameroonian authorities held multiparty elections temporarily to evade the Western interventions (Pemunta, 2018). This situation may stem from the EU's over-emphasis on elections and democratization based on Eurocentric views.

Pemunta (2018) further states that conditionality on democracy can be viewed as the EU's tool for interventions to African states to pursue its security or economic interests, where the effectiveness of aid conditionality is compromised. Besides, economic conditionality, such as trade liberalization, can also embody the asymmetric relationships between developed regions and developing regions. This may reflect the donor's intention to obtain easy access to the market to SSA, which would lead to the exploitation of resources. Hence, conditionalities associated with aid lead to maintaining SSA under the substantial influence of the EU, making it difficult for SSA to break off the dependent relations.

To sum up, the dependent structure seems to be sustained through financial aid in three forms, as described above. There is the fact that 85% of the financial aid was used for unproductive purposes, which was not intended (Moyo, 2010). Although international donors had recognized the risk of aid diversion already in the 1940s, an enormous amount of financial support has been continuously provided, even though many countries infringe on conditionality (Moyo, 2010). This suggests that the outcome of the aid and conditionality are seldom regarded as important in reality (Moyo, 2010). As Lyons

(2014) states, aid needs to be changed into the form of trade, and the EU needs to build the equal partnerships with SSA to encourage its independent development by strengthening its economy through international trade. Yet, does the EU-SSA trade truly and equitably promote SSA's economic development?

#### *Trade – How the Trade Policies Maintain Dependent Structure –*

European trade policy towards developing countries can be originated in the late 1950s as the framework of the relationship between the EC and former colonies of European countries (Sicurelli, 2010). Since then, the EU's economic ties with African countries have gone through several changes, along with the regulations of GATT or WTO. The EU offers various schemes to SSA, mainly under the EU-ACP relations, and most of the policies put "development cooperation" as a top priority and objective. Indeed, promoting free-trade and eliminating tariffs seem to be the ideal initiatives to support economic development and smooth integration of SSA into the world economy. Nevertheless, three overlapping schemes explained below include controversial aspects, which leads to sustaining the dependent structure, often characterized as neo-colonialism. The trade policies and agreements also embody the EU's self-interest.

#### *Generalized Scheme of Preferences (GSP)*

One of the dominant and contradictory trade policies of the EU is the Generalized Scheme of Preferences (GSP). GSP is based on the principle of non-reciprocity and designed to provide the developing countries

with low-tariff or tariff-free access to the European market (Sicurelli, 2010). The revision of the GATT provided this norm in 1979, and its member states are given a free hand to draft a preference scheme for developing countries and decide countries and products that are eligible for that scheme (Sicurelli, 2010). Although the name of the policy includes ‘general’, it remained quite ‘selective’ in both country and product coverage (Holland, 2002, p. 145, as cited in Sicurelli, 2010). To be specific, it was not implemented to all developing countries; and it was focused only on trade in the manufacture and industrial goods that most of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) cannot efficiently produce. In addition, it did not cover all products in the agricultural sector, which is the most sensitive sector for the economies of developing countries.

In 2006, the revision of GSP, called GSP plus, entered into force. It provides additional market access to developing countries under the condition that they implement or show the progress of ratifying 27 international conventions related to human rights, environmental protection, and good governance (Sicurelli, 2010). This may indeed give a great incentive to LDCs to incorporate a list of conventions required to receive the special treatments for exporting the products. Yet, once a country is granted GSP plus, the EU is eligible to monitor the beneficiary country to ensure that the country abides by its commitments. This monitoring is liable to result in de facto political intervention in the country, enabling the European countries to control the region for their benefit.

### *Everything but Arms (EBA)*

Everything but Arms (EBA) is a new system of tariffs established in 2001 as a part of the EU’s GSP. The scheme provides the LDCs with full duty-free and quota-free access to the EU market for all products except for arms (Sicurelli, 2010). This trading scheme aims at encouraging the development of LDCs. However, contradictorily, EBA had been temporarily excluded three goods from duty-free access into the EU market: bananas, sugar, and rice (Sicurelli, 2010). Since the establishment of EBA in March 2001, duty-free access to bananas, sugar, and rice was postponed until January 2006, July 2009, and September 2009, respectively (Sicurelli, 2010). Those three products are essential for SSA, where they enjoy the advantage, but the removal of tariffs proceeds slowly and gradually or not at all (Sicurelli, 2010). In contrast, the EU pushed for the rapid removal of tariffs and non-tariff barriers in manufactured goods, where it enjoys the most advantage.

Non-tariff barriers exist under the ambiguous WTO laws, which include, Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards (SPS)<sup>3</sup>, Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT)<sup>4</sup>, and Rules of Origin Agreement<sup>5</sup> (Sicurelli, 2010). It remains unclear that to which extent the governments apply those regulations without unnecessary barriers to trade. Thus, criticisms arose among developing countries because they tend to impose lower standards for imports compared to developed societies (Sicurelli, 2010). The EU also adopts strict rules of origin and bureaucratic hurdles in the regulations of EBA, which further limit the exports of LDCs (Brown, 2005, as cited in Sicurelli, 2010). Moreover, even if the EU

<sup>3</sup> SPS is a right to adopt the standards to protect food safety as long as they do not constitute unnecessary barriers to trade.

<sup>4</sup> TBT is technical regulations and procedures to guarantee if the requirements in technical standards are fulfilled such as labeling regulations.

<sup>5</sup> Rules of Origin Agreement (1994) provides the criteria to define where the product was made.

does not impose those barriers, it spends 58 billion euros per year to subsidize European agricultural producers (Sepos, 2013). Under the circumstances, ACP countries' products cannot compete with European ones, resulting in a situation where the EU exports back surplus agricultural products originated in SSA, which reproduces SSA's trade deficit as well as undermines its local production.

Sepos (2013) argues that this trade relationship can be regarded as 'exploitation' due to the extensive use of tariffs and subsidies by the EU in its agricultural sector to eradicate the only remaining competitive advantage, namely cheap agricultural products, that developing countries have over EU producers. On the other hand, from the EU's perspective, a lot of lobbies who don't want to increase the import of agricultural products from SSA make it difficult to change its trade policies. Even among EU institutions, there are differing views on market access and development cooperation, which leads to its internal inconsistency (Sicurelli, 2010).

#### *Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) and Trade Negotiations*

The EPAs have been one of the most controversial issues in the EU-SSA relations of the 2000s. Sicurell (2010) states that while African regional organizations and governments express supportive attitudes for the EU's attempt to integrate African economies in the global economy, African leaders' feedbacks to specific aspects of the EPAs have been cautious and skeptical. Africa has been insisting that EPAs should not undermine the process of economic integration in Africa. Yet, it is assumed that under

the reciprocal trade under EPAs, intra-Africa trade will be reduced by about 16%; instead, the imports from the EU will take the place of intra-regional exports (AU, 2007, as cited in Sicurelli, 2010). Such reduction of intra-Africa trade will not promote and strengthen economic integration in Africa; rather, it reinforces the asymmetric trade structures. Sepos (2013) explains SSA must implement policies to expand exports and break off the monoculture economy to sustain economic growth. Accordingly, trade preference can play an important role, but most EPAs do not consider the nature and structure of African domestic economies and adopting Eurocentric policies instead.

The asymmetric relationships between the EU and SSA can also be seen in the negotiation process of EPAs. When it comes to trade with the EU, SSA countries are under conditions of dependence and asymmetry, far from autonomy or democracy (Sepos, 2013). In the process of EPA negotiations, ACP officials indicate that the EU forced the African states to negotiate with smaller regional groups so that the EU would dominate the negotiations. The EU, moreover, sets the agenda and controls the content as well as the pace of the official talks, including EPAs (Sepos, 2013). Furthermore, since SSA countries are in a weak standpoint in the governance of global financial institutions, such as the IMF or WTO, the policies and opinions of the EU and the US dominate the rules of these institutions (Sepos, 2013). These asymmetric relations in the negotiations can be the driving reason that SSA countries are compelled to agree and sign the unequal agreements.

To sum up, the unilateral initiatives of

the EU on trade policies and agreements with SSA would never be said to be practical or helpful for the development of SSA. Even though the Cotonou Agreement<sup>6</sup> (2000) contains normative objectives and declarations, such as “equality of the partners and ownership of the development strategies (Art. 2)” and “dialogue shall be central to their partnership and cooperation relations (Art. 2)” (Sepos, 2013), it is far from achieving or even trying to achieve those goals. Thus, the EU’s trade policies can maintain a core-periphery structure by making SSA economically dependent on the EU. Besides, the EU’s dominant approach to EPAs and other trade negotiations implies that the beneficiary countries have almost no power to negotiate but are coerced to ratify the agreements.

### **Findings and Discussions**

#### **– Intentional and Inescapable Structure of Dependency –**

The dependent structure can indeed be identified in both policy fields: financial aid and trade, which leads to maintaining the asymmetric relations between the EU and SSA. However, the factors that reproduce and construct the structure are different in characteristics.

Regarding the financial aid, the funds from the EU can reproduce the dependent structure in three ways: imposing debt burdens, promoting corruption, and adopting ineffective conditionalities. It is revealed that aid can lead to the underdevelopment of SSA. One of the factors of this contradiction in development aid can be attributed to the donors’ egocentric approach to the aid receivers, including the EU’s self-interest to

maintain close connections with former colonies and to keep them under the sphere of its influence. There is the fact that the independence of African countries was achieved with substantial financial help from former empires. Therefore, aid is one of the tools for many European countries to mix up their altruism with egoism based on strategic geopolitical control (Moyo, 2010). However, there might also be another factor: A firm belief and misunderstanding of the donors that the aid will always help development. Moyo (2010) points out that many developed countries believe aid is the first priority to support Africa’s development based on the successful experience of the Marshall Plan in Europe, even though the situation is completely different in SSA; while the European countries had fundamental political systems and financial infrastructure after WW II, these are not the case in SSA. Cibian (2011), moreover, argues that development failures in SSA are inherently related to the donors’ misunderstanding of the receiving countries. The EU fails to understand SSA governance and social realities, leading to a mismatch between aid policies and local social realities (Cibian, 2011). Hence, the aid reinforces SSA’s dependency by continuing financial transactions either for pursuing donors’ interests or for believing in a myth of aid, which are gathered to undermine the effectiveness of financial aid. Besides, aid can indeed benefit some countries with good governance, or ironically a handful of African elites, but not the majority citizens. Considering this fact, African leaders might also be contributing to aid’s ineffectiveness. Thus, these factors of dependent structure in

<sup>6</sup> The Cotonou agreement is the framework for EU relations with ACP countries adopted in 2000. It is the most comprehensive partnership agreement with 79 countries, including 48 from SSA.

financial aid suggest that the actors, such as the EU and SSA leaders, can play a crucial role in combating the dependent structure.

On the other hand, regarding the trade policies embodied in GSP, EBA, and EPA negotiations, the dependent structure can be perceived in the initiatives of the EU in SSA. Yet, the characteristics of such structure are partly different from those of the aid. In the EU-SSA trade relations, there is an asymmetric exchange of products, whereby the EU provides the SSA with manufactured goods in exchange for primary commodities such as crops and natural resources. These trade relations lead to exploitation and continuously undermine SSA's local economies. The factors that create this dependent economic structure can be twofold: The strategic policy implementations of the EU to pursue its economic benefits and an inevitable economic structure as a result of global capitalism. The former perspective is similar to that of aid regarding the EU's self-interest. It can be exemplified in the trade distortions by the EU through unfair regulations, including tariffs, quotas, discriminatory transportation, subsidies, and asymmetric negotiations. The essential features of this economic structure are its link to the structure during colonialism. Considering the historical background of the strategic policy implementations by the EU, this economically dependent structure might be embedded in the EU-SSA relations much longer and more profoundly than the aid. On the other hand, the latter perspective is based on the structuralist approach in the dependency theory, in which the unequal exchange of products explained above is attributed to the international division of labor under the ex-

panding capitalism. In other words, the dependent structure created through trade is an inevitable and unavoidable consequence of the expansion of global capitalism. For instance, the self-interested policies of the EU can partly be unavoidable because the EU also needs to develop its economy by maximizing benefits. It might appear to be inconsistent with the former viewpoint of the EU's self-interest, but both factors can contribute to the construction of the dependent structure.

To conclude, the dependent structure is reproduced in different ways from both policy fields. The continuous asymmetric structure and the EU's self-interest can be conceived in both policy fields, whereas the characteristics in the factors that have formed the dependence are different. The analysis in two policy fields revealed that the dependent structure comprises two aspects; one is that the EU intentionally, for its self-interest, or mistakenly creates the structure; another is that the global capitalism unavoidably forms and sustains the structure. Both intentional and inevitable characteristics of this dependent structure, thereby, make it extremely difficult for SSA to escape from the dependency.

Concerning the theoretical framework, the dependency theory corresponds to the EU's foreign policies towards SSA to a great extent. As discussed above, SSA is financially and economically over-relying on support from the EU, and the region is also placed in unequal relations with the EU. These characteristics apply to the significant elements of the dependency theory (See Chapter 3). In a contradictory manner, the initiatives of the EU to develop SSA actually under-

mine its growth and sustain the dependent structure. "Development cooperation" is not and must not be seen as a benevolent, highly moral, and ethical standard in its dealings with the developing world; rather, it is necessary to be considered more as business-like activities regarding the intentions behind them. It can be the development cooperation itself that hinders the development of SSA and other developing countries.

### **Conclusion**

The paper discussed the EU's initiatives in development cooperation in SSA by examining two policy fields: financial aid and trade, in order to identify how the dependent structure can be viewed in the policies. The research revealed that both policy fields of the EU reproduce the dependent structure in different ways, which leads to maintaining the core-periphery dichotomy and the underdevelopment of SSA. Thus, EU-SSA relations can significantly correspond to the dependency theory. This implies that a considerable development gap among states and underdevelopment in certain regions in the world may also be attributed to the dependent structure reproduced by the dominant countries.

Since the dependent structure is creat-

ed both intentionally by the EU's interests and inevitably by global capitalism, it is difficult to break off the asymmetric relations of "development cooperation". Therefore, a strong international norm that imposes external pressures to alter the fundamental structure may be necessary. A significant milestone in successful development cooperation would be a shared understanding of the international community that halting unnecessary development assistance can also be a form of practical development cooperation. Besides, the noteworthy challenge for the international community would be to find a new form of global capitalism, where developing countries can equally harmonize with other advanced countries.

The paper includes several limitations in source selection and a range of the research. Since it is secondary research, it cannot reach the real intentions of the actors. The academic articles and books might be biased and comprises some extreme opinions, though the paper uses the source from both European and African authors. Also, the research focus was limited to two policy fields, which might not be adequate. Thus, for future research, the other policy fields such as security, environmental negotiations, and immigration issues need to be considered.

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# Is Future Health in Air?

## The Association between Ambient Air Pollution and Low Birth Weight in India

Miri Taniyama

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### Author's Note

**Miri Taniyama** wrote this paper for her Global Business capstone seminar. She has been interested in public health in developing countries since she was younger, which made her decide to write about it for her seminar paper. She hopes that reading this paper will generate interest and awareness of public health or lives in developing countries.

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### Introduction

The third goal of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which deal with "health problems including maternal and newborn health issues" (Aminu, n.d.), is to "ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages" (United Nations [UN], n.d.). One of goal's targets is to reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from air, water, and soil pollutions (UN, n.d.). According to the World Health Organization (n.d.), every year, air pollution kills an estimated seven million people worldwide. The negative effect of air pollution on health cannot be ignored, especially for infants, the most vulnerable group. Thus, numerous researchers have investigated the adverse relationship between prenatal exposure to ambient air pollution and birth outcome around the world. Wang et al.

(1997), Lee et al. (2007), and Wu et al. (2018) found that exposure to pollutants during the third trimester of pregnancy is an important factor contributing to low birth weight.

India is one of the most polluted countries in the world. Chainey (2015) reported that 13 of the 20 most polluted cities in the world were in India in 2014, with the Indian cities of Delhi, Patna, Gwalior, and Rajpur ranking as the top four in the ranking by World Health Organization (WHO). It ranked approximately 1600 cities in 91 countries according to their concentrations of Particulate Matter 2.5 ( $PM_{2.5}$ ) and Particulate Matter 10 ( $PM_{10}$ ), referring to particles less than 2.5 and 10 micrometers in diameter, respectively (Chainey, 2015).

Despite India's severe air pollution, only a few papers have investigated the association between ambient air pollution and birth

outcome, and the handful of existing papers have targeted only a limited number of pollutants. Thus, studying the effect of indoor air pollution in India seems warranted. This paper aims to reveal the association between prenatal exposure to ambient air pollution, including various pollutants, during the third trimester of pregnancy and infants' low birth weight (< 2500 g) throughout India.

### Literature Review

A considerable number of researchers have tried to reveal the association between air pollution and low birth weight as an adverse outcome. Sram et al. (2005) and Sun et al. (2016) conducted meta-analyses of previous papers related to this topic yet most of the included papers focused on only one or a few pollutants in a specific district or city. Especially in India, the author could not find any papers investigating a variety of toxicants and their effects country-wide.

The major pollutants included in analyses are fine particulate matters with a diameter of less than 2.5 microns ( $PM_{2.5}$ ) or less than 10 microns ( $PM_{10}$ ), nitrogen dioxide ( $NO_2$ ), and sulfur dioxide ( $SO_2$ ). The most targeted pollutant is  $PM_{2.5}$ , which can penetrate lung tissues and cause cardiovascular and respiratory diseases as well as lung cancer (WHO, 2018). Sun et al. (2016) found that birth weight would be reduced by 15.9 g (95% confidence interval [CI]: -26.8, -5.0) with an increase of 10  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  of  $PM_{2.5}$ . Wu et al. (2018) determined that cumulative maternal  $PM_{2.5}$  exposure during the 27th through 33th gestational weeks caused lower birth weight by an estimated 137 g. Another common pollutant included in research is  $PM_{10}$ ,

which also penetrates and sticks to the inside of the lungs (WHO, 2018). Balsa et al. (2016) studied the association between  $PM_{10}$  and low birth weight, although they did not find statistically significant results, nor did Huang et al. (2015). Two additional major toxicants are  $SO_2$  and  $NO_2$ , whose concentrations are often highest in urban areas in low- and middle-income countries, triggering negative health outcomes such as asthma and reduced lung functions (WHO, 2018). Wang et al. (1997) examined the relationship between maternal exposure to  $SO_2$  and birth weight in Beijing, China. They found an estimated 7.3 g in birth weight for every 100  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  increase in maternal exposure to  $SO_2$  during the third trimester (Wang et al., 1997). Lee et al. (2007) also found an adverse relationship between  $SO_2$  and  $NO_2$  exposure during the third trimester and low birth weight. Furthermore, Huang et al. (2015) indicated that a 10  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  increase of  $NO_2$  is associated with a 13.78 g (95% CI: -21.12, -6.43) reduction in birth weight.

Although these researchers have investigated ambient air pollution's influence on low birth weight, few such studies have been conducted in India. Moreover, the papers exploring the association between air pollution and low birth weight mostly consider indoor, not ambient, air pollution. Balakrishnan et al. (2018) investigated the effect of  $PM_{2.5}$  on low birth weight in the state of Tamil Nadu, India. Their results show that a 10  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  increase of maternal  $PM_{2.5}$  exposure was associated with a 4 g decrease in birth weight (Balakrishnan et al., 2018). However, these researchers only considered the effect of  $PM_{2.5}$  in a specific location,

meaning it might be difficult to generalize the finding to the entire country of India. Therefore, by combining a nationally representative household survey and a variety of pollution data across many cities in India, this paper will present more robust evidence regarding the association between ambient pollution and low birth weight.

## **Materials and Methodology**

### *Materials*

This study utilized the birth record data from India in 2015 and 2016, as published by the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), and air quality data originally published by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) of India.

The DHS Program (n.d.), funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development, has collected nationally representative data in more than 90 countries since 1984. The purpose of this program is to use the collected data for better policymaking, program, monitoring, evaluation, and additional efforts, and it disseminates the data for free to people who obtain appropriate permission from The DHS Program. The program conducts a survey every 4 to 6 years to monitor individual respondents' data so that researchers can accurately study long-term effects. Although the program offers a variety of survey types and topics, the author used the standard DHS Survey of India in 2015–16, which included 1,315,617 individual samples from all over the country. The data included in this analysis are females' birth records with the date of birth, the infant's birth weight, maternal age, and pregnancy duration.

Additional data used for this research

came from the daily Air Quality Data in India for 2015–2020, which the author accessed via kaggle.com and originally from the CPCB of India. Because the open data in CPCB do not match the designated time and area of The DHS Program data, the author utilized the data from kaggle.com (Vopani, n.d.), which included 12 air pollutants: PM<sub>2.5</sub>, PM10, nitric oxide (NO), NO<sub>2</sub>, any nitric x-oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>), ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>), carbon monoxide (CO), SO<sub>2</sub>, benzene, toluene, and xylene. The data on these pollutants came from 25 cities: Ahmedabad, Aizawl, Amaravati, Amritsar, Bengaluru, Bhopal, Brajrajnagar, Chandigarh, Chennai, Delhi, Ernakulam, Gurugram, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Jorapokhar, Kochi, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mumbai, Patna, Shillong, Talcher, Thiruvananthapuram, and Visakhapatnam.

### *Dataset*

In this research, the author combined The DHS Program data and the air quality data. After combining and organizing the data, 516 samples were identified in seven cities (i.e., Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Mumbai, and Patna) from 2015–2016. The following subsections discuss the characteristics of the sample.

### *Study Area*

The 516 samples came from Bengaluru (1.94%), Chennai (3.10%), Delhi (65.50%), Hyderabad (3.10%), Lucknow (23.96%), Mumbai (1.74%), and Patna (1.55%). These are relatively large cities. Delhi, the capital city, accounts for the largest proportion of the data.

### *Participants*

The study cohort included women who resided in the defined area and gave birth during 2015 and/or 2016. In India, some newborns are officially registered and others not. In this sample of 516 mothers, the birth weight of 270 infants came from official documents whereas the remaining 246 came from the mother's own memory.

### *Methodology*

Following the findings of Wang et al. (1997), Lee et al. (2007), and Wu et al. (2018), this paper focused on the effect of maternal exposure during the third trimester of pregnancy. To examine the relationship between exposure to air pollutants (i.e., PM<sub>2.5</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, NO, NO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, NH<sub>3</sub>, CO,

SO<sub>2</sub>, benzene, toluene, and xylene) during the third trimester and birth weight, the author constructed three exposure variables: mean level of the pollutant for 90 days before delivery, mean level of the pollutant for 60 days before delivery, and mean level of the pollutant for 30 days before delivery. This study considered the last 3 months of gestation as the third trimester of pregnancy because The DHS Program considers the gestation period based on the unit of months, not weeks. Therefore, the exact starting date of the third trimester is ambiguous.

This study used a linear regression model, in which the dependent variable is the infant's birth weight and the main independent variable is the exposure to a pollutant. Identification is expressed in Equation (1).

$$Y_{pi} = \beta_{pi} * X_{pi} + Sex + Age + PregDuration + \varepsilon \quad (1)$$

The main independent variable is a variable combining pollutant (p) and period (i)—namely, 90 days, 60 days, or 30 days before delivery. The control variables are the infant's gender (1 if male and 0 if female), mother's age at delivery, and pregnancy duration; these variables are included in the regression analysis. Because of the limitation of the data, the mother's age could not be separated into several categorical variables. Wang et al. (1997) used season as an attribute variable. However, India is too big, meaning each state has different seasonal features; thus, it was not feasible to include season variables in the model.

Table 1 presents the characteristics of the sample variables. The right column shows the number of observations for and the percentages of low birth weight and gender. For the birth weight, maternal age, and gestation age (noted as pregnancy duration in the model), the average and standard deviation (SD) are provided. The overall mean birth weight was 2,754.66 g (SD = 560.30), and the rate of low birth weight (birth weight < 2500 g) was 20.16% (104 out of 516) in this sample. Table 2 summarizes the pollutant variables with the number of observations, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The mean value was used in the analysis.

Table 1  
*Sample Variables' Summary Statistics*

| Variables                 | n (%) or Mean (SD) <sup>a</sup> |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| All                       | 516                             |
| Birth weight              | 2754.665 (560.302)              |
| Low birth weight          |                                 |
| 1 if birth weight < 2500g | 104 (20.155)                    |
| 0 if birth weight ≥ 2500g | 412 (79.845)                    |
| Gender                    |                                 |
| 1 if male                 | 254 (49.224)                    |
| 0 if female               | 262 (50.775)                    |
| Mother's age              | 25.382 (4.327)                  |
| Gestation age (in months) | 8.818 (0.496)                   |

Note: <sup>a</sup> Percentages for categorical variables and mean (standard deviation) for continuous variables.

Table 2  
*Summary of Statistics of Air Pollutant Variables in India*

| Variables           | n (%)        | Mean (SD)        |
|---------------------|--------------|------------------|
| PM <sub>2.5</sub>   |              |                  |
| Average for 90 days | 500 (96.900) | 116.515 (52.809) |
| Average for 60 days | 511 (99.031) | 111.155 (55.943) |
| Average for 30 days | 471 (80.814) | 119.534 (69.492) |
| PM <sub>10</sub>    |              |                  |
| Average for 90 days | 338 (65.550) | 246.647 (72.604) |
| Average for 60 days | 386 (74.806) | 221.685 (91.431) |
| Average for 30 days | 360 (69.767) | 240.632 (99.327) |
| NO                  |              |                  |
| Average for 90 days | 507 (98.256) | 29.045 (19.636)  |
| Average for 60 days | 511 (99.031) | 27.388 (19.481)  |
| Average for 30 days | 510 (98.837) | 28.050 (21.104)  |
| NO <sub>2</sub>     |              |                  |
| Average for 90 days | 507 (98.256) | 44.271 (19.801)  |
| Average for 60 days | 511 (99.031) | 40.928 (20.074)  |
| Average for 30 days | 510 (98.837) | 41.462 (21.408)  |
| NO <sub>x</sub>     |              |                  |
| Average for 90 days | 516 (100)    | 59.632 (40.205)  |
| Average for 60 days | 516 (100)    | 58.104 (41.317)  |
| Average for 30 days | 516 (100)    | 58.952 (44.508)  |
| NH <sub>3</sub>     |              |                  |
| Average for 90 days | 364 (70.543) | 42.392 (10.495)  |
| Average for 60 days | 401 (77.713) | 42.842 (15.927)  |
| Average for 30 days | 383 (74.225) | 45.556 (21.229)  |
| CO                  |              |                  |
| Average for 90 days | 516 (100)    | 3.509 (2.600)    |
| Average for 60 days | 516 (100)    | 3.793 (2.731)    |
| Average for 30 days | 516 (100)    | 3.907 (3.328)    |
| SO <sub>2</sub>     |              |                  |
| Average for 90 days | 507 (98.256) | 14.207 (6.726)   |
| Average for 60 days | 511 (99.031) | 14.909 (12.430)  |
| Average for 30 days | 510 (98.837) | 16.557 (22.063)  |
| O <sub>3</sub>      |              |                  |
| Average for 90 days | 507 (98.256) | 60.545 (24.661)  |
| Average for 60 days | 511 (99.031) | 55.336 (24.370)  |
| Average for 30 days | 510 (98.837) | 55.127 (26.819)  |

|                     |              |  |               |
|---------------------|--------------|--|---------------|
| Benzene             |              |  |               |
| Average for 90 days | 515 (99.806) |  | 4.569 (4.940) |
| Average for 60 days | 516 (100)    |  | 4.226 (4.609) |
| Average for 30 days | 510 (98.837) |  | 4.536 (7.105) |
| Toluene             |              |  |               |
| Average for 90 days | 515 (99.806) |  | 9.960 (5.303) |
| Average for 60 days | 516 (100)    |  | 9.265 (5.082) |
| Average for 30 days | 512 (99.225) |  | 9.485 (6.520) |
| Xylene              |              |  |               |
| Average for 90 days | 282 (54.651) |  | 2.529 (1.627) |
| Average for 60 days | 342 (66.279) |  | 2.806 (1.590) |
| Average for 30 days | 275 (53.295) |  | 2.784 (1.791) |

## Results

This study sought an association between ambient air pollutants and low birth weight of infants and simultaneously compared the effect size of each air pollutant. The data included 12 pollutants:  $PM_{2.5}$ ,  $PM_{10}$ , NO, NO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, NH<sub>3</sub>, CO, SO<sub>2</sub>, O<sub>3</sub>, benzene, toluene, and xylene. However, the analysis revealed that only  $PM_{2.5}$ ,  $PM_{10}$ , NO, and NH<sub>3</sub> showed statistically significant results at the 5% significance level. The following sections explain the regression results of the four individual particles.

## $PM_{2.5}$

Table 3 shows the negative correlation between the mean level of  $PM_{2.5}$  and birth weight. Panel A indicates that a 1 $\mu$ g/m<sup>3</sup> increase of  $PM_{2.5}$  during the last 3 months before delivery leads to a 1.061 g (95% CI: -1.968, -0.154) lower birth weight. Meanwhile, Panels B and C present the results for the mean level of  $PM_{2.5}$  for 60 days and 30 days before delivery, respectively. They are not statistically significant because, at the 5% significance level, the p-value is over 0.05 for both.

Table 3  
Results of Regression for  $PM_{2.5}$   
Panel A:  $PM_{2.5}$  for 90 days

|  | $\beta$  | SE      | t     | p      | 95% CI   |          |
|--|----------|---------|-------|--------|----------|----------|
| <b><math>PM_{2.5}</math> for 90 days</b> | -1.061   | 0.462   | -2.30 | 0.0022 | -1.968   | -0.154   |
| <b>Gender</b>                            | 69.129   | 48.683  | 1.42  | 0.156  | -26.522  | 164.781  |
| <b>Age</b>                               | 14.000   | 5.648   | 2.48  | 0.014  | 2.902    | 25.097   |
| <b>Gestation age</b>                     | 225.533  | 49.297  | 4.57  | 0.000  | 128.676  | 322.390  |
| <b>Constant</b>                          | 496.4039 | 465.414 | 1.07  | 0.287  | -418.026 | 1410.834 |

Panel B:  $PM_{2.5}$  for 60 days

|  | $\beta$ | SE      | t     | p     | 95% CI   |          |
|--|---------|---------|-------|-------|----------|----------|
| <b><math>PM_{2.5}</math> for 60 days</b> | -0.008  | 0.433   | -0.02 | 0.985 | -0.859   | 0.843    |
| <b>Gender</b>                            | 63.165  | 48.405  | 1.30  | 0.193 | -31.934  | 158.265  |
| <b>Age</b>                               | 12.464  | 5.591   | 2.23  | 0.026 | 1.480    | 23.449   |
| <b>Gestation age</b>                     | 227.452 | 49.183  | 4.62  | 0.000 | 130.824  | 324.079  |
| <b>Constant</b>                          | 402.930 | 467.115 | 0.86  | 0.389 | -514.793 | 1320.652 |

Panel C:  $PM_{2.5}$  for 30 days

|  | $\beta$ | SE      | t    | p     | 95% CI   |          |
|--|---------|---------|------|-------|----------|----------|
| <b><math>PM_{2.5}</math> for 30 days</b> | 0.563   | 0.349   | 1.61 | 0.108 | -0.123   | 1.248    |
| <b>Gender</b>                            | 79.694  | 48.401  | 1.65 | 0.100 | -15.417  | 174.805  |
| <b>Age</b>                               | 12.427  | 5.620   | 2.21 | 0.028 | 1.383    | 23.470   |
| <b>Gestation age</b>                     | 178.106 | 50.150  | 3.55 | 0.000 | 79.558   | 276.654  |
| <b>Constant</b>                          | 763.969 | 477.293 | 1.60 | 0.110 | -173.944 | 1701.881 |

*PM10*

Table 4 Panel A illustrates the relationship between exposure to PM10 during the last 3 months before delivery and birth weight (p-value = 0.008). With every 1

unit of PM10 increase, the birth weight decreased by 1.051 g (95% CI: -1.822, -0.281). Meanwhile, the average level of PM10 for 60 days and 30 days showed no significant results (see Panels B and C).

Table 4  
Results of Regression for PM<sub>10</sub>  
Panel A: PM<sub>10</sub> for 90 days

|                                    | <b>β</b> | <b>SE</b> | <b>t</b> | <b>p</b> | <b>95% CI</b> |         |
|------------------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|---------------|---------|
| <b>PM<sub>10</sub> for 90 days</b> | -1.052   | 0.392     | -2.68    | 0.008    | -1.822        | -0.281  |
| <b>Gender</b>                      | 108.847  | 56.819    | 1.92     | 0.056    | -2.922        | 220.617 |
| <b>Age</b>                         | 16.598   | 6.729     | 2.47     | 0.014    | 3.360         | 29.835  |
| <b>Gestation age</b>               | 175.518  | 63.640    | 2.76     | 0.006    | 50.330        | 300.706 |
| <b>Constant</b>                    | 979.780  | 614.891   | 1.59     | 0.112    | -229.781      | 2189.34 |

Panel B: PM<sub>10</sub> for 60 days

|                                    | <b>β</b> | <b>SE</b> | <b>t</b> | <b>p</b> | <b>95% CI</b> |          |
|------------------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|---------------|----------|
| <b>PM<sub>10</sub> for 60 days</b> | 0.073    | 0.307     | 0.24     | 0.812    | -0.530        | 0.676    |
| <b>Gender</b>                      | 76.327   | 56.025    | 1.36     | 0.174    | -33.829       | 186.483  |
| <b>Age</b>                         | 17.102   | 6.643     | 2.57     | 0.010    | 4.041         | 30.164   |
| <b>Gestation age</b>               | 248.833  | 61.359    | 4.06     | 0.000    | 128.190       | 369.477  |
| <b>Constant</b>                    | 60.856   | 588.840   | 0.10     | 0.918    | -1096.926     | 1218.639 |

Panel C: PM<sub>10</sub> for 30 days

|                                    | <b>β</b> | <b>SE</b> | <b>t</b> | <b>p</b> | <b>95% CI</b> |          |
|------------------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|---------------|----------|
| <b>PM<sub>10</sub> for 30 days</b> | 0.086    | 0.276     | 0.31     | 0.755    | -0.457        | 0.629    |
| <b>Gender</b>                      | 101.009  | 54.728    | 1.85     | 0.066    | -6.622        | 208.641  |
| <b>Age</b>                         | 15.712   | 6.530     | 2.40     | 0.017    | 2.860         | 28.545   |
| <b>Gestation age</b>               | 165.229  | 62.063    | 2.66     | 0.008    | 43.172        | 287.286  |
| <b>Constant</b>                    | 819.501  | 597.553   | 1.37     | 0,171    | -355.679      | 1994.699 |

*NO*

NO showed a significant effect on the birth weight (see Table 5). As indicated in Panel A, during the last 3 months of pregnancy, a 1 µg/m3 increase to NO exposure for the mother led to the infant being born with a

2.687 g (95% CI: -5.133, -0.241) lower birth weight than it should be. As with the two previously discussed pollutants, the p-values for the mean level for 60 days and 30 days did not show significance (see Panels B and C).

Table 5  
Results of Regression for NO  
Panel A: NO for 90 days

|                       | <b>β</b> | <b>SE</b> | <b>t</b> | <b>p</b> | <b>95% CI</b> |          |
|-----------------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|---------------|----------|
| <b>NO for 90 days</b> | -2.687   | 1.245     | -2.16    | 0.031    | -5.133        | -0.241   |
| <b>Gender</b>         | 70.011   | 48.241    | 1.45     | 0.147    | -24.768       | 164.789  |
| <b>Age</b>            | 13.154   | 5.579     | 2.36     | 0.019    | 2.193         | 24.114   |
| <b>Gestation age</b>  | 239.394  | 49.741    | 4.81     | 0.000    | 141.667       | 337.120  |
| <b>Constant</b>       | 351.770  | 463.827   | 0.76     | 0.449    | -559.511      | 1263.051 |



**Panel B: NO for 60 days**

|                       | $\beta$ | SE      | t     | p     | 95% CI   |          |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|-------|-------|----------|----------|
| <b>NO for 60 days</b> | -0.012  | 1.250   | -0.01 | 0.992 | -2.467   | 2.443    |
| <b>Gender</b>         | 63.174  | 48.412  | 1.30  | 0.193 | -31.938  | 158.287  |
| <b>Age</b>            | 12.466  | 5.592   | 2.23  | 0.026 | 1.481    | 23.452   |
| <b>Gestation age</b>  | 227.538 | 49.418  | 4.60  | 0.000 | 130.448  | 324.628  |
| <b>Constant</b>       | 401.554 | 462.598 | 0.87  | 0.386 | -507.295 | 1310.403 |

**Panel C: NO for 30 days**

|                       | $\beta$ | SE      | t    | p     | 95% CI   |          |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|------|-------|----------|----------|
| <b>NO for 30 days</b> | 0.184   | 1.155   | 0.16 | 0.873 | -2.086   | 2.454    |
| <b>Gender</b>         | 64.712  | 48.457  | 1.34 | 0.182 | -30.490  | 159.915  |
| <b>Age</b>            | 12.239  | 5.601   | 2.19 | 0.029 | 1.235    | 23.244   |
| <b>Gestation age</b>  | 222.154 | 49.714  | 4.47 | 0.000 | 124.481  | 319.826  |
| <b>Constant</b>       | 447.591 | 465.618 | 0.96 | 0.337 | -467.195 | 1362.377 |

*NH<sub>3</sub>*

NH<sub>3</sub> also demonstrated a statistically significant and negative correlation with birth weight, as shown in Table 6. Panel A indicates that, with a p-value of 0.021, a 1  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  increase of mean exposure to NH<sub>3</sub>

during the last trimester decreased the infant's birth weight by 6.096 g (95% CI: -11.254, -0.939). On the other hand, Panels B and C indicate no statistically significant effect of exposure to NH<sub>3</sub> on birth weight for 60 days and 30 days before delivery.

Table 6  
*Results of Regression for NH<sub>3</sub>*  
**Panel A: NH<sub>3</sub> for 90 days**

|                                   | $\beta$ | SE      | t     | p     | 95% CI   |          |
|-----------------------------------|---------|---------|-------|-------|----------|----------|
| <b>NH<sub>3</sub> for 90 days</b> | -6.096  | 2.623   | -2.32 | 0.021 | -11.254  | -0.939   |
| <b>Gender</b>                     | 108.223 | 54.858  | 1.97  | 0.049 | 0.340    | 216.106  |
| <b>Age</b>                        | 20.912  | 6.448   | 3.24  | 0.001 | 8.231    | 33.593   |
| <b>Gestation age</b>              | 202.631 | 62.345  | 3.25  | 0.001 | 80.024   | 325.239  |
| <b>Constant</b>                   | 629.595 | 595.963 | 1.06  | 0.291 | -542.423 | 1801.613 |

**Panel B: NH<sub>3</sub> for 60 days**

|                                   | $\beta$  | SE      | t     | p     | 95% CI    |         |
|-----------------------------------|----------|---------|-------|-------|-----------|---------|
| <b>NH<sub>3</sub> for 60 days</b> | -0.825   | 1.748   | -0.47 | 0.637 | -4.261    | 2.623   |
| <b>Gender</b>                     | 66.968   | 55.377  | 1.21  | 0.227 | -41.901   | 175.837 |
| <b>Age</b>                        | 18.485   | 6.523   | 2.83  | 0.005 | 5.661     | 31.308  |
| <b>Gestation age</b>              | 276.652  | 60.514  | 4.57  | 0.000 | 157.682   | 395.621 |
| <b>Constant</b>                   | -164.267 | 577.137 | -0.28 | 0.776 | -1298.903 | 970.369 |

**Panel C: NH<sub>3</sub> for 30 days**

|                                   | $\beta$ | SE      | t    | p     | 95% CI   |          |
|-----------------------------------|---------|---------|------|-------|----------|----------|
| <b>NH<sub>3</sub> for 30 days</b> | 1.131   | 1.266   | 0.89 | 0.372 | -1.358   | 3.620    |
| <b>Gender</b>                     | 90.123  | 53.389  | 1.69 | 0.092 | -14.854  | 195.100  |
| <b>Age</b>                        | 16.612  | 6.316   | 2.63 | 0.009 | 4.192    | 29.031   |
| <b>Gestation age</b>              | 198.149 | 61.449  | 3.22 | 0.001 | 77.325   | 318.974  |
| <b>Constant</b>                   | 480.049 | 585.960 | 0.82 | 0.413 | -672.101 | 1632.198 |

*NO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, CO, SO<sub>2</sub>, O<sub>3</sub>, Benzene, Toluene, and Xylene*

The remaining pollutants considered in this study did not show any statistically sig-

nificant results at the 5% significance level. Table 7 summarizes the correlation coefficients of exposure variables for NO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, CO, SO<sub>2</sub>, O<sub>3</sub>, benzene, toluene, and xylene.

Table 7  
Correlation coefficients for NO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, CO, SO<sub>2</sub>, O<sub>3</sub>, Benzene, Toluene, and Xylene

|                                    |                                |                       |                   |               |                     |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| CO<br>30                           | 1.463<br>(7.256)               | Benzene<br>30         | -3.094<br>(3.439) |               |                     |
| CO<br>60                           | -0.577<br>(8.852)              | Benzene<br>60         | -3.400<br>(5.246) |               |                     |
| CO<br>90                           | -14.832<br>(9.314)             | Benzene<br>90         | 2.357<br>(4.893)  |               |                     |
| NO <sub>x</sub><br>30              | -0.108<br>(0.548)              | O <sub>3</sub><br>30  | 0.985<br>(0.904)  | Xylene<br>30  | -29.540<br>(18.299) |
| NO <sub>x</sub><br>60              | -0.130<br>(0.592)              | O <sub>3</sub><br>60  | 0.960<br>(0.993)  | Xylene<br>60  | -21.188<br>(18.716) |
| NO <sub>x</sub><br>90              | -0.552<br>(0.611)              | O <sub>3</sub><br>90  | -0.737<br>(0.987) | Xylene<br>90  | 9.271<br>(20.333)   |
| NO <sub>2</sub><br>30              | 0.956<br>(1.138)               | SO <sub>2</sub><br>30 | 1.355<br>(1.097)  | Toluene<br>30 | -2.437<br>(3.734)   |
| NO <sub>2</sub><br>60              | 0.512<br>(1.213)               | SO <sub>2</sub><br>60 | 2.538<br>(1.946)  | Toluene<br>60 | -3.290<br>(4.748)   |
| NO <sub>2</sub><br>90 <sup>a</sup> | -2.102<br>(1.236) <sup>b</sup> | SO <sub>2</sub><br>90 | 1.348<br>(3.619)  | Toluene<br>90 | -6.812<br>(4.556)   |
|                                    | β                              |                       | β                 |               | β                   |

Note: a 90, 60, and 30 represent 90 days, 60 days, and 30 days before delivery. b Standard error (SE)

## Discussion

Overall, the results support the hypothesis that higher maternal exposure to pollutants—specifically,  $PM_{2.5}$ ,  $PM_{10}$ ,  $NO$ , and  $NH_3$ —is associated with a low birth weight. The average level of exposure 90 days before delivery was found to be relevant, whereas the mean level for 60 days and 30 days did not explain a significant relationship with birth weight. These results seem consistent with the results suggested by Wu et al. (2018). By creating three-dimensional images (see Appendix 1), they found that maternal exposures to  $PM_{2.5}$  during the 27th–33th gestational weeks were significant for low birth weight (Wu et al., 2018). Although their findings were suggested for only  $PM_{2.5}$ , assuming the full gestational period to be 40 weeks (10 months), the 27th–33th gestational weeks correspond to around the eighth month, which is around 90–60 days before delivery. As the current study showed significant results for the 90-day average but not for the 60-day average, there must be an exposure window between 90 and 60 days before giving birth.

Furthermore, the author successfully demonstrated that  $NH_3$  had the most significant impact on low birth weight compared to other pollutants. Corresponding to a  $1\mu g/m^3$  increase, the effect sizes of  $NH_3$ ,  $NO$ ,  $PM_{2.5}$ , and  $PM_{10}$  were  $-6.096$  g,  $-2.687$  g,  $-1.061$  g, and  $-1.051$  g, respectively. The magnitude of  $NH_3$  is almost twice that of  $NO$  and six times that of  $PM_{2.5}$  and  $PM_{10}$ . Sram et al. (2005) compiled past research about ambient air pollution and birth weight; however, no single study found an effect of  $NH_3$ . One possible reason for the unique results in this analysis

related to  $NH_3$  is the small size of the sample.

## Limitations

This research faced various limitations, including missing data, omitted variable bias, and the endogeneity of the model. First, missing data were dropped through the cleaning process, so the data were limited, which could have affected the results. The main data used in this study were retrieved from The DHS Program's survey of India from 2015–16, which contained 1,315,617 samples. However, only 259,469 of these samples included the birth weight variable. Moreover, children's birth dates were indispensable for this analysis, but only 243,555 samples included information on the exact birth year, month, and day. Thus, after cleaning the data at this point, only 20% of the original data sample remained. Finally, the 243,555 samples included only 1,340 samples with birth records from 2015 and/or 2016. In addition, regarding the air quality data, the original data included the daily level of pollutants in each city; nonetheless, each city had data for only one point on each day, meaning each city had a monitoring station used to collect the data. Therefore, if some data were missing for a long period for any reason, the corresponding birth sample could not be utilized in this research. Ultimately, combining The DHS Program data with the air quality data left 516 samples, so the author could utilize only 0.04% of the tremendously large DHS dataset.

Second, the most important potential source of bias in the results was the measurement of exposure to pollutants. The air quality data from the CPCB of India includ-

ed the daily level of pollutants monitored in a station in each city. Although this research considered data from large cities (i.e., Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Mumbai, and Patna), only one monitoring station provided data from each city. Moreover, there was no geographical information about the stations, so the author could only combine individual birth records with the unit of the city, without regard for the distance between the monitoring station and individual residences. As a result, exposure to pollutants could not be precisely measured as some mothers' houses were closer to the monitoring station than others'. Therefore, this research could only identify the effects of a range of exposure to birth weight.

Finally, the existence of omitted variables and the endogeneity of pollutant variables cannot be denied. This study used a linear model that included the infant's gender, maternal age at delivery, and gestational duration in months as control variables; however, the tables in the Results section had very low R-squared values, which meant that other variables not explained in the model could have influenced the results. Alderman et al. (1987) investigated maternal exposure to CO and its effect on low birth weight, concluding that the results included the impact of both outdoor and indoor air pollution, which happened in the current study as well. At the same time, the main independent variable used in this research was endogenous. Regarding the endogeneity issue, Jayachandran (2009) successfully researched the impact of air pollution on fetal, infant, and child mortality in Indonesia. Using the massive wildfire that occurred in late

1997 as a natural experiment and referring to the 2000 Indonesian Census, she was able to measure the impact of ambient air pollution relatively accurately (Jayachandran, 2009). On the other hand, the current case study in India was not able to be connected with any natural event causing air pollution; thus, the main independent variables were endogenous and possibly changed the research results.

### **Conclusion**

This paper sought to reveal the relationship between ambient air pollution during the third trimester and low birth weight in diverse areas in India. An association was found for PM<sub>2.5</sub>, PM10, NO, and NH<sub>3</sub> for 90 days before delivery but not for 60 days or 30 days. These results are consistent with several studies conducted in other countries, such as Wu et al. (2018). The current research also successfully compared the effect sizes of pollutants and determined that NH<sub>3</sub> had the most significant impact on birth weight, followed by NO, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, and PM10. This finding is unique as popular pollutants examined in studies focused on a similar topic are PM<sub>2.5</sub>, PM10, NO, NO<sub>2</sub>, and SO<sub>2</sub>. However, the current study faced several limitations, such as a small sample size due to missing data and the cleaning process, an imprecise measurement of pollutant exposure, omitted variable biases, and endogeneity.

Kim et al. (2017) insisted that children are likely to recover almost completely from the pollution effect as they grow, and Bue's (2019) results indicated that, in the long run, prenatal health conditions and those of the first 6 months of life do not have effects on cognitive and education outcomes.

The results of these two papers suggest an important question: Even if air pollution affects infants' birth weight, once they are born and grow, will the prenatal exposure have a significant impact on the children's future health in the long term? Further research should consider both short- and long-term outcomes while accounting for the limitations identified in this analysis.

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# Does Transit-Oriented Development increase Social Capital? Car Usage, Social Life, and Volunteerism

Yasuhiro Tashiro

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## Author's Note

**Yasuhiro Tashiro** is a senior student in the Global Business program. His essay “Does Transit-Oriented Development increase Social Capital? Car usage, social life, and volunteerism” was written for the Global Business Capstone Seminar under Professor Wenti Du’s supervision at AIU. Yasuhiro’s interest is economics, development, and community ever since he went to study abroad in Switzerland in search of conditions of better quality of life. Professor Hideyuki Nakagawa of Economic Development and Professor Ayumi Sugimoto of Community Development were among the most influential professors for this study.

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## Abstract

The author uses prefectural data on automobile gasoline usage and Social Capital measurements to describe the relationship between Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and Social Capital using Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression. For Social Capital measurements, prefectural data on hours spent on social life and volunteer work from 2011 and 2016 is used. A decrease of one hundred liters of gasoline usage per year is associated with approximately 0.8 hours per week increase in volunteer work. TOD is associated with Social Capital. Moreover, a thousand-person per km<sup>2</sup> increase in population density is associated with one more hour of time spent on social life per week. Therefore, attraction and concentration of the population can be the channel through which TOD increases Social Capital. Finally, the author suggests curbing the cost of cheap and short transportation to increase activity improving neighborhoods, based on analysis obtained from supplementary transportation cost data.

**Keywords:** Keywords: Social Capital, Development, Transport, Automobile, Volunteerism, Social Life

## Introduction

Suburbanization, first acknowledged in papers in the 1910s, was accelerated by the spread of automobiles in the 1920s in the US where ills of concentrated industrial cities were prevalent (Modarres & Kirby, 2010), seeking for supposedly greener and safer self-contained neighborhoods (Jacobs, 1993). Similarly, in the rest of the world, the phenomenon coincided with the spread of automobiles in the 1960s in Europe, and the 1970s in Japan (Kishii, 2019). However, the attempt to create such neighborhoods, dubbed sometimes as Garden cities, has neglected the values of the liveliness of a community that a variety of land-use and street life brings. The importance of this aspect of a community, “reinvented” by Jacobs and later coined “social capital” by Putnam (Putnam, 1993), has inspired developers to think twice about traditional development around train stations. One such promising candidate is Transit Oriented Development or TOD. This research is aimed to answer the relationship between these two concepts. In other words: Is increase in TOD associated with an increase in Social Capital?

Transit Adjacent Development (TAD) is a traditional development type focused around connecting a hub station and suburban areas via intercity railways. In each of those cities, privileged few live in walking distance to stations; however, the rest typically rely on automobiles. This type of development created less populated streets in neighborhoods that felt less secure to walk and therefore less attractive; hence, the vicious cycle continues. The initial scarcity of building types other than residences was

much worse later, leaving monotonous residence “deserted.” However, it is understandable that people head to suburbs, given the cities’ skyrocketing housing price (also caused by commercial centered monotonous neighborhood plans) and ever-worsening pollution, congestion, and other urban problems, intrinsic to car-based society.

On the other hand, transit-oriented development (TOD) aims to reduce car usage, increase walkability by providing high-quality public transportation, and provide walkable zones characterized by its mix of land usage. The Japanese government exemplifies a “Compact City” plan, focusing on revitalizing rural cities by introducing functional city centers and curtailing the cost of living sparsely to tackle depopulation, aging and risky concentration in Tokyo (Masuda, 2014). Toyama’s high-quality public transportation, Strasbourg’s traffic zoning and shared platform among buses and trams, and the concentration of administrative function in Misato-machi, Akita exemplifies successful Compact cities. TOD has been modified to suit rural to urban areas (CAO, 2014).

In fact, research shows that TOD has been environmentally and economically successful (Kumruzzaman et al., 2004). However, the increase of social capital followed by an increase of Happiness is another way TOD can contribute to human well-being. social capital is included as a factor in Coub-Douglas based production function (Agnitsch et al., 2006). Consequently, social capital is beginning to be measured by the government, at least in Australia (General Household Survey, 2002,) UK, and Canada (Wood and Giles Corti, 2007).



TOD is similarly challenging to measure, though recent development in challenging filtering of TOD from TAD has shown that, residents of TODs indeed have shown a significantly higher level of trust and reciprocity and connections with neighbors compared with residents of TADs (Kumruzzaman et al., 2004). This has motivated the author to further explore evidence of attributes of TOD such as walkability and mixed land-use increases in social capital. It is also interesting to observe TOD-ness and social capital measured by different data available. Furthermore, the researcher hopes to observe the increase of happiness associated with the increase in social capital to ultimately assess the validity of the assumption that the increase of social capital caused by TOD is any good. In this paper, the author will provide an OLS regression analysis for the relationship between TOD and social capital.

This paper is organized as follows. Section two describes literature related to the TOD and social capital. Section three explains the data and methodology the author used to answer the research question. Section four details the results, and section five concludes the paper.

## **Literature Review**

### *Measuring Social Capital*

Although there is no consensus on the definition of social capital, much has been discussed in social science since Putnam (1993) presented it as the third capital. Tools and machines are capital that improves productivity of labor and hence wellbeing, but capital is not limited to physical capital. Education and training are exam-

ples of human capital which also increases productivity. Similarly, Coleman (1990) and Putnam (1993) argue social structure is an important determinant of productivity. (Routledge and von Amsberg, 2002).

Social capital is defined as network norms, and trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation (Putnam, 1997). An underlying principle assumption made in this paper is that a society with higher levels of social capital experiences more rapid growth because of this coordination and cooperation, as other researchers on TOD and social capital do (Kumruzzaman et al, 2014, Utsunomiya, 2016). However, the (causal) relationship between social capital and economic growth is unclear. Putnam (2000) argues that the failure and success of the Italian government is explained by social capital and that the decline of social capital in the US in the 20th century led to some economic measures. On the other hand, Miguel et al. (2005) found industrialization in Indonesia increased social capital, but that initial social capital did not predict subsequent economic growth. Both findings are derived from a single nation and careful interpretation is recommended. Not only growth but relation with labor mobility is critical. As Kranton (1997) points out, social capital is undermined by extensive labor mobility. In other words, individuals no longer engage in long-term reciprocal relationships that nurture community under perfect mobility. While social capital is essential input for economic growth, economic growth may destroy social capital. In order to examine this, Routledge and von Amsberg (2003) developed a model of social capital and growth that predicts

social capital comes with a cost. That is, an increase of social capital is at the expense of fewer trade opportunities. Furthermore, social capital requires less mobility (a human rights infringement in the first place!) and more inequality, even though welfare may increase (Routledge and von Amsberg, 2003). Apparently, the benefit of social capital in economics has not reached consensus.

Kumruzzaman et al. (2014) have positively associated TOD in Brisbane, Austria with social capital, which was measured by participation in networks, reciprocity/altruism, trust, social norms, the commons, or pooled community resources, and civic engagement. Utsunomiya (2019) have also positively associated TOD with social capital. To be more precise, the researcher took as the measurement of TOD, the frequency of community bus use (community buses, hereafter), the number of cars per capita (car ownership hereafter), and population density of prefectures in Japan. The researcher positively associated measurement of social capital such as trust and reciprocity with community buses, and negatively associated trust and reciprocity with car ownership, but found no significant evidence in participation.

Based on the past studies, the author gathered data from a Survey on Time Use and Leisure Activities (STULA) study in Japan, which although not focusing on TOD, proposes ways to measure social capital by exploring the possibility of using said STULA. STULA surveys how people spend time outside of work. It gives time spent for particular activities such as volunteering by various subgroups including residents of a prefecture. The study suggests using vol-

unteer in STULA as a proxy of social capital, while also considering the use of NHK's data similar to STULA, and Social Stratification and Mobility Survey (SSM). SSM asks participants questions such as "Do you put importance on the contacts with others and widening your human relationship in your daily life?" to identify social capital (Takashi & Akiyoshi, 2002). However, the survey is old and conducted only once every ten years. It is also common to use general trust from the Nationwide Survey of the Japanese National Character conducted by The Institute of Mathematical Statistics. This has been used across countries, so Yamagishi and Yamagishi (1994) were able to find differences in the level of trust across two cities in different countries.

In terms of international comparison, STULA is comparable to HETUS (Harmonised European Time Use Surveys), which is widely available in the EU and in line with the OECD guidelines (Takashi & Akiyoshi, 2002). The author uses STULA because recent data (2011 and 2016) is available and data is organized by prefecture.

### *Measuring TOD*

Main measurement of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) in this paper is car ownership and population density. The author will provide supplementary evidence on the relationship between cost of transportation and social capital as well. The intuitions for each measurement are as follows. Walkability is a great concern for TOD. In various ways, such as by suspending cars in city centers, or separating roads for automobiles and pedestrians, TOD aims to make

areas more walkable. For trips of longer distances, TOD tries to achieve better access to public transport. Therefore, TOD enables people to travel on foot or by public transport rather than cars. Previous findings on pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods found they have more perceived sense of community than auto-oriented neighborhoods (Lund, 2003). First, car ownership is negatively associated with TOD, because cheaper, more efficient public transport would reduce the necessity of owning cars. Next, population density is positively associated with TOD because less car parks enable denser accommodation. As TOD is associated with such measurements about places, the researchers used some of these measures as a proxy of TOD-ness in this research. The TOD-ness is then associated with the level of social capital to answer the research question.

#### *Relationship between TOD and Social Capital*

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) reverses suburbanization. In the 1920s, in the US, industrial cities were suffering from too much concentration. Rising rents, pollution, and bad access to green areas became city workers' common concern. People's demand for more spacious, affordable, and green residences in the outskirts rose. Mass motorization, defined as the vehicle ownership of 200 per 1,000 persons reached at the same time, played a significant role in de-concentration. The city plan was reshaped accordingly, for this movement was considered both an economic and quality of life benefit to individuals (Modarres & Kirby, 2010). In Europe and Japan, cars became popular at a similar lev-

el in the 1960s and 1970s, respectively, and thus suburbanization followed at the same level. However, growth in the suburbs led to a hollowing out of city centers, and American cities experienced depopulation and increasing crime rate. Seeing this so-called inner crisis, European countries later restricted cars entering city centers like Essen in the 1960s, and made clear the place is for pedestrians. Modern light-rail-trains, especially the success of once-abolished-Light Rail Train (LRT) in Strasbourg, enforced the idea that urban public transport is relevant. (Kishii, Yajima, and Nakano, 2019, CAO, 2014).

Recent studies conducted in Japan have an extra focus on aging and depopulation. Also, since the 2011 disaster when residents in some towns and villages were forced to evacuate in separate regions, people have come to think of (re)construction of local transportation as a means to bond and bridge people and society again in the course of reconstruction. Researchers concluded that after Toyama LRT was built, the elderly participated more in activities, and the young drove less (Utsunomiya, 2016).

In the meanwhile, the concept of social capital has been developed in the field of community development. Putnam (1993) defined it as "features of social organization, such as networks, norms, and trust, that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit" (p1-2). Along with physical capital and human capital, social capital enhances individual productivity, but is the attribute of the whole community and not of any specific members (Sobel, 2002).

TODs are defined with the magnitude of multiple indexes mentioned later

in comparison with Transit Adjacent Developments (TAD). Therefore, researchers can derive TOD-ness of a particular area. In short, density is correlated with consumer amenities, and cities facilitate social interactions, but it is not so simple as density also being correlated with social capital (Glaeser and Gottlieb, 2006).

Since then, TOD has been implemented and assessed. Economic and environmental effects are evident, but results measured with social capital are scarce, except there are Kumruzzaman et al., (2014). A major achievement in distinguishing TODs from Transit Adjacent Developments (TADs), which was difficult without using cluster analysis of indexes such as Public transport accessibility level (PTAL), net residential density, and land-use diversity, was marked

(Kamruzzaman et al., 2014). Though the development of social capital was primarily influenced by the self-selection effect, individuals who lived in TODs had a significantly higher level of trust and reciprocity than those who lived in TADs. Surprisingly, some independent environmental factors, such as PTALs (Public Transportation Accessibility Level) associated with TODs, had a negative association with connectedness, and trust and reciprocity. Dempsey et al. (2012) in UK and Glaeser and Gottlieb (2006) in US found a similar result, where some factors of TOD decrease interaction of residents, although TOD has a positive impact on social capital as a whole. Therefore, merely improving one or two aspects of TOD, such as PTAL, does not increase social capital.

## Data and Methodology

Table 1 *Summary statistics*

|         | Volunteer (Time spent per week, 2016) | Social life (Time spent per week, 2016) | Amount of gasoline spent for automobile, except cargo and bus (L / person, 2016) | Population Density (Person / km <sup>2</sup> , 2016) | Local improvement activities |
|---------|---------------------------------------|---|--|--|------------------------------|
| AVERAGE | 4.00                                  | 16.36                                   | 393.15   | 5474.70  | 12.05                        |
| STDEV   | 1.04                                  | 1.76                                    | 81.03  | 1702.37  | 3.53                         |
| MAX     | 7                                     | 21                                      | 537.93   | 12022  | 26.1                         |
| MIN     | 3                                     | 13                                      | 145.52   | 3317   | 7.4                          |

| Initial fee<br>for a ride | Yen per<br>Kilometer | Minimum | 1st quartile | Median | 3rd<br>quartile | Maximum |
|---------------------------|----------------------|---------|--------------|--------|-----------------|---------|
| 153.40                    | 34.02                | 2.99    | 24.52        | 36.57  | 54.34           | 321.90  |
| 20.14                     | 5.72                 | 0.61    | 5.73         | 8.96   | 14.29           | 320.30  |
| 220                       | 54.2                 | 4.8     | 36.2         | 52.9   | 81.7            | 2234.7  |
| 100                       | 24.19                | 1.9     | 9.4          | 12.5   | 17.2            | 119.2   |

This section is organized as follows. First, data on Social Capital is described. Then factors of TOD are discussed. Lastly, the methodology of this research is explained. Data on factors of social capital can be obtained from “Survey on time use and leisure activities” by Statistics Bureau (2013, 2017). They conduct surveys on how much time people spend on certain activities in their free time in Japan. The survey has been collected every five year since 1976, and in 2016 more than 0.2 million people participated. The researcher extracted prefectural data on how much time people spend per week for volunteerism and social life. On average people spent 4 hours volunteering and 17 hours taking part in social life, and standard deviation were 1.04 and 1.76 respectively. Volunteering includes cleaning communal areas, procurement of aid for disaster areas, participation in community events, participating in transport safety activities, labor, political, or religious campaigns, and voting. It also includes PTA activities, but excludes participation in some community events such as festivals because they are categorized in other sections. Volunteering in organizations (18.4%) and without organization affiliation (7.9%) are included. These

organizations include self-governing bodies (11.6%), volunteer oriented “clubs and circles” and “civic organizations” (3.6%). In our research into the Kumamoto Earthquake in 2016 and following, we found an increase of time spent on volunteer work in Kumamoto (8.4% higher than average) and in Kyushu that might be relevant and difficult to control. Social Life includes visiting, inviting visitors, having conversations with one another (in person and over phone or mail), and inviting and being invited to weddings and funerals. It includes eating and drinking for socializing but excludes dining in and out, as well as having meals in school or the workplace. According to Sakamoto (2010) summarizing research in social capital in Japan, social capital is declining in recent years through decline in social networks or participation but not in trust and reciprocity. Therefore, although trust is one of the most important aspects of social capital, as discussed, in Japan, volunteerism and social life is the more suitable measurement.

Data on TOD include car usage and public transport accessibility level and population density. First, instead of car ownership that Kamruzzaman et al.(2014) use for their study, data on the amount of gasoline spent

for automobiles was used. The gasoline spent for automobiles (except cargo carriers and buses) per person was the least in Tokyo with 149.84, and the highest in Tochigi with 509.30 L per year per person in 2018. The average and the standard deviations were 331.77 L and 70.62 in 2018 and 332.31 L and 81.03 in 2016. This paper proposes the amount of gasoline usage for private automobiles except bus, cargo carriers, and special use cars (e.g. police cars, ambulances, construction vehicles). The data was collected by MLIT (2018) from a sample of 9600 people, within the range of 7 days or 1 month from April 1, 2016. Each prefecture collected a report card with initial and ending date of the report, and record on the odometer plus gas intake at respective time points. In this research, the amount of gasoline usage for private automobiles per person (kl/person) is analyzed, which is the total gas consumption divided by the population of the prefectures.

Kumruzzaman, who conducted study in Brisbane (2019) and Utsunomiya in Toyama (2016) and Kobe (2019), used PTAL (Public Transport Accessibility Level). Kumruzzaman and Utsunomiya obtained detailed and tailored city level data for each city, but comparable data across prefectures was required for this study. The accessibility index indicates the transportation accessibility of certain destinations from an arbitrary starting point. MLIT is working on prefecture level Accessibility Index. The researcher was able to find PTAL for only some destinations. Here, it is suitable to suggest setting hospital as a proxy for general accessibility, for it is a critical destination for residents, and compared to the restaurants, commercial fa-

cilities, and city-halls, it is less likely to have mere concentration as the explanation when it might correlate with social capital. In other words, accessibility to restaurants for example, is directly connected to some of the factors of social capital, such as occurrences of dining out with friends, relatives, spouse, or family, etc. This is not ideal because the effect of TOD on social capital is wrongly measured by, in this example, proximity to restaurants, rather than general increase in usability of public transport. This is not the researcher's intention. Furthermore, for comprehensive understanding of transportation accessibility, the accessibility index makes use of generalized cost theory. Generalized cost includes public transport service variables such as time spent for travel, fee, and comfortability of travel, in monetary terms. It is necessary to note that the index is not pointing directly to the time consumed to arrive at the destination, but, it is a relative index about the usability of the area.

Finally, the researcher will conduct two OLS regression analyses based on the model,

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Amount of Gas}_i + \beta_2 \text{Population Density}_i + \epsilon_i$$

where,  $Y_i$  is the level of social capital measured by hours per week of Social Life or Volunteer,  $\beta_0$  is the constant,  $\beta_1$  Amount of  $\text{Gas}_i$  is the amount of gasoline spent for automobile except cargo carriers and buses, per person in prefecture  $i$ ,  $\beta_2$  Population Density $_i$  is the population density in prefecture  $i$ , and  $\epsilon_i$  is the margin of error. Regression analysis assumes that data are linear. However, the researcher was not very comfortable with the model, as described in the next section.

However, this was the best available data, so the research was conducted nevertheless.

Supplementary analysis exploiting the cost of going to the nearest hospital is the proxy for public transport accessibility level (PTAL). The model for OLS regression is:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Initial fee for ride}_i + \beta_2 \text{Yen per kilo}_i + \beta_3 \text{Minimum}_i + \beta_4 \text{1st Quartile}_i + \beta_5 \text{Median}_i$$

where  $Y_i$  is the social capital measured in days of participating in local improvement activities, Initial fee for ride<sub>*i*</sub> is initial fee for ride in prefecture *i*, and Yen per kilo<sub>*i*</sub> is the monetary cost of travel divided by distance, and the following five variables are respectively quartile cost of travel of going to the nearest hospital in

prefecture *i*. Intuitively, minimum cost refers to walking while maximum cost refers to long distance travel such as train, but any combination of modes is possible.

To justify the use of this data, the author conducted a correlation analysis. According to Pearson's correlation analysis, social life and amount of gasoline, as well as population density have significant and strong to very strong correlation, as shown in the table. Amount of gasoline have significant and weak negative relationships, which suggests the amount of gasoline is a valid measurement for TOD. The author believes the amount of gasoline is a better measurement than car ownership because the data is more granular and reflects actual mileage.

Table 2 *Correlation analysis of data*

Only displaying significant figures. \*\*Significant at 1% level, \*Significant at 5% level

|                                 | Volunteer (Time spent per week, 2016) and social activities | Social life (Time spent per week, 2016) | Amount of gasoline spent for automobile, except cargo and bus (L / person, 2016) | Population Density (Person / km <sup>2</sup> ) | Footstep (Footsteps / day / person) | Road Length (km) |
|---------------------------------|---|---|--|--|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Volunteer and social activities | 1.000   |   |  |  |                                     |                  |
| Social life                     |   | 1.000                                   |  |  |                                     |                  |
| AGSA                            |   | <b>-0.409**</b>                         | 1.000  |  |                                     |                  |
| Population density              |   | <b>0.554**</b>                          | <b>-0.826**</b>  | 1.000  |                                     |                  |
| Footstep                        | 0.322*  |   | -0.348*  | 0.353*   | 1.000                               |                  |
| Road Length                     | <b>-0.385**</b>   |   |  |  |                                     | 1.000            |

## Results

First, a person's correlation analysis shows that "amount of gasoline spent for automobiles, except cargo carriers and buses" and "time spent on social life" have significant negative relationships ( $p=0.004$ ). As we saw earlier, this can be explained by the very strong negative correlation between "amount of gasoline" and "population density," which is significant at a one percent level. Our goal is to isolate urbanity from "amount of gasoline" to see public transport decreasing car usage and increasing social capital.

The researcher found that the amount of gasoline spent for automobiles, except cargo carriers and buses per person have no significant correlation with social life; however, the population density was significant and positively associated at a one percent level,

as shown in Table 2. In other words, a thousand person per km<sup>2</sup> increase of population density is associated with one more hour of time spent for social life per week. Therefore, the increase of social life is possibly attained by higher population density, but not through decrease of car usage. However, the R squared is 0.284, suggesting the limitation of the model due to the missing variables. The author still believes the model is durable, since the null hypothesis that the all the variables have non-significant relationship with the dependent variable, is rejected with the F value of 0.000243. In any case, this is contrary to the hypothesis that the increase of social capital can be explained by the increase in TOD, which promotes the use of public transport rather than private automobiles.

Table 3 Regression: Time spent for Social Life (Hours per Week) and Amount of Gasoline Spent (L)

|  | Coefficient | Standard Error |
|--|-------------|----------------|
| Amount of gasoline spent for automobile, except cargo and bus (L / Person) | 0.003       | 0.005          |
| Population density (Person / km <sup>2</sup> )                             | 0.001**     | 0.000          |
| Constant   | 11.187      | 3.023          |
| Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>  | 0.284       |                |
| Significant F  | 0.000243    |                |

\*\*Significant at a 1% level \*Significant at a 5% level

Next, the author found a significant and negative relationship between the amount of gasoline spent for automobiles, except cargo carriers and buses per person, and volunteer hours, as seen in Table 4. The interpretation is, a decrease of one hundred

liters of gasoline usage is associated with an approximately 0.8 hours per week increase of volunteer work. The R squared is 0.0831, suggesting the limitation of the model. Surprisingly, a thousand person / km<sup>2</sup> increase of population density would



be associated with decrease of volunteer work by 0.3 hours per week. This suggests lower social capital in urban areas as Putnam (1993) maintained. The model showed

rough linearity with the F-value of 0.0557. Therefore, the author consider the model durable, however the limitation of the model requires improvement for further studies.

Table 4 *Regression Time spent for Volunteer (Hours per week) and Amount of gasoline spent (L)*

|  | Coefficient | Standard Error |
|--|-------------|----------------|
| Amount of gasoline spent for automobile, except cargo and bus (L / Person) | -0.00791*   | 0.00320        |
| Population density (Person / km <sup>2</sup> )                             | 0.000336*   | 0.000336       |
| Constant   | 9.23        | 2.01           |
| Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>  | 0.0831      |                |
| Significant F  | 0.0557      |                |

\*\*Significant at a 1% level \*Significant at a 5% level

Social capital measurements social life and volunteerism are significantly and positively associated with population density. This is not consistent with other studies that reported lower levels of social interaction in high density areas in the UK (Dempsey et al, 2002), and lower level of social participation in the US (Glaeser and Gottlieb, 2006).

Third, the researcher found that an “initial fee for a ride” was positively and significantly associated with “time spent per week on local improvement activities” as seen in Table 5. This also suggests a negative relationship between TOD’s effort to lower transportation cost versus the effect on getting people to participate in local activities. The researcher found that, the “least expected cost of using public transport when going to hospital” was significantly associated with “times spent per week on local improvement activities.” Furthermore, it is interesting to

look at what part of the cost is significant. In other words, should the effort to decrease transportation cost be made to lower the initial fee, maximum fee, yen per kilo, or median? Apparently, a unit decrease of “first quartile of the cost of getting to the hospital” is associated with an approximately 50 minutes per week increase of “local improvement activities.” A unit here includes expected cost including time, monetary and opportunity cost, which is summarized as having a mean of 24.52 and a standard deviation of 5.73. Thinking about light rail transportation or community buses, which are cheap short distance forms of public transport, improvement on public transport for cheap short distances may enhance participation in local activities, probably because cheap short distance public transport directly encourages social participation when improvements are made.

Table 5 Regression Volunteer work for improvement of neighborhood and Cost of transport

|                          | Coefficient | Standard Error |
|--------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Initial fee for a ride   | 0.060**     | 0.019          |
| Yen per kilometer        | -0.023      | 0.063          |
| Minimum                  | -0.684      | 0.687          |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Quartile | -0.881*     | 0.406          |
| Median                   | 0.570       | 0.402          |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quartile | -0.088      | 0.119          |
| Maximum                  | 0.004       | 0.001          |
| Constant                 | 9.80        | 4.32           |
| Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>  | 0.541       |                |
| Significant F            | 1.95E-06    |                |

\*\*Significant at a 1% level, \*Significant at a 5% level

### Conclusion

The researcher found evidence that the increase of TOD is associated with a high level of social capital. However, the result is mixed between various ways to measure TOD and social capital. On the one hand, there is no evidence that when people spend less on gas for automobiles, social life increases. However, an increase of population density is positively and significantly associated with social life. A thousand people per km<sup>2</sup> increase of population density is associated with one more hour of time spent on social life per week. Therefore, attraction and concentration of the population can be the channel through which TOD increases social capital. On the other hand, the researcher find evidence that the amount of gas spent is negatively and significantly correlated with volunteerism. In the meanwhile, population density was negatively associated with volunteerism. TOD as a means to increase social capital requires careful control of this negative effect observed by concentration. The economic impact of this effect is a decrease of one hundred liters of gasoline usage per year is associated with approximately 0.8

hours per week increase of volunteer work. Lastly, an initial fee for public transport is positively and significantly associated with local improvement activities, casting doubt on TOD's ability to reduce transportation costs. However, improvement on cheap short distance transport such as LRTs and community buses are advised, given a decrease worth one fifth the standard deviation of the "first quartile of the cost of getting to hospital" is associated with a 50 minutes per week increase of local improvement activities.

The model used is insufficient to capture the relationship between TOD and social capital, and the researcher suggests two improvements in the methodology. First, more data on one measurement can be collected from different periods, such as 2011 and 2016. This will allow more credible results. Second, causality cannot be established from the OLS regression. There are many causality problems we can address. For instance, is high social life caused by high density or the other way around? Also, does high population density decrease volunteers in Japan? These are interesting research questions to investigate in the future.

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# Residents' Subjective Well-being in Depopulated Akita: The Lifestyle in the Periphery

Hiroki Miyake

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## Author's Note

**Hiroki Miyake** is a junior in the Global Studies, Transnational Studies program. He wrote the paper "Residents' Subjective Well-being in Depopulated Akita: The Lifestyle in the Periphery" in Dr. Lee Friederich's ENG150 Advanced Research Writing class. Hiroki's interest is in community studies and communication studies. Extracurricular activities with local people in Akita have made him interested in them and the essay topic.

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## Abstract

Akita prefecture is the least populous area in Japan (Mock, 2019). In Akita, residents suffer a shortage of access to life necessities and medical services. There are two main reasons for depopulation: migration to urban areas, and an aging society (Mock, 2019). Consequently, Akita's communities and economy have shrunk year by year. As a result, residents are not satisfied with their lives. On the other hand, the number of people who migrate to the countryside is increasing (Obikwelu et al., 2017). They seek for well-being in rural areas.

In this way, there is a gap of recognition towards rural life. This research investigated factors that affect people's subjective well-being in depopulated Akita. From interviews with the professional and the public worker, it became clear that there are no fixed factors, and all people seek their fruitful life regardless of their residences. It is the consequence of the Japanese social structure. From the result, the researcher discussed three determinants of the sense of subjective well-being; individualism and collectivism, the center and periphery, and residents and non-residents. In rural areas like Akita, related populations can contribute to the reconstruction of attitudes towards residents' subjective well-being.

**Keywords:** subjective well-being, depopulation, rural communities, related population, Akita

## Introduction

The word bumpkin means “a person from the countryside who is considered to be awkward and stupid” (Cambridge University Press, n.d.). Similarly, in Japan, the Japanese term *inaka-kusai* literally means the stink of the countryside, but it actually means rustic and unsophisticated (Electronic Dictionary Research and Development Group, n.d.a). These terms imply urbanites’ lofty attitude towards rural residents. At the same time, there is a sharp contrast between life in metropolitan areas and non-metropolitan areas. Historically, nations have developed with a focus on cities. On the other hand, rural areas have been regarded as the periphery of the nation.

In Japan, behind urban areas such as Tokyo, rural areas are facing a harsh situation. Low fertility rates and long life expectancy result in depopulation and the low rate of the working-age population aged 25 to 64. (The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2019, pp. 26-30). Furthermore, depopulation causes social issues in the community. Takeo and Dormido (2019) reported that rural areas face the decline of local economy and inaccessibility to social services, because of the aging society and outflow of young people seeking urban opportunities (paras. 4-13). As counteracts, the national government promotes regional revitalization and a new concept of so-called related population who have a relationship with a specific region and the possibility of settlement (Mizuho Research Institute, 2019, pp.11-13). The revitalization of rural areas can be the key to the development of Japan. Also, Japanese people start to

focus on beneficial lifestyles in the countryside. Therefore, now is the time to discuss the future of rural areas, the periphery of Japan.

Akita, a prefecture in northeastern Japan, is a countryside area at the forefront of depopulation (Takeo & Dormido, 2019, para. 4). The prefecture is the least populated area in Japan, and it is estimated that Akita’s population will become less than one-fifth of the current population within 80 years (Mock, 2019, pp. 245-247). As depopulation progresses, the problems that residents in Akita face will be seen all around Japan. Comprehending the lifestyle of people in depopulated Akita will lead to figuring out the preferable lifestyle for Japanese people in the future. This research will focus on the lives and subjective well-being of Akita’s depopulated communities. This section assesses the factors of depopulation, problems in Akita, and the potential of rural areas, with the analysis of previous researches.

## Literature Review

### *The causes of depopulation*

Young people in Akita leave their hometown, seeking jobs and educational opportunities. The Department of Planning and Promotion (2020) of Akita prefectural government reported that 59.2% of migrants are aged 15 to 29, which means one-fifth of the population in this age left Akita; they left Akita because of their occupations or education (pp. 6-8). Also, Akita has a lower percentage of the population from outside prefectures (the Department of International Relations, 2017, pp. 21-23). Those data imply that many young residents migrate from Akita. A prime reason for migra-

tion is that Akita has fewer opportunities for attractive jobs and higher education, even though Akita places first in the academic score of the National Achievement Test in elementary school students (Mock, 2019, pp. 245-247). The young population, aged 15 to 34, is the driving force of a community, but Akita does not have enough of them due to the outflow to cities.

Behind the tendency of outflow from rural areas to urban areas, there is the concentration of industry and ideology encouraging young people to relocate to Tokyo. Since the 1960s, the government has established a Tokyo-centered industrial hierarchy for economic growth (Sugimoto, 2014, pp. 71-72). With the concentrated offices, firms, and stores, urban workers can communicate efficiently and productively in time and cost. As a result, the Japanese economy has grown significantly, but it makes a gap in wages between the center and periphery. Furthermore, mass media industries in Tokyo have centralized information. They have promoted the idea that Tokyo is the “coolest” place where smart youngsters live, and in contrast, rural citizens are uncool and unsophisticated (Mock, 2019, pp. 256-257). It causes the gap in ideological status between regions. To reduce these disparities in income and status, rural residents migrate to metropolises. That is why migration to urban areas is a reasonable and inevitable choice for rural youngsters.

#### *Social issues in Akita*

In terms of problems, Akita is in a negative cycle of depopulation and shrinkage of the economy. The outflow of the population

has caused the decline of local industries. As a result, young residents have left Akita to work at more fascinating and developing companies in cities. Mock (2019) discusses the decline of primary industries comprising fisheries, forestry, and agriculture, which were the leading industries in Akita, rich in natural resources (pp. 248-254). These workers have had difficulty earning enough money to meet their basic expenses. Furthermore, such a shrinkage has accelerated due to the aging population. By 2025, when members of the so-called “Dankai” generations, who were born during the baby-boom between 1947 and 1949, turns 75, it is estimated that the rate of the population aged over 75 will rise significantly (Kajita et al., 2016, p. 431). With this growth rate, the shrinkage of the economy will progress, as youngsters continue to leave Akita.

Moreover, in Akita, the social well-being and personal well-being of citizens in communities do not improve. The aging society surges in demand for social welfare services, including medical ones. Nevertheless, these facilities are also suffering from chronic labor shortages, and citizens lose access to them. Kudo and Yarime (2012) researched communities in Yurihonjo, the municipality located in the southern Akita. From their research, it becomes clear that residents in remote areas far from the center of the municipality are dissatisfied with “transportation and access,” “education employment,” and “health” (Kudo & Yarime, 2012 p. 503). These communities are in danger of extinction. Additionally, residents are not satisfied with Akita’s current situation, especially about the depopulation and de-

clining industries (Miyamoto & Watanabe, 2017, pp. 347-349). In these current situations, it is getting more difficult to maintain community and residents' well-being.

#### *The possibility of rural areas*

Even in such challenging situations, there is a potential advantage in Akita. Japanese social structure makes an imbalanced population density. Population concentration in Tokyo brings residents a productive lifestyle, but it has the risk of fatal damage from disasters and potential consequences (Brasor, 2020, para. 4). An urban lifestyle also leads to a miserable life due to congested environments like packed trains or long commute times (Sugimoto, 2014, p. 72). In contrast, there are potential benefits to the countryside. Non-metropolitan citizens can have a life with abundant nature and substantial connections to the community (Takeo & Dormido, 2019, paras. 21-23). Especially for urban dwellers, a quiet and relaxed life in the natural environment is attractive, and they are fascinated by the lower cost of living and products (Obikwelu et al., 2017, pp. 79-80). Considering that, Akita, one of Japan's most typical rural areas, has more opportunities for a beneficial lifestyle.

More and more people have focused on such benefits. The number of people who migrate to the countryside is slightly increasing, seeking their well-being (Chandran, 2019, paras. 32-36). Such migration to rural areas is called an I-turn. In addition to I-turners, the number of U-turners, who return to their hometown from metropolises, is also increasing. I-turn and U-turn movements contribute to the increase of the

population of rural communities. The population structure of Akita has a specific feature. The percentage of U-turners in Akita is 34.8%, which is the third-largest rate of Japan (the Department of International Relations, 2017, pp. 21-23). In Akita, urban experiences of U-turners and migrants have played significant roles in local communities.

Furthermore, the number of outsiders will increase due to the I-turn movements. With these rural revitalization trends, both national and local governments encourage urban dwellers to be more interested in the countryside. However, as a counter measure against depopulation, the regeneration policies of non-metropolitan areas have not effectively increased the population (Kajita et al., 2016, pp. 431-432). In these cases, the migration without any preparation seems difficult for urban dwellers. Deguchi et al. (2020) report the importance of non-residential populations like tourists. They spend money on their travels, which can connect to the revitalization of the local economy (pp. 92-93). However, they cannot solve the depopulation problem because they will not relocate. Therefore, the government has tried to multiply the number of non-residential populations with more profound relationships with communities. They are called related population, who have the possibility of migration in the future (Mizuho Research Institute, 2019, pp. 11-12). They can be the leaders or operators of community development from outsiders' perspectives. Akita prefectural government also tries to approach potential migrants.



### *Subjective well-being of residents and migrants*

In this way, Akita suffers from reduced community and economy because of its depopulation caused by aging-society and the outflow of youngsters. The situation seems inevitable due to the structure of Japanese society. Residents face social problems, and they are not satisfied with them. On the other hand, in this circumstance, urbanites migrate to the countryside and find their well-being in rural areas, fascinated by potential benefits. There is the gap of perception of well-being in rural lifestyle, between indigenous residents and migrants.

Well-being is a vague term, so this paper defines it as subjective well-being. Diener and Diener (2009) defined subjective well-being as the person's self-evaluation, which consists of self-esteem, income, and life satisfaction (p. 71). To clarify the current situations of these three elements will lead to clarifying the subjective well-being of residents. Miyamoto and Watanabe (2017) researched subjective well-being in Akita and pointed out the lack of life satisfaction (p. 351). They analyzed negative factors for residents, but the recognition gap shows that there must be a benefit that fascinates increasing I-turners. In these circumstances, it is significant to investigate Akita residents' subjective well-being at the leading edge of community extinction. It is also arguable whether outsiders or revitalization policies of local and national governments, including the approach for related population, can contribute to their subjective well-being.

### **Methodology**

#### *Guiding Questions*

To clarify the factors of subjective well-being in Akita residents, the researcher investigated people who are tackling depopulation problems at Akita. The guiding question of the research was: "What factors affect people's fruitful life in shrinking, depopulated communities in Akita?" In this question, the phrase, a fruitful life, means the state that people can keep not only livable accessibility to livable medical supports and necessities but also their subjective well-being. Also, the researcher focused on the difference in factors of well-being between urban dwellers and people in the countryside. Such differences led to finding out the role of outsiders or related population for the subjective well-being of themselves and residents in local communities.

#### *Setting and Participants*

For this study, the researcher selected two people as participants. The first one is Professor Ayumi Sugimoto, Associate Professor at Akita International University (AIU). Her field of expertise is environmental governance, memory in rural communities, and fieldwork education. The researcher asked her because she is a Professor of Community Studies at AIU, who offered information from multiple academic perspectives. Also, she was not born in Akita, so that she has the viewpoint of an outsider who migrated to Akita. The researcher also interviewed Mr. Masakazu Sato, a public worker in Ugo, a municipality in southeastern Akita, and a member of a non-profit organization working for "related populations" men-

tioned above. The purpose of the interview is to gain additional information and cases of promoting rural relocation and related population. Participants told the researcher elements of subjective well-being in Akita, based on their experiences in their jobs.

#### *Data Collection*

The researcher interviewed both participants on July 3rd, 2020. In the interviews, there were eleven open-ended questions about their works and current situations in Akita, based on the guiding question “What factors affect people’s fruitful life in shrinking, depopulated communities in Akita?” (See Appendix). The interviews were conducted and recorded via ZOOM, the online video chat service. In the interviews, the researcher and participants used their first language, Japanese, to prevent misunderstanding. By the day before the meeting, the researcher sent details of the research and interview questions.

#### *Findings*

In the interview, the two interviewees discussed Akita’s current situation and the significance of elements in subjective well-being. As a problem, residents do not meet enough of the requirements for subjective well-being: self-esteem, income, or life satisfaction. However, there are several intangible benefits that rural residents receive. Also, there are severe gaps in ideology toward well-being between regions. In Japan, such gaps have been created since the 17th century, and Japanese people have changed the concept of well-being. In this situation, such gaps and

general trends in well-being are under reconsideration. Related populations and rural migration contribute to these movements.

#### *The history of Japanese social structures*

Professor Sugimoto analyzed the current situation around depopulation in Akita from a historical perspective. Relationships between center and periphery are seen in feudalism since the Edo period, which began in 1603. There was a system of centralized power, business, and politics. The resulting concentration Japan had developed continued and accelerated since the 1960s. With the change, all people chose and tried to be prosperous, and they migrated to the center. In other words, this structure and ideology has been historically constructed since the 17th century. Professor Sugimoto emphasized that depopulation is the compensation for citizen’s choices, and such problems are essential to distribute budget to and formulate policies for in the countryside. Therefore, depopulation problems should be considered not only in the countryside, but as complications of the Japanese social structure and the shift of attitudes toward richness.

#### *Benefits and difficulties in a traditional rural lifestyle*

Interviewees pointed out local traditions and communities as specific characteristics in Akita. They emphasized that those features affect residents’ life positively and negatively. The most significant factor is their strong cultural identity with close relationships between residents. Mr. Sato confirmed that people communicate based on tangible and intangible legacies, such as resources, tra-

ditional knowledge, or stable connections between residents, inherited from generation to generation. Also, Professor Sugimoto pointed out these legacies affect their daily lives. With a stable connection among residents, they have a harmonious life in an orderly manner. On the other hand, it is difficult for outsiders to receive the same benefit because it is constructed with traditions and social ties in communities. Mr. Sato insisted that they tend to be stereotypical and status-oriented. Also, Professor Sugimoto felt the exclusivity toward her as an outsider.

#### *The roles of outsiders and related population*

Even though people from other communities are regarded as strangers and outsiders, they are essential for the development of shrinking communities. Especially, related populations have significant roles for the revitalization of communities and the improvement of residents' lives. Professor Sugimoto pointed out the necessity to shift community mobility from closed to open. The mobility will protect the community from shrinkage, and the non-residential population will play essential roles in the community. Also, Mr. Sato defined related populations as fans of the resources in the area. They visit and buy local products. Also, in Ugo, the local government provides opportunities for communicating with local high school students. Fans of the community can have an impact on the local economy and education.

### **Discussion**

Considering the interviews and secondary research, Akita residents tend to be dissatisfied with their lives. There is no definite

factor to improve their subjective well-being. Some people are fascinated by rural life because they seek something to raise their self-esteem or life satisfaction, the elements of subjective well-being, just as rural residents seek these elements in metropolises. There are differences and gaps of recognition toward rural lifestyle between regions and residents. It is because the sense of subjective well-being is personally constructed with the ideology in the regions. There are three possible determinants of such points of view: individualism and collectivism, the center and periphery, and residents and non-residents. Those determinants are not problems in Akita, but distortions of Japanese social structure.

#### *Individualism and collectivism*

In Japan, opposite thoughts are co-existing, and they affect citizens' ideology. Historically, Japanese society was collectivistic, but Western individualism has spread with Americanization and industrialization after World War (Ogihara, 2017, pp. 5-6). The mixture of individualism and collectivism can distort people's sense of happiness. Individualism and industrialized societies value individual success in finance; in contrast, collectivism and traditional societies value harmony in the group (Ogihara, 2017, p. 4). As a result of its conflict and fusion, each citizen might have had different values of happiness. Subjective well-being consists of self-esteem, income, and life satisfaction, which depends on subjective values (Diener & Diener, 2009, p. 71). Such a difference in value causes several perspectives towards rural life between residents and outsiders. Therefore, whether

a rural lifestyle is fruitful or not depends on people. Nevertheless, this discussion is based on the premise that people can have enough access to daily necessities, medical support, and social services. There is a need to help rural residents suffering the lack of them.

#### *The center and periphery*

Japanese society has developed with the system of centralization of functions and population. From a macro perspective, the problem is the gap between the central and rural areas of Japan. The national government tends to focus on metropolises and ignore the countryside (Sugimoto, 2014, p. 71). Nevertheless, similar disparities can be seen in Akita. This gap can affect the different sense of subjective well-being between areas in Akita, as Kudo and Yarime's (2012) research suggests (p. 496). There is a remarkable gap of opportunities and ideology between central Akita and the periphery of Akita. For example, residents have less opportunity for higher education or jobs in the peripheries (Mock, 2019, pp. 254-256). Furthermore, prefectural governments distribute budget mainly to the economic and political center of the prefecture. This focus can lead to the well-being of those in the center. However, for residents in peripheries, this is unfair treatment. Small municipalities like Ugo do not have enough budget for enough public services or innovative policies.

#### *Residents and non-residents*

Those disparities of services can change due to the commitment of non-residential populations, especially related populations. With the mobility and openness of commu-

nities, the related populations might participate in community activities. Historically, residents and non-residents are completely divided, but the border between them is ambiguous. Such interaction can benefit all stakeholders of communities. Professor Sugimoto indicated that affirmation from outsiders could be connected to the rise of residents' self-esteem. Also, related populations can reflect their life as residents in the community. There must be friction of ideologies, but related populations and residents could reconstruct their lifestyle from conflicts into a more holistic one. The relationships between residents and related populations could rebuild a more satisfying community where every stakeholder can keep their subjective well-being.

#### *Limitations and further research*

As a limitation of the research, there can be several biases both in primary and secondary research. The number of participants interview is limited, and there must be selection bias and participants' assumptions in the interview data. Interviewing workers and officials in the national government could provide other perspectives. In addition, in the interview, Professor Sugimoto explained that depopulation should not be analyzed as the problem only in rural areas. However, the secondary research before the interview treats the problems of depopulation as rural issues. Therefore, secondary research has a data selection bias. The research of Japanese social structure is required to investigate the topic more.

Also, this research did not include social change due to the pandemic of COVID-19.

The discussion in this research is based on the premise that Akita is depopulated. However, it is estimated that the Japanese government encourages relocation from metropolises to non-metropolitan areas to reduce the risk of the epidemic (Brasor, paras. 4-5). If the relocation is accelerated and overpopulation results, potential problems will occur, such as environmental issues due to the overuse of private vehicles. Considering these problems and possibilities, the ideology or policies for rural areas will change, and depopulation will become more complicated. There is room for future researches on this topic.

### **Conclusion**

This research investigated residents' lifestyle in Akita with the research question "what factors affect people's fruitful life in shrinking, depopulated communities in Akita?" There is no fixed factor, but specific features of the rural community, such as community ties, local traditions, or the natural environment, can be sources of subjective well-being. Also, the openness of communities with related populations will be an opportunity to reflect their lives as well.

In Akita, people suffer depopulation and shrinkage of the local economy and communities because of the compensation for the centralized structure of Japanese society, constructed historically. This structure also has affected citizens' concept of happiness and well-being. People tend to seek something they do not have for being satisfied with their lives. This tendency depends on individuals, but their surroundings are significant determinants. Especially in rural areas, the collaboration of indigenous residents and non-resident, related populations can reconstruct a sense of well-being. Practical collaboration methods are under the discussion by governments and are worth researching further.

The Japanese term *Ningen-kusai* means "full of human traits," even though it literally means the stink of people (Electronic Dictionary Research and Development Group, n.d.b). The term indicates that not only bumpkins, but also all people have some stink. People have been seeking a lifestyle full of subjective well-being. Such endless exploration is a very human activity, and Akita can be the most suitable place for that.

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## Appendix

### *Interview Questions*

#### Interview 1: Professor Ayumi Sugimoto

Q1: What brings you to live and work in Akita?

Q2: Do you have any difficulties living or working in Akita? When do you feel happy in Akita?

Q3: Do you feel like you have a fruitful life? Why do you think so?

Q4: From your courses and my research, it becomes clear that depopulation in Akita is due to the Japanese social structure, which centralizes the function to urban areas. Also, aging-society affects depopulation. Are there any other reasons that you know of from multiple geographical, historical, or economic perspectives?

Q5: How Does depopulation affect residents' life? What are the current problems which residents face because of depopulation?

Q6: What problems do you predict that can happen in Akita in the near future because of depopulation?

Q7: Regarding these issues, are there some unique characteristics only in Akita or rural areas? How do those characteristics work? Do they are positive or negative?

Q8: From your perspective, do you think people in Akita can keep their fruitful life now? (The definition of fruitful: Sense of fulfillment and standard life with enough support)

Q9: Do you have anything to comment on my research questions?

Q10: Do you have any solutions for the shrinkage of the community?

Q11: In Japan, "Related Population" is promoted by the government. What do you think about it? Can this project help rural areas?

The researcher asked additional questions based on the responses of interviewee.

## Interview 2: Mr. Masakazu Sato

- Q1: What are your relationship with Ugo town? Why are you decided to work in the Town office?
- Q2: Do you have any difficulties living or working in Akita? When do you feel happy in Akita?
- Q3: Do you feel like you have a fruitful life? Why do you think so?
- Q4: What are the current problems that residents face because of depopulation?
- Q5: What problems do you predict that can happen in the near future because of depopulation?
- Q6: Regarding these issues, are there some unique characteristics only in Akita or rural areas? How do those characteristics work? Do they are positive or negative?
- Q7: Do you think people in Akita can keep their fruitful life now? If so, how do they live? If not, what services or systems do they need in order to achieve their well-being?  
(The definition of happy: Sense of fulfillment, standard life with enough support)
- Q8: Your project focuses on “Related Population.” How does your project help rural areas?
- Q9: Do you think “Related Population” can make residents’ life happier?
- Q10: Do you have some difficulties with your project?
- Q11: Do you have any comments or suggestions for my research?

The researcher asked additional questions based on the responses of interviewee.



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# Sexism in Japanese Traditions

Ayuna Yukihiro

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## Author's Note

**Ayuna Yukihiro** is a sophomore student in the Global Studies program. Her essay "Sexism in Japanese Traditions" was written for the Advanced Research Writing class under Professor Lee Friederich's supervision at AIU. Her experience in AIU's Kanto team and learning about religious gender discrimination was influential for this research topic.

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## Abstract

Throughout Japan's rich history, many traditions and rituals have been passed down to us today. However, due to modernization of society, the problems of discrimination against women began to surface in Shinto traditions. It has become a question as to whether these sexist rules are what Shintoism stands for, or merely the values of male supremacy reflected upon religions. Experts suggest religion and politics reflect upon each other and say if gender equality is achieved on one side, the other will follow. Other experts suggest that although these sexist rules exist, it is unlikely for them to change without significant public pressure. By tracing back to the origin of Shintoism beliefs, there were some interesting findings. Women served as influential figures and illustrated as powerful goddess in Shintoism in ancient Japan; however, they were degraded as more patriarchal values began to set in Japan. In my primary research, I surveyed how young Japanese university students saw the sexist rules and observed whether people feel there should be changes made. I found that although most participants recognized the rules as discrimination against women, they were split in opinions of whether those traditions should be preserved and passed on the way they are now.

**Keywords:** oversimplification, Shintoism, purity, patriarchal, gender equality

## Introduction

### *Overview of Japanese traditions and society*

The sun begins to set, and excitement grows among the audience and the performers as they all wait to hear the first blow of the whistle. When the sound echoes through the hot, humid summer air, the rhythmical music from the drums and flutes take over; the annual Kanto Festival has begun. All at once, the Kanto poles are lifted, and the bright lanterns light up the streets. However, as the performance carries on, we begin to notice that only men are holding up the Kanto poles. Regardless of whether women are physically able to hold the pole up, there is a strict rule which bans women from even touching or stepping over the poles. Similarly, there are other traditions seen as a discriminatory act against women in Japan.

Some see these issues from the religious and traditional aspects and emphasize that traditions should be kept and be passed on (Sumo wrestling, 2018). Others see them from political aspects and point out that these oppressions are caused by social and political beliefs of male supremacy and are merely disguised and justified in the form of sacred traditions. (Rich, 2018). Matters associated with religion are often some of the most complex and often avoided topics to discuss because of their sacredness (Alba, 2019). Of course, overgeneralizing these issues and accusing all Japanese traditions to be sexist causes misunderstanding of Japan's history and culture (Yoshida, 2018). However, the problems of religious discrimination against women are bound up in the unclear origins and history of the rules. Without understanding the purpose or the

values that Shintoism holds, the reality of women's oppression in religion will forever be an unsolved problem in modern times.

Furthermore, in Japan, gender inequality or male-dominated society has caused women to be submissive in fulfilling their duty as a "good wife," including household chores such as cooking, cleaning, and child-rearing. (Cozy, 2013). According to The Global Gender Gap Index (2020), Japan ranks 121 out of 153 countries on the list. In the previous year of 2018, Japan ranked 110 out of 149 countries (World Economic Forum, 2018). This data shows that Japan's ranking on gender equality is lowering instead of heading towards improvement. From these data, it can be said that Japanese culture still holds on to their old-fashioned beliefs. The reluctance of change in the society may be reflecting religious oppression on women in Shinto traditions and rituals.

Here, I will examine whether religious discriminations reflect political and patriarchal beliefs, and the way people think of these problems. Explicitly focusing on Shinto traditions, I will trace back to what these traditions and religious beliefs have at their foundations.

## Literature Review

### *Man-Made Rules for "Sacred" Traditions: Imperial Household Law*

Religions are known to be "smeared with so much sexual discrimination" (Yoshida, 2018, para.8). What is more, some Japanese traditions that discriminate against women are said to be man-made rules reflecting patriarchal beliefs in society. One of Japan's most controversial topics can be seen in the

Imperial Household Laws. Changes made to this law during the Meiji era banned women from succession to the throne, even when female Emperors were seen in history (Taylor, 2019). This rule has been strictly kept to this day, and last year, Japan welcomed its new Emperor. Further flaws to the law surfaced when Empress Masako was not allowed to participate in one of Emperor Naruhito's enthronement ceremony rituals because of the Imperial Household Law. However, a woman politician in the cabinet of Prime Minister Abe was accepted to view the enthronement for the first time in history (Rich, 2019). This questions the legitimacy of the rule, since the law prohibits the Empress from attending because of her sex, not her status.

Although the ritual is considered religiously "sacred," as the change to this rule in the Meiji era suggests, the rules restricting women's Imperial members from attending are politically made. This implies that religious discrimination is indeed a reflection of social inequality (Barber, 2012). However, society's response to these male-dominated beliefs is beginning to change. According to a survey, 82% of the respondents voted for supporting women's succession to the throne (Nearly 80% in Japan, 2019). This number shows that people are willing to change "sacred" traditions and back the idea that "Religion's endorsement of male supremacy is inconsistent with 21st-century values of social justice and gender equality." (Alba, 2019, para.9).

#### *Man-Made Rules for "Sacred" Traditions:*

##### *Sumo Wrestling*

Other controversial traditions can be seen

in Japanese national sport Sumo. The rule states that women are prohibited from entering the dohyo, the sumo ring, based on religious belief from Shintoism, which considers women as "unclean" or "impure" because of menstrual blood (Yoshida, 2018). When the news of a woman forced out of the dohyo to save a man's life was broadcast on the news, it caught the attention of many people both domestically and internationally, which led to questioning the appropriateness of this sort of discrimination in traditions in modern society (Rich, 2018). From a modern society's point of view, this limiting act on women is considered sexism to the public's eyes. Especially from Western ideas, this type of tradition that openly discriminates against women is considered outdated and said to symbolize society's values on gender equality (Barber, 2012). From the idea that social inequality reflects cultural inequality, experts believe that public pressure towards these organizations is necessary for change (Barber, 2012).

##### *Shinto Myths*

Shintoism is considered to be the foundation for Japanese culture and lifestyle (Shinto, 2009), tracing back to one of Shinto's holy books, "Nihon-shoki," which illustrates a powerful "sun goddess" called Amaterasu. She is said to be "the most important deity in the Shinto religion, and ruler of Takama no Hara (the High Celestial Plain), the domain of the kami or spirits" (Cartwright, 2012, para.1). Because the Japanese imperial family is thought to be the descendants of this goddess who represents an influential female figure, people can say that the Shinto religion itself does not have a strong

sense of degradation towards women's value.

Perhaps Shintoism's strong emphasis on "purity" makes the religion vulnerable against patriarchal beliefs in society. In Shintoism, the meaning of "impurity" is associated with diseases or death (Religions, 2009). Furthermore, many traditions and festivals that are seen in Japan originate from the act of praying for a good harvest because Shintoism is well-known as religion based on the faith of worshipping nature (Hirai, 2019). The Akita Kanto Festival is one example. When we trace back to the festival's origin, it is to get rid of evil spirits during midsummer and pray for a plentiful harvest for rice and crops (Akita Kanto Festival, n.d.). This explanation fits the purpose of getting rid of impurity. However, when women are only permitted limited roles in the festival, such as playing the flutes or drums, the meaning of "impurity" begins to shift. The local people explain that women ban rules come from a myth that says the Kanto pole represents male genitals, and touching them will make women "sexually" impure, which is why women are banned from the festival. These myths are often passed down orally and are rarely found in the form of writing. The explanation of this myth cannot be found on the Akita Kanto Festival's official website. This questions whether the justification of discrimination against women seen in this festival should be valid. However, people directly involved in these traditions seem to hold a strong position on preserving the traditions that have been passed on to them and state that this rule will not change.

### *Change of Concept of "Purity" in Shintoism*

The values of women's sexual purity are majorly reflected through Miko or shrine maidens in Shinto temples. They are said to be one of the most religious and politically powerful figures back in ancient Japan (Davies, n.d.). However, as women, "sexual purity was essential," and they were expected to be virgins (Davies, n.d., para.6). However, now, women do not have to be virgins to become a Miko, and the traditions or roles of Miko have drastically changed since ancient times. Now, most Miko found in Shinto temples are merely considered assistants to the priest, and most of them are young part-time workers in universities and have no religious ties to Shinto (Davies, n.d.). The traditional and religious roles of Miko has faded to some extent as they do not hold such an influential role anymore. As seen in this case, "history shows that any religion that refuses to change dies out." (Kremer, 2013, para.8). Most religions face a turning point in which they must choose to change to survive the changes in society. Since religion is deeply connected with politics, some experts point out that as more women begin to thrive in professional fields, we will see changes in religious discrimination (Barber, 2012).

### *Change in Rules*

The reality, however, is that Japanese traditions are still often reluctant to change even with social pressures, from a strong belief that their traditions and rituals are an essential aspect of Japanese culture that has been passed on from ancestors. They are considered as something highly spiritual. Moreover, the continuation of enthusiasm

towards the tradition may be why associations are reluctant to change. For example, the Japan Sumo Association is known to keep its rules despite its several scandals because sumo still has sufficient numbers of both men and women supporters (Rich, 2018).

### *Religions and Politics*

To this point, I have repeatedly introduced the close-knit relations between religion and politics. We can observe how much religion can strongly impact our lives. Statistics show that there are 89.5 million Shinto followers in Japan, making 70.4% of the total population (Iwai, 2017). However, today, many Japanese people are not entirely devoted to their religion, and often are unaware of what it stands for. That is why some experts are concerned that an “oversimplification” of these sexist traditions can cause people to misunderstand the whole structure of Japanese values (Yoshida, 2018).

Uncertainty in Shintoism’s position as religion takes on women’s equality and misinterpretations of traditions may make a difference in how people approach traditional problems. One of the reasons that people rarely initiate change is because of “limited awareness of feminism in the country” (Sumo wrestling, 2018, para.19).

In my primary research, I conducted a survey targeting domestic university students to hear the opinions on Japanese traditions. From there, I will proceed to explain what factors are needed to change traditional rules.

## **Methodology**

### *Guiding Questions*

As part of this study, online surveys

were distributed to university students in Japan. Questions were structured to bring out answers that were genuine and based on prior knowledge of these problems. The guiding question of the research was as follows: how do younger generations perceive the relationship in religion and gender inequality? The questions were made to discover where young Japanese university students stand on the problems of religion and traditions in Japan.

### *Setting and Participants*

The survey was taken from July 1st to the 6th. There were 39 respondents to this study. Out of these respondents, 21 were male, and 18 were female. All respondents reside in Japan and hold a Japanese nationality. The majority of the respondents with 29 people were in their sophomore year in university: three people in freshman year, two people in junior, three people in senior, and one listed as “other.” None of the participants are religiously affiliated. Survey respondents were recruited via LINE groups and direct contact with individuals. No specialized prior knowledge of this field was necessary, and participants were asked to answer based on their first-hand thoughts and experiences. The survey was taken anonymously through Google Forms.

### *Data collection*

In this study, nine questions were included in the survey for the participants to answer. The first five questions were basic questions to attain information on participants’ gender, birthplace, grade, and religious affiliation. Some questions in the survey

were multiple-choice answers with the option of “other” where participants were able to type in their answers in case they did not find a suitable answer for them. In the second half of the questions, a short explanation of traditional rules regarding the sumo ring was introduced as an example to help participants to grasp an image of the on-going issues. Participants were asked to answer the questions from the range of “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree” on a lineage scale. The final question to this survey was also a multiple-choice answer where participants were asked to choose the best description that reflected their opinion. An “other” section was also provided for participants to write and express their opinion freely.

### *Findings*

To the question of “do you think gender discriminations seen in traditions (e.g., banning women on sumo ring) are justifiable?” 21 out of 39 people answered that they either “disagree” or “strongly disagree” with justifying religious discriminations against women seen in traditions. Moreover, out of these 21 people, 11 were female, and 10 were male.

However, with a total of 21 male participants, there were less than half that answered against justification when looking from the bigger picture. On the other hand, out of 11 people who answered “strongly agree” and “agree”, nine were male. In this case, males were the majority of respondents supporting for justification of religious discriminations against women.

There is a fascinating twist when the question proceeds to number seven (introduced in the beginning of this section),

where we can see a shift in the participant’s position in the answers. 24 out of 39 participants chose “strongly agree” or “agree” for this question. The typical flow that I have observed from the results was that people who disagreed with the justification for religious discrimination agree to the change for this question. However, six people, and surprisingly, of which 4 were female, answered that they “strongly disagree” that traditional changes should be made with social changes. On the contrary, 7 out of 11 people who supported justification for the previous question answered that they support changes in traditional rules according to social values.

Lacking means to expand and elaborate on what exactly “social values” are in this context, the results can be interpreted in several ways. One way to analyze this shift in position is to think whether these participants saw the phrase “changes in social values” as a positive or negative connotation. Suppose people held a positive image to “social values”. They will most likely choose to agree with the change because it meant that women and men are given equal opportunity in both religious and societal fields. Moreover, people who switched from justifying religion to supporting change may accept that traditions are indeed under the influence of society and that they should keep changing as the world surrounding it changes.

### **Discussion**

#### *Female vs. Male on Religious Justification*

Before this survey, the hypothesis that I had set up was that males would have more tendency to answer to justify religious discrimination

while females would be more opposed.

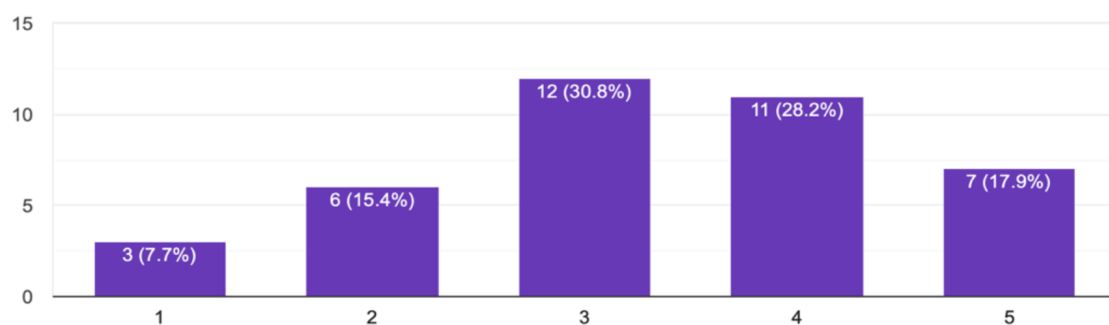
However, there were several findings that I found to be quite interesting. I observed an equal amount of attention paid by both genders regarding this situation even when women were the ones who were put at a disadvantage in this particular case. However, when focusing on the numbers of males who agrees to religious discrimination, one way to analyze this result is by thinking from their position. From the past, men were often the dominating power both in religion and society. Therefore, these results may show that they were either unaware of the privileges they had as a male, or genuinely feel that there is no problem in these traditions and that it should be preserved. While some experts point out that Japan lacks feminist movements (Sumo wrestling, 2018),

when we focus only on Japan's case, what may be lacking is the education of Shintoism's historical background to the people.

Females, who are first-hand experiencers for these sexist rules, are more exposed to the unfairness of "sacred" traditions and will be more likely to hold doubt as to why they are put at a disadvantage. However, while Japanese people often participate in traditional events and festivals, such as the Akita Kanto Festival or sumo wrestling, it is common for them not to have any religious affiliation. This can be observed in question 4, where all respondents answered "no." Thus, without the proper education of these matters, they may be more vulnerable to gullibly accepting that even traditions with discriminations against women are "sacred" traditions.

政治的価値観が宗教上の男女差別に反映していると思いますか？ Do you think political values in society reflect gender inequality in religions ?

39 responses



It is crucial to educate children on what Shintoism as a religion stands for and what it represents. As covered in the literature review, many sexist rules are man-made. Therefore, it is essential to separate the two by showing how the traditions or rituals that are said to derive in Shintoism are politically influenced. The current situa-

tion can be observed in the survey. Question 8 was the only question where the most answered response was number 3 (neutral/ it depends). There was no significant tilt towards neither agree nor disagree. It can be said that people are confused or having trouble grasping this concept of political values infringed on traditions.

However, since I did not give an explanation of what “political value” is, we cannot be sure whether the responses can be interpreted as they are. Nonetheless, without sufficient and accurate knowledge of religion and the traditions, we cannot expect any changes to be made in the rules no matter how unjust they may seem. Moreover, the organization that stands their ground on keeping controversial rules should have the responsibility to state where and when the rules were made under what social contexts.

For further research, there is a need to ask participants whether they were ever taught about Shintoism values and whether they are closely associated with it. Moreover, some questions should be revised to provide a more precise explanation of what terms such as “political value” or “social value” mean in the context of Shintoism. Additionally, now that we are living in the 21st century with different identities such as the LGBTQ community, it will be interesting to observe how rules will be applied.

### **Conclusion**

This paper introduced how sexist rules applied in religious traditions and sacred rituals in Japan were found to reflect the social values of male supremacy in the past. It was clear that traditions were indeed influenced by the political system based on patriarchal values, as seen in the Japanese Imperial Family and sumo wrestling. Other Shinto

traditions are also passed down orally, and the origins of festivals are often not commonly known by people who are not closely associated with them. However, these women ban rules are not sufficient enough to claim that Shintoism itself is a sexist religion because they have powerful female figures illustrated in old literature and myths.

Moreover, some core concept of “purity” was seen to be interpreted in different ways according to rituals. It seems that the vagueness of the term is the reason why Shintoism was vulnerable to be used in favor of patriarchal beliefs. Furthermore, as the survey shows, most Japanese university students feel that these sexist rules should not be justified under the name of religion and should aim to change society. It is important to know where our “traditions” come from and think critically before accepting them.

Finally, we have to carefully think about how much we can intervene with issues regarding religious beliefs and traditions. These questions are never easy to answer but need to be discussed more often in Japan. In order for Japan to achieve gender equality, both socially and religiously, the younger generation should take affirmative actions to understand Japan’s history and culture. When we are able to cultivate our own thoughts and opinions of these matters, perhaps we can move towards finding the solution that satisfies everyone.



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## **Appendix A**

### *Survey Questions*

1. What is your gender?
  - Female
  - Male
  - Prefer not to say
  - Other
2. Where did you grow up?
3. What year are you in?
  - Freshman
  - Sophomore
  - Junior
  - Senior
  - Other
4. Are you in any religion?
  - Yes
  - No
5. If yes, are there any disagreements that you have with your religion's beliefs/values?
  - Yes
  - No
6. Do you think gender discriminations seen in traditions (e.g. banning women on sumo ring) are justifiable?
  - strongly agree
  - agree
  - it depends/ neutral
  - disagree
  - strongly disagree

7. Do you think changes in religions/traditions should be made according to the values in society?
  1. strongly agree
  2. agree
  3. it depends/ neutral
  4. disagree
  5. strongly disagree
  
8. Do you think political values in society reflect gender inequality in religions?
  1. strongly agree
  2. agree
  3. it depends/ neutral
  4. disagree
  5. strongly disagree
  
9. What would be your reaction be if you were rejected in participating in something just because of your sex?
  - It's fair. It has been this way for a long time
  - It's unfair, but it is the way it is
  - It's unfair, this rule needs to change
  - Other

## Appendix B

### *Survey Participants Characteristics*

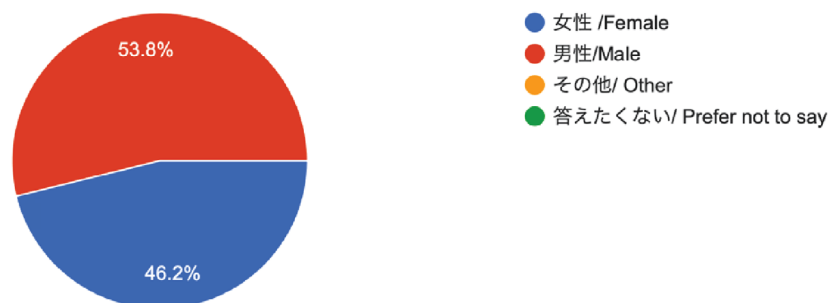
Number of Respondents: 39

Range of Academic Year of Respondents: Freshman ~ Senior

### Survey Participants Answer Summary

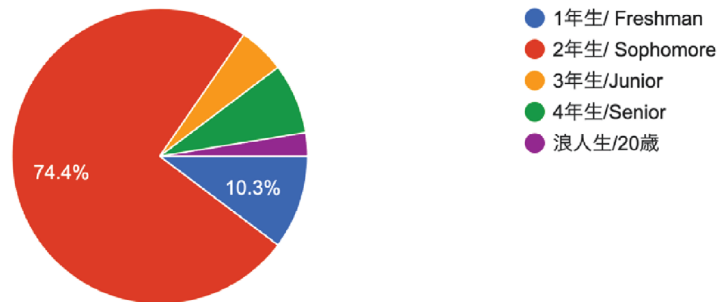
性別/ What is your gender?

39 responses



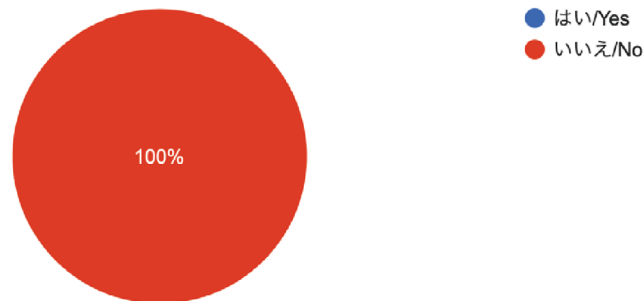
学年/ what year are you in?

39 responses



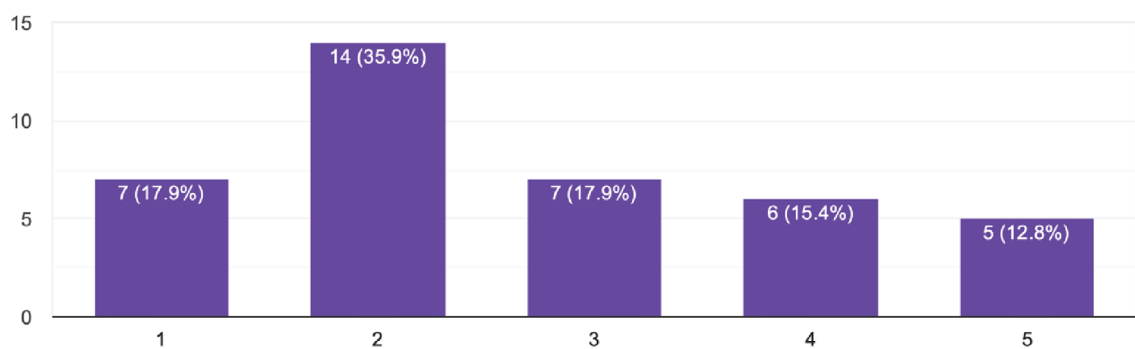
宗教に属していますか？ Are you in any religion?

39 responses



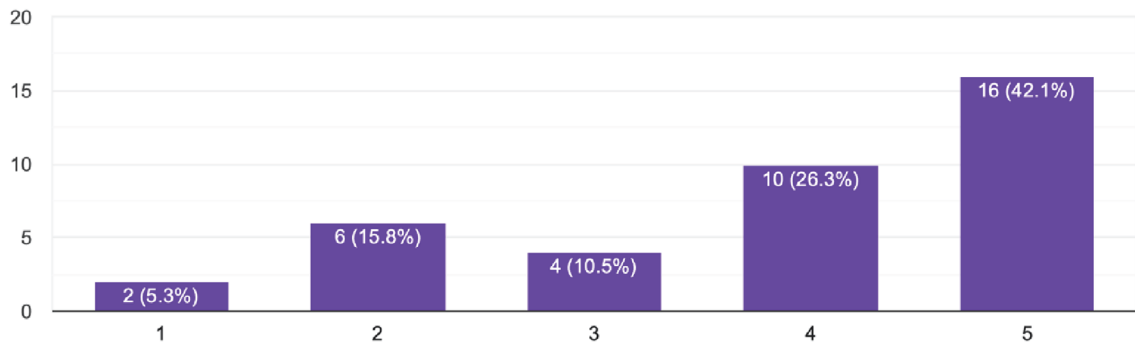
宗教上の差別的な伝統やルールは正当化されるべきだと思いますか？ Do you think gender discriminations seen in traditions (e.g. banning women on sumo ring) are justifiable?

39 responses



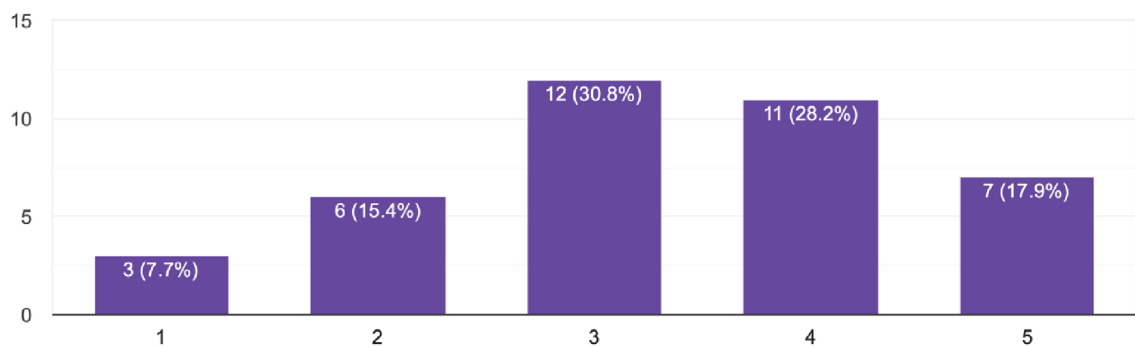
宗教上の伝統やルールは現代社会の価値観の変化に伴い変わるべきだと思いますか？ Do you think changes in religions/traditions should be made according to the values in society?

38 responses



政治的価値観が宗教上の男女差別に反映していると思いますか？ Do you think political values in society reflect gender inequality in religions ?

39 responses



もし性別だけで伝統行事に参加することを拒まれ時のあなたの反応に...thing just because of your sex?

39 responses



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# Transformative Change Starting from Education: Unfolding Impact of Hidden Curriculums on Gender Roles

Nanako Furuse

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## Author's Note

**Nanako Furuse** is a junior in the Global Studies program. Her essay “Transformative Change starting from Education: Unfolding Impact of Hidden Curriculums on Gender Roles” was written for Advanced Research Writing under Professor Lee Friederich’s supervision at AIU. Nanako’s field of interest is gender, feminism, and history in East Asia. Professor Kenkoh Satoh of the Teacher’s License Program and Professor Kaeko Chiba of Anthropology willingly accepted the interview for the essay.

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## Abstract

The recent scandal of irregularities in the entrance examinations at renowned Japanese medical universities shatters the notion of equal educational opportunity regardless of gender. Along with the exposure of the scandal, Japanese education is increasingly encouraged to review its role as an entity to pursue gender equality and considered as one of the most critical sectors to advance the process toward equal society. Recent studies reveal the impact of hidden curriculums on students in the formation of gender roles and how traditional gender roles, the “Ryosai Kenbo” concept, interfere with achieving gender equality. This research aims to examine the influence of hidden curriculums further through a survey and interviews and propose solutions to eliminate hidden curriculums from Japanese education.

**Keywords:** Education, gender inequality, hidden curriculums, Japan

## Introduction

“Japan medical schools ‘rigged women’s results’”—this is a headline from BBC News on December 4, 2018 (BBC News, 2018). The article continued that nine Japanese medical schools admitted that they manipulated test scores to reduce the number of female students because women leave the profession for childbirth and child-care (BBC News, 2018). This scandal undermined the notion of equal educational opportunity and revealed how the education sector is “trying to ‘meet’ the demand” of the traditional job markets with “very patriarchal values – where men work and earn, and women stay home and take care of their children” (UNESCO Bangkok, 2019, paras.15&17). The traditional values based on the idea of men at work and women at home is called “Ryosai Kenbo” or “Good wife, wise mother” and was created at the end of the 1890s in Japan (Koyama, 2012, p.184). Even though the concept has developed and changed as Japanese women gain power in society, the spirit of “Ryosai Kenbo” or traditional gender roles are still influential in Japan, making women engage in “dual labor” at home and working outside (Koyama, 2012, p.183). Due to the disproportionate burden on women based conventional gender roles, it is hard for women to be on the career track. Female employees tend to work as irregular workers, a flexible working style with low wages, to manage both roles as mother and employee (Nikkei, 2019). Moreover, women make up only 14% of employees in managerial positions in Japan, one of the lowest rates in G20 (ILOSTAT and OECD, 2019). Even from the international point of view, Japan still has a long way

from eliminating gender inequality in the labor market. According to the Global Gender Gap Report 2020, which shows “relative gaps between women and men” in four social factors, Japan ranked 121 out of 153 countries, especially low in political empowerment and economic participation and opportunities (World Economic Forum, 2020, p.4).

Although gender roles prevail in many different areas of Japanese women’s lives, such as family, employment, or intimate partner relationships (Belarmino & Roberts, 2019), education has essential responsibilities because “it can either reinforce gender stereotypes, biases and discrimination or change and transform society to realize gender equality” (UNESCO Bangkok, 2019, para.13). “Gender discrimination exists in practice” in the Japanese labor market, and the education sector has to realize the unhealthy collusive relationship with the labor sector and should challenge traditional “beliefs” rather than “contributing and reinforcing gender discrimination in the job market” (UNESCO Bangkok, 2019, para.14&17). Education should be regarded as “the single best investment countries can make to build prosperous, healthy, and equitable societies” (UN, n.d., para.1).

## Literature Review: A Hidden Old-School in Present-day Japan

### *The education policy of the Japanese government*

The Japanese government is regarding education as one of the crucial elements to achieve gender equality. In 2006, the government passed the new Basic Act on Education, a foundation of Japanese education

based on the Constitution of Japan. The new act includes “fostering the values of respect for justice, responsibility, equality between men and women” as one of the five objectives of education that are most critical in current Japan (MEXT, 2006, Chapter.1). Along with the implementation of the new act, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) revised the curriculum and textbooks of schools, aiming to create gender-equal society (MEXT, 2006). However, even after the enactment of the new act, gender roles or bias are still prevalent in education through a “hidden curriculum” (Lee, 2014, p.40).

#### *Hidden curriculums and the impacts on students*

A hidden curriculum “consists of those learning states of a setting which are either unintended or intended but not openly acknowledged to the learners in the setting unless the learners are aware of them,” and differentiated from a school curriculum, which is “an explicit, conscious, formally planned course with specific objectives” (Martin, 1976; Kentli, 2009, as cited in Lee, 2014, p.40). A hidden curriculum can be seen in “textbooks, a teacher’s use of language, standard learning activities, and the social structure of the classroom” (Lee, 2014, p.40). According to Odhiambo, “the hidden curriculum relating to gender construction” is one of the essential aspects that need to be uncovered because the hidden curriculum can influence learners’ “personal or cognitive development” and convey gender bias or perception (2012, as cited in Lee, 2012, p.39). Moreover, young learners could miss the

chance to prepare “for a more economically viable future founded on equitable social and economic participation” (Clark, 2016, p.6). Therefore, it is crucial to examine the hidden curriculum in education “to prevent students from developing gender bias and stereotypes about themselves and the opposite gender” (Lee, 2014, p.51). There are several factors to analyze in the hidden curriculum in Japanese education, including female representation in textbooks, female teachers in a leadership positions, or teacher’s words and actions.

#### *Hidden Curriculum A: Female representation in textbooks*

Among the elements to analyze in the hidden curriculum in Japan are educational materials, mainly textbooks. Textbooks play a crucial role in Japanese education since textbooks should get approval from MEXT and have “institutional authority,” leading to “encourage students to attach great credibility” (Lee, 2014, p.40). Although MEXT pays careful attention to female representation in educational material along with the new act, it seems that there is still prevailing gender bias against women in textbooks. In the English textbook (EFL textbook), women appear less often than men, which implies “women are of less importance and are less-worthy of mention than men” (Lee, 2014, p.51). Moreover, men are depicted with the association of physically demanding activities, wealth, or wisdom, while women are represented in “family care, indoor activity, or emotional fragility” (Lee, 2014, p.51). Textbooks should have a “balanced representation of men and women” because traditional and dominant gender



roles can be taught to students unintentionally and strengthen student's "values and beliefs about gender identity," which is difficult to unlearn in the future (Lee, 2014, p.51).

#### *Hidden Curriculum B: Lack of female leadership*

Lack of female leadership in the educational field is another hidden curriculum that affects student beliefs about gender roles. Female teachers' ratio in a managerial position is only 18% even though female teachers consist of about 50% in Japan (Nikkei, 2020). Besides, "Japan has one of the lowest shares of women in school leadership" in the world (UNESCO, 2019, p.20). Small numbers of female leaders in education can be a negative hidden curriculum because the setting gives an assumption that "men have more rights to act with authority" and reinforce prejudice against female leaders (Usui, Rose, and Reiko Kageyama, 2003, p.116).

#### *Hidden Curriculum C: Teacher's words and attitude*

Teachers' words and actions also contain hidden messages about gender roles, and teachers' awareness or "sensitivity to gender issues" are related to the historical background of Japanese education (Nagatsuka, 2014, p.13). Until around the middle of the 1990s, Japanese education was based on traditional gender roles, assuming that "the current and future student's lives differ depending on their gender" (Nagatsuka, 2014, p.17). Based on the idea, a home economics curriculum was mandatory only for female students because "many women have a unique role in domestic life" (Nagatsuka,

2014, 17). It is essential to analyze whether teachers have taken gender-segregated education or not because their "sensitivity to gender issues" can be affected by their educational background (Nagatsuka, 2014, p.13). According to Nagatsuka, gender-segregated education ended in 1996, and people who were 19 years old or more at that time can be categorized into learners who have only experienced gender-segregated education (2014). Those people were 41 years old or more in 2018. According to my calculation based on the School Teacher's Survey by MEXT in 2018, teachers who are 41 years old or more account for approximately 63.6% in public elementary, junior, and high schools at the time of 2018 (MEXT, 2018). Nagatsuka stated that "there is a chance that these teachers lack 'sensitivity to gender issues' and have consciousness and qualities that generate modern challenges," and it is crucial to cultivate "sensitivity to gender issues" in teachers to minimize the impact of a hidden curriculum (2014, p. 20).

#### *Existing studies and uniqueness of this research*

Education plays a crucial role in realizing gender equality and should work against gender discrimination or traditional gender roles (UNESCO Bangkok, 2019). Although the Japanese government acknowledges and promotes the importance of education to achieve gender equality, the hidden gender bias in educational materials remains a problem that requires a solution (Lee, 2014). Moreover, male-dominated settings in education reinforce the assumption of men's authority and lack of understanding against

women's leaders (Usui, Rose, and Reiko Kageyama, 2003). Japanese schools need teachers with developed "sensitivity to gender issues" since teachers play a critical role in "shaping gender awareness and attitude in students" (Nagatsuka, 2014, p.13). The present research reveals the hidden curriculums and the impacts on students from various perspectives and calls for change. This research aims to analyze the impact of the hidden curriculums on the formation of traditional gender roles and propose solutions for eliminating conventional gender roles in Japanese education, which have not been investigated integrally in the current studies.

### **Methodology**

#### *Guiding Questions*

In order to gain insight into the research, I conducted a survey targeting students who have studied in Japanese educational institutions based on my guiding questions: How do students think about gender equality in education, and what are the experiences that can affect their gender roles? In addition to the survey, I interviewed a professor in each Gender Studies and the Teacher's License Program in AIU to get opinions from experts based on my guiding questions: How do experts evaluate Japanese education in terms of gender equality, and what are the solutions to eliminate the impact of hidden curriculums?

#### **Participants and data collection**

##### *Survey*

The survey was conducted online using Google Forms for a week and was distributed inside and outside the AIU community. The survey consisted of two parts:

general subject information and seven main questions. The general subject information identified the participant's school level and learning period in Japanese educational institutions. I collected responses from 51 participants. About 90% of participants were university students, and 94 % of them have studied in Japanese educational institutions for more than ten years.

### **Interview**

1. I interviewed Dr. Chiba Kaeko, who is teaching Gender Studies and Japan Studies at AIU. The interview was conducted in English on ZOOM, asking Dr. Chiba about current gender issues and possible solutions for gender equality in education.
2. I interviewed Professor Satoh Kenkoh, the head of the Teacher's License Program at AIU who has also served as principal in three high schools in Akita. The interview was conducted in Japanese on ZOOM. I mainly asked eight questions asked about the Japanese educational system and possible reforms in terms of gender equality.

I received both professors' permission for recording the interviews to quote accurately in the paper.

### **Findings**

#### *Survey Question 1:*

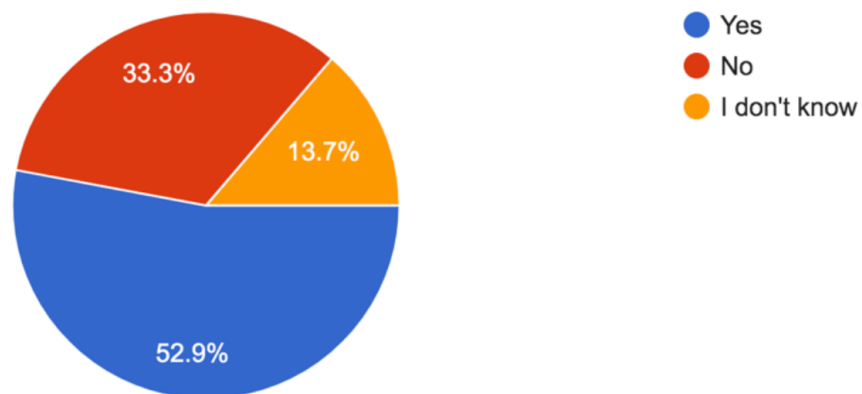
*Many students think gender inequality is severe in Japan but not so much in education*

The first question asked participants to rate the seriousness of gender inequality in Japan from 0 (no seriousness and urgency) to 4 (high seriousness and strong urgency).

More than 86% of students rated the seriousness of gender inequality at 3 or 4. The second question asked participants whether gender inequality is prevailing in Japanese education. 51% of participants answered Yes,

while 33.3% answered No. Comparing the results of the first and second questions, some people think that gender inequality is severe in Japan but not in the educational field.

Do you think gender inequality is prevail in Japanese education?  
 (教育現場においてジェンダー不平等は広がっていると思いますか?)  
 51 responses



*Survey Question 2:*

*Many students have rarely encountered female managerial staff in their school life.*

Question four and five asked about the number of female school principals and year-head teachers that participants had encountered in their school life. About 95% of participants answered that they had met 0 to 2 female principals in their school life, and about 77% for female year-head teachers. The results show that many students do not have a chance to encounter female leadership in school life in Japan.

*Survey Question 3:*

*Students show relatively high credibility in textbooks.*

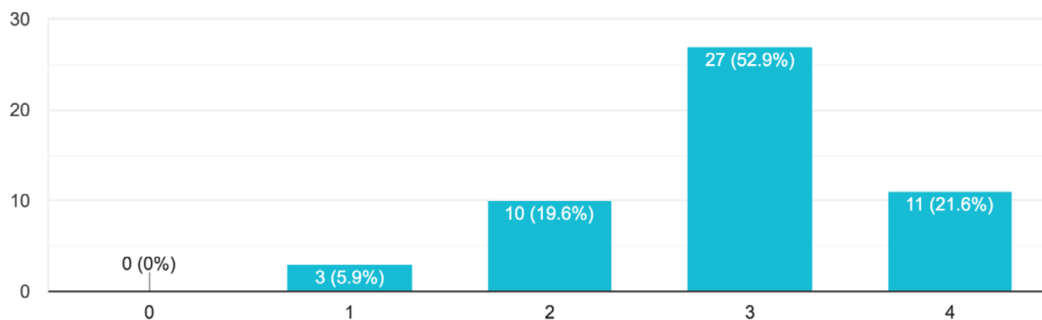
Question six asked participants to rate the credibility of the information in the text-

books used in elementary, junior, and high schools from 0 (skeptical and no acceptance) to 4 (high acceptance). According to the responses, about 74.5% of people rated 3 or 4, indicating their opinion about high credibility in the textbooks. On the other hand, for the last question asking about the credibility in the teachers' words and actions, the responses were about evenly distributed through low to high reliability.

The responses of two questions show that many students sense high credibility in textbooks, while their belief in the reliability in teachers' words and actions depends on the student.

How much did you trust or accept the information in textbooks when you were in elementary, junior, and high school? Please rate your trust or acceptance on a scale of 0-4 (0: not at all, 1: a little, 2: somewhat, 3: quite a bit, 4: completely). (信頼度を0-4で表してください。)

51 responses



### Interview Question 1:

#### Both professors emphasized a critical role of education for achieving gender equality.

Both professors negatively evaluated the progress of gender equality in Japan and highlighted the impact of education on students. Dr. Chiba thinks that “the academic education which we will receive from the school is getting better;” however, “indirect gender influence” in education, such as lack of female principals is “very influential.” Dr. Chiba also mentioned that “In a lifestyle that kids see in everyday life, we still have clear gender roles. It will definitely affect children.” On the other hand, Professor Satoh stressed the responsibility of education by saying, “Japan should change from education.”

### Interview Question 2:

#### Three common challenges in education that both professors pointed out

##### *Challenge 1: The generation gap between students and teachers*

Professor Satoh stressed the differences in educational background between

teachers and students. For old teachers, the past education that differentiated the gender roles is “ingrained in the teacher’s mind and is difficult to change.” Professor continued by saying, “Old teachers can teach gender equality based on the instruction, but students will not get the message because teachers do not understand the issue deeply and lack convincing force.” Dr. Chiba also mentioned that “when old gentlemen were brought up as a child, that [separated gender roles] were a good social expectation.” As both professors highlighted, some older generations believe in traditional gender roles, which can be considered as a challenge for educating gender equality.

##### *Challenge 2: Lack of student’s voice*

Both professors stated that students’ voices should be reflected more in education for achieving equality. Professor Satoh said, “Older teachers have to learn from students, and schools should create an environment where students can raise their voice when they have a sense of discomfort.” Dr. Chiba mentioned that “We should have more opportunity to hear from

a student's point of view. Young voices can change conservative gender inequality in Japanese society." Both experts emphasized the lack of opinions from the young generation and the need for their voices.

*Challenge 3: Adhesion between education and the labor market*

Professor Satoh underlined a misguided notion of modern Japanese education. Professor said, "According to the Convention on the Rights of Child, Children are individuals with their rights. However, in Japan, children are treated as children who belong to adults. Adults manipulate children to meet their interests through education. Education should not prevent students from growing but should develop their talent." Dr. Chiba mentioned that "I think that the current education system is wrong. They [students] are more concerned about which university to enter" under the "academic career-based society. The education system is not appropriate to let students think of what they really want to learn. They do not have time to think about it, and they only use the time for raising scores." Two experts recognized the current education as following what society requires for children.

## **Discussion**

*Student's awareness of gender issues in education*

Based on the survey results, it is possible to assume that Japanese students can be susceptible to the impact of hidden curriculums under the current education. The reasons are relatively low awareness of gender inequality in education, high-level trust in textbooks, which can include

biased representation of gender and lack of female leadership in their school life.

*Possible solutions for eliminating negative hidden curriculums in education*

There were three main problems that both professors brought up during the interview as the causes of the hidden curriculum and gender inequality in Japanese education (see Interview 2 in the findings). In this section, solutions for each challenge will be discussed based on interviews and additional research.

*Challenge 1: The generation gap between students and teachers*

*Solution: Raising awareness among teachers through training and active communication*

To address teachers' low sensitivity and lack of convincing force of gender equality, Professor Satoh raised training and active communication as a means to raise awareness of gender issues among teachers. He stated that "Newly appointed teachers or managers should get training about gender issues. Moreover, the professor continued by saying, "it is also important to appreciate and say what teachers feel and realize in everyday life. Students learn from the teacher's words and actions. If teachers can show that they can exchange their opinion regardless of their gender without problems, students can learn from their behavior." Therefore, the government should create detailed guidelines regarding teacher training about gender awareness. In addition, regardless of age or gender, teachers should actively share their opinions, including on gender issues, so that teachers can educate themselves but also impact students indirectly

as a form of the positive hidden curriculum.

### **Challenge 2: Lack of student's voice**

#### *Solution: Reflecting the views of students*

Schools should provide students with an environment in which they can raise their voices against a sense of discomfort in their school life. Dr. Chiba mentioned that schools should hear from students about “what they want to learn, how they want to improve, what kind of points of view that they want to contribute to education.” Professor Satoh stated that “Schools should put up posters about contact information of consultation services for gender issues in a noticeable place.” It is indispensable to create an atmosphere of openness for students so that their voices will be reflected. Moreover, teachers can learn and raise awareness and sensitivity of gender issues and minimize the impact of the hidden curriculum based on student opinions.

### **Challenge 3: Adhesion between education and the labor market**

It is critical to make transformative change in education rather than waiting for social change to cut unhealthy ties with the labor sector.

#### *Solution 1: Introducing a check system of textbook based on gender perspectives*

Gender representation in textbooks is one of the critical factors of the formation of gender roles in students because of their significance as educational materials and high approval rates from students (see survey result: Question six). Educational materials should meet six criteria to achieve gender-equal curriculums: they should be

“(a) inclusive, (b) accurate, (c) affirmative, (d) representative, (e) integrated, and (f) weave together the experiences, needs, and interests of both males and females” (Bailey, 1992, as cited in Clark, 2016, p.7). The government should lead the process of textbook making based on these criteria. Moreover, introducing digital technology is advantageous to check gender representation in textbooks that humans can easily overlook. Computer concordancing can analyze “the occurrences of a selected word or phrase, including its frequency, location, and context,” which can “provide useful insights about how genders are represented” (Lee, 2014, p.42). The Japanese government can integrate this technology into textbook making and minimize the impact of the hidden curriculum transferred through biased textbooks.

#### *Solution 2: Promoting parental leave for male teachers*

Securing career pathways for women after having children is essential to opening up opportunities for female advancement in the field, and men's participation is the key to achieving the goal. Professor Satoh stated the need for rules regarding parental leave. “The education board should set affirmative rules of parental leave for men to reduce the burden of women.” In the status quo, only 2.8% of male public school teachers take parental leave, while female teachers account for 96.9% (MEXT, 2018). The government has to set an affirmative solution, such as making parental leave mandatory for men, to reduce the burden of women and allow them to pursue both career and family. The solution could eventually lead

to an increase in female leadership and minimize the impact of the hidden curriculum.

*Solution 3: Conducting a review of the personnel system*

Reviewing personnel systems to decrease the burden of management positions is necessary to support teachers' career and family in a compatible way. Professor Satoh stated that "For example, some schools introduce the positions of principal, deputy principal, assistant principal, principal teacher to share the work of management position." Subdividing work can provide teachers with the opportunity to pursue both career and family affairs, which eventually leads to an increase in the number of female leaders and minimizes the impact of the hidden curriculum. Moreover, Professor Satoh identified the short tenure of school principals as a problem. "High school principals have only about two years in the office in general, which is not enough to introduce a drastic reform in the school. Ideally, the period of their service is about five years so that they can have enough time to make a change in their school." Thus, it is essential to give enough time for educators working in a field to make a difference in the Japanese education system.

## **Conclusion**

This research revealed the impact of hidden curriculums on the formation of conventional gender roles and proposed solutions for eliminating hidden curriculums in Japanese education. The educational sector should take a lead role in creating a gender-equal society in Japan. However, the current school serves as a preparation period for students to satisfy the conditions for working in the conventional and discriminatory labor market by shaping traditional gender roles in students and limiting opportunities through hidden curriculums. The Japanese educational sector has to realize the significant impact of hidden curriculums on students and make a transformative change in educational materials, teachers' awareness, and the personnel system. Education should not take a passive role in society but should voice doubts about traditional norms and initiate necessary changes to achieve gender equality in Japan.

This research was unique and novel in terms of integrating various perspectives of hidden curriculums and solutions based on real opinions from students or professionals. However, further research is necessary for the challenges and obstacles of implementing the solutions.

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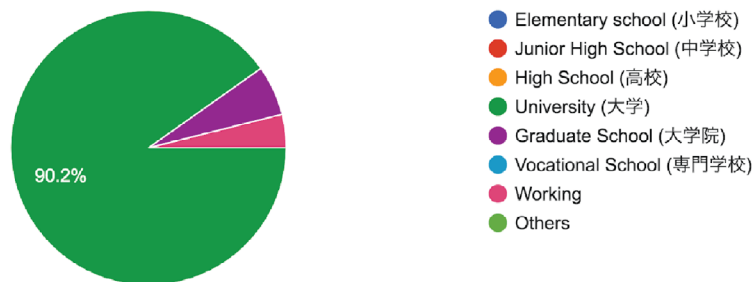
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## Appendix A Survey Questions and Results

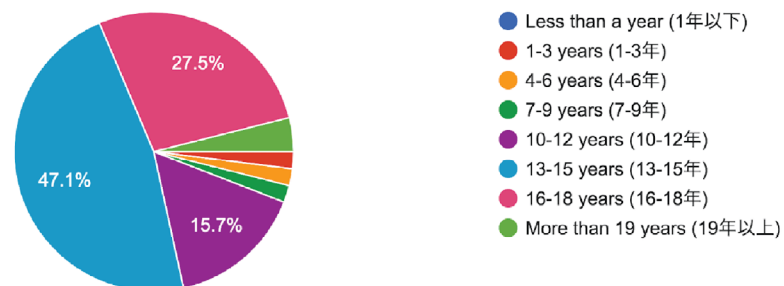
Which school are you in? (現在通っている学校はどこですか?)

51 responses



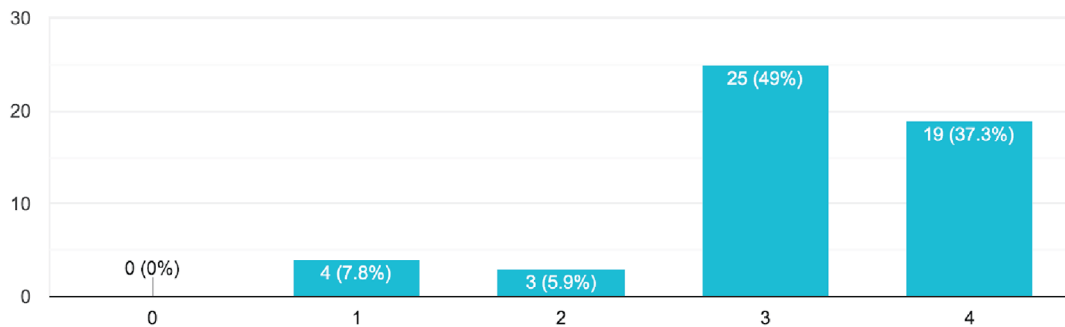
How many years have you learned in Japanese school? (日本の学校での学習期間は何年ですか?)

51 responses



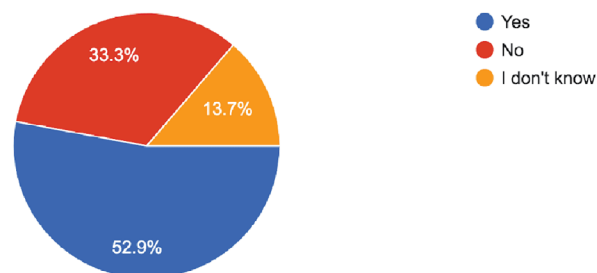
Do you think gender inequality is serious in Japan? Please rate the seriousness from 0-4.  
(日本におけるジェンダー不平等は深刻だと思いますか? 深刻性を0-4で表してください。)

51 responses



Do you think gender inequality is prevail in Japanese education?  
(教育現場においてジェンダー不平等は広がっていると思いますか?)

51 responses



Please describe the reason why you think so in the previous question . (上記の質問の答えの理由を記入してください)

51 responses

理系に進学する女子が少ない

直接関係するかわかりませんが、母親が家事をする、父親が仕事をする、といったインプットをされているような気がします。特に家庭科の時間は、女子ならできないと、といった発言が見られました。

今まであまりそのことについて考えたことがなかった

体育の時間で女子はダンス、男子は剣道や柔道を習うなどカリキュラムが性別によって分かれているため。

高校の時、制服を買うことが義務だったが、女子の制服のほうが値段が高かった。また、男子は好きな靴下を履いてもいいのに、女子は指定の靴下だった。

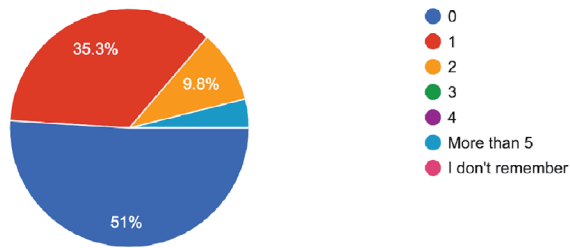
男性教員の方が多い印象を受けるから。

出席番号や席などの分ける必要のないところで男女を分ける。差別ではないかもしれないが意味不明な区別により男女に壁を作る恐れがあると思った(自分の学校の体験談より)。

システムの言えば不平等さはあまりないかもしれないけれど、mindset of the people

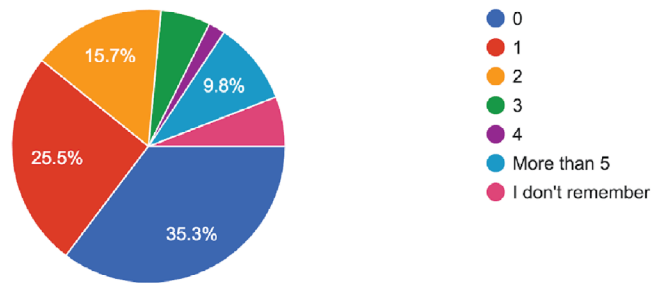
How many female school principals have you encountered in your school life?  
 (あなたが通った学校で女性の校長先生は何人いましたか?)

51 responses



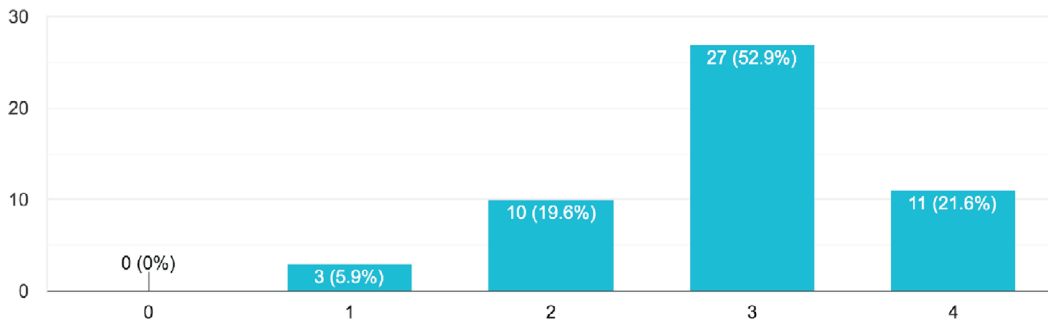
How many female year-head teachers have you encountered in your school life?  
 (あなたが通った学校で女性の学年主任の先生は何人いましたか?)

51 responses



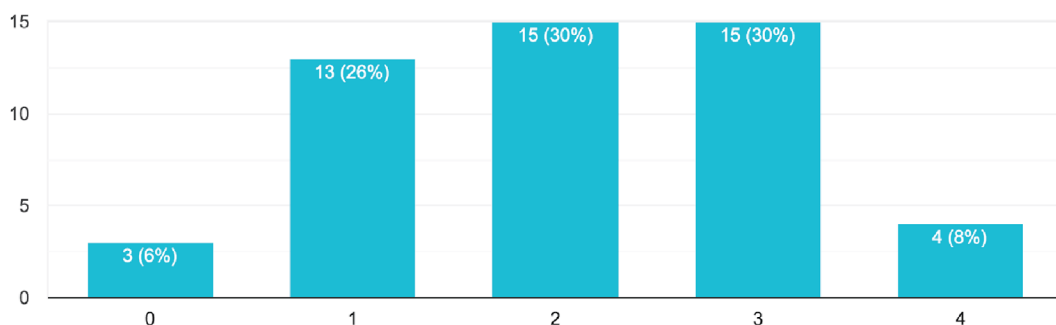
How much did you trust or accept the information in textbooks when you were in elementary, junior, and high school? Please rate...信用または信じていましたか?信頼度を0-4で表してください。)

51 responses



How much did you trust or accept your teacher's words and action when you were in elementary, junior, and high school? Please rate...信用または信じていましたか?信頼度を0-4で表してください。)

50 responses



## **Appendix B**

### Interview Questions 1 (Dr. Chiba Kaeko)

1. How do you evaluate the progress of gender equality in Japan?
2. What do you think about the causes of deep-rooted gender roles in Japanese society?
3. Do you think education is responsible for the formation of gender roles in students?
4. How seriously do you think the impact of hidden curriculums on student's perception of gender roles in Japanese school education? (female representation in the textbook, lack of female teacher in a leadership position, or teacher's awareness of gender issues)
5. Do you think gender perception that students get from school education lasts long in the future? If so, how?
6. What do you think the cause of lack of female leadership, and what do you think the solution for the issue?
7. Do you think Japanese education should change to achieve gender equality? If so, how?
8. How should Japanese education change to achieve gender equality? Textbooks? Teacher's awareness? The number of Female teachers in managerial positions?
9. Do you think educating gender inequality can eliminate
10. If gender education is included in the school's curriculum, what can be the possible difficulties?
11. Do you think students are susceptible to educational material or teacher's actions or words?

Additional follow-up questions were asked depending on responses.

## **Appendix C**

### Interview Questions 2 (Professor Satoh Kenkoh)

1. What had changed after the Japanese government implemented the new Basic Act on Education, which emphasizing gender equality?
2. How seriously do you think about the impact of the hidden curriculum on student's perception of gender roles in Japanese education? (female representation in the textbook, lack of female teacher in a leadership position, or teacher's awareness of gender issue)
3. Do you think gender perception that students get from school education lasts long in the future? If so, how? Do you think students are susceptible to educational material or teacher's actions or words?
4. Are there any programs or requirements for Japanese teachers to raise awareness of gender issues?
5. What do you think about educating gender inequality in Japan?
6. Do you think Japanese education should change to achieve gender equality?
7. If gender education is included in the school's curriculum, what can be the possible difficulties?
8. Do you have something that you keep in mind when you teach TLP for future Japanese teachers regarding gender awareness?

Additional follow-up questions were asked depending on responses.

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# The Conservation of World Heritage Sites and the Relationship with Local People — The Example of Shirakami-Sanchi

Eri Suenaga

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## Author's note

**Eri Suenaga** is a sophomore student in the Global Business program. Her essay “The Conservation of World Heritage Sites and the Relationship with Local People --- The Example of Shirakami-Sanchi” was written for the Composition I under Professor Rebecca Sasaki at AIU. Eri had an opportunity to participate in a field trip of the Environmental Science course and learned there about the environmental problems and the traditional culture in Akita. This experience motivated her to research nature in Akita. Dr. Yoji Natori of Environmental Science was the most influential professor for this essay.

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There is a growing number of world heritage sites in Japan. On July 6, 2019, UNESCO (2019) registered the Mozu and Furuichi tombs in Osaka as World Cultural Heritage Sites, raising the total number of World Heritage Sites in Japan to 23. Since 2013, Japan has registered at least one new World Heritage Site every year. Some institutions are eager to attain the accolade of a heritage site because it can mean greater profits for the local sightseeing industry, and can therefore lead to a revitalization of the local area. Others disagree with the desire for World Heritage Site status because the conservation rules of the affiliated site are often very strict,

and it can deprive local people of their peaceful and traditional lifestyle. Shirakami-Sanchi, the mountain range crossing Akita and Aomori prefectures, has been a target of these discussions since it was registered as a World Heritage Site in 1993. This registration may be a good prompt to preserve Shirakami-Sanchi at a national level and be a trigger to raise benefits from the sightseeing industry, but its cost, the loss of the traditional lifestyle of local hunters there, the so-called matagi, who believe in the mountain's god and have continued to coexist with nature for generations, seem to surpass its benefits.

The registration of Shirakami-Sanchi as a world heritage site is considered as the cause of the loss of the matagi. Takeda (1972) defines “the matagi are hunters who live by old hunting traditions in the mountainous areas of the northern part of Japan,” and states “hunting was generally conducted as a well-organized group hunt, observing traditional regulations, and the role played by each hunter as either a shooter or beater was strictly fulfilled”. They inherited their traditional life-style of hunting bears in spring, gathering edible wild plants and raising some crops in other seasons, from their ancestors. However, since the reinforcement of the protection of Shirakami-Sanchi was implemented due to the registration as the World Natural Heritage Site, matagi began to be forced to abandon their hunting and become excluded from their way of life that depended on the mountains. It seems there is no need to exclude them from their home nature because they are not destructive against nature; Mason (2015) states, “the traditionally sustainable use by matagi does fit with several of the general sustainability principles”. But it has also been noted, that the lifestyles of former inhabitants in newly designated world heritage areas commonly face government intervention for the conservation of the area by being excluded from the area (Miller, 2013). To be precise, matagi are not defined as former inhabitants or native people there, but they have undergone an analogous struggle as such inhabitants as Shirakami-Sanchi’s longstanding traditional users for centuries.

The registration as the world heritage sites indeed contributes to the conservation of Shirakami-Sanchi to some extent. Shiraka-

mi-Sanchi is now famous for retaining the largest beech forest in Asia (Peters, 1997), but it once faced the danger of deforestation from the latter of the 1950s to the 1980s. In 1955, the Japanese government implemented a policy named kakudai zourin seisaku, the policy for expanding afforestation. In contrast to its nature-friendly sound, this policy had the aim to remove natural beech trees that were not suitable as building materials and replace them with more useful ones for architecture such as cedar and cypress trees so that those cut tree could be utilized for constructing new buildings as a part of post-war recovery. Following this policy, the management bureau of forests in Akita conducted a large scale of a cut-off of natural beech in Shirakami-Sanchi in the 1960s, and it directly caused the shrinkage of the forest in size from 47,000 hectares to 16,000 hectares in the 1980s (Yoshida, 2011). In addition to such a situation, there was a scheme for creating a path through the forest. According to the scheme, the path was planned to cross Akita prefecture and Aomori prefecture and the construction would require cutting the beech trees in the natural forest. A large number of local people countered against this scheme by establishing committees and argued the precise rarity of the natural beech forest and the importance of the forest in terms of erosion and flood control. Their voice ultimately resulted in the registration of Shirakami-Sanchi as a World Heritage Site, and after the registration, the scheme for constructing a path through the natural forest was completely suspended, and the extent of the beech forest has recovered to 16,971 hectares (Ministry of the Environment, 2015). Also, the fame

of Shirakami-Sanchi as a World Heritage site has brought many visitors from various places. In 1993, the year Shirakami-Sanchi was designated as a World Heritage Site, the number of visitors to Shirakami-Sanchi was approximately 2,000,000, and this number increased and reached 3,750,000 in 2005, approaching to the double number of that in 1993 (Yoshida, 2011). Thus, the local area around the Shirakami-Sanchi once planned to gain profits from the forestry industry, but it succeeded in gaining profits from sightseeing instead without destroying the natural forest.

Once Shirakami-Sanchi was established as a World Heritage Site, many regulations and restrictions against entering the designated area were implemented to retain the environment, and matagi were also forced to follow those strategies conducted by the government that intended to eliminate human activities from the forest. However, it seems to have affected in the wrong way and rather brought an unbalanced ecosystem. Since matagi have lived in the Shirakami area for centuries, they have been already incorporated in the ecosystem of Shirakami-Sanchi and therefore, the loss of matagi has contributed to the collapse of the balanced ecosystem. One typical example that shows this collapse is the recent appearance of bears in cities. Matagi and bears have been connected by a keen bargaining relationship. One of the reasons why matagi hunt bears in spring is that bears come out of hibernation as one in spring, and therefore one gunshot can implant human's threat in all bears' minds around there at once, which can prevent bears from coming down to the human village. However, since matagi have been

forced to quit this tradition, bears began to increase their number and come out to villages and cities to look for foods because they do not regard humans as a threat to them. When I participated in a field trip for studying the culture in the forest and problems of the wild animal in Akita, I was able to have an opportunity to learn how the municipalities tackle this problem. Although municipalities have established strategies against those problems, it seems that their way to deal with the bears is not efficient because the officers from municipalities try to capture a bear only when it appears in their city in summer, ignoring the full-fledged way done by matagi. This probably cannot adequately reduce the number of times bears appear in their city because other bears in the forest do not learn that humans can be harmful to them, and they should stay in the forest unless they come down to the city. The lecturer there, who supports matagi, complained, "officers of the municipality and government seem not to listen to us very much," making a sad smile on his face. Thus, matagi culture has been not only excluded from the Shirakami-Sanchi but also prevented from participating in the process of the conservation of Shirakami-Sanchi. This triggered the increasing number of bears appearing in the cities and also led to the deterioration of the approach for problems occurring in the forest environment.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, evaluating the example of Shirakami-Sanchi, we may be not able to assert that designating an area as the World Heritage Site does contribute to the conservation of the target area. The authority as

the World Heritage Site can indeed be beneficially utilized to restrain other factors that can be obstacles for its conservation, and its fame can bring many profits to the area. As for the example of Shirakami-Sanchi, registration was the deciding factor to completely suspend the scheme to construct roads crossing the target area and its fame has increased the number of visitors to Shirakami-Sanchi at a rapid rate and raised the profits from sightseeing. However, the conservation of Shirakami-Sanchi was focusing too much on its perfect isolation from human activities. Matagi have lived there and co-existed with nature in Shirakami-Sanchi for a very long period, but due to the reinforcement of

the environmental protection there, matagi lost their traditional lifestyle and their voice. It eventually caused the collapse of the ecosystem there, and as a result, bears have begun to come out to the cities. This example of Shirakami-Sanchi as a World Heritage Site helps us realize again that seeking an ideal way to protect nature is a highly complicated issue because it requires us to consider various factors including the lifestyle of local people in the target area. We need to continue to review and study what positive and negative effects natural protections have or had on the target areas and reflect the findings in the future conservation of nature.

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