

COMPLETION REPORT

Intercultural understanding: A case study of Filipino Nikkei-jin students in Japan

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Intercultural Understanding among Filipino Nikkei-Jin students in Japan

Filipino Nikkei-Jin in this study refers to those who were born between Filipino and Japanese parents. They grew up in the Philippines, were uprooted and are currently living in Japan. The participants in this study are in their senior high school: 17 from Osaka Prefecture; 6 from Tokyo-to; 5 from Hiroshima; and 2 from Yokohama. They significantly spent the early years of their lives in the Philippines and are still aware of the Filipino values and culture. They can still understand and speak the Filipino language. For triangulation, a senior high school institution was visited in Osaka Prefecture and an elementary school in Hiroshima Prefecture. In the former, 3 teachers were interviewed and a classroom observation was conducted. In the later, interview with 2 teachers and Assistant principal was conducted. The schools have foreign students in their midst and have activities and programs pertinent to intercultural understanding. Filipino mothers were also interviewed: two from Tokyo-To, 2 from Osaka, 3 from Hiroshima, and 1 from Yokohama. Although the focus of this study is on the Filipino Nikkei-jin students, the perspectives of teachers and mothers are also of value for a deeper understanding of the phenomenon.

Based on the interview with Filipino Nikkei-jin students, intercultural understanding is understood through varied concepts and dynamics of adjustments. Their interactions with the Japanese and fellow Filipino facilitate for an understanding of themselves as Filipino and how they can adapt and adjust to the Japanese society. It also help them to learn the Japanese language, culture, values, and tradition. They give premium to the learning of Japanese language which is the key in understanding the Japanese society and its people. Given this, they admit that adjustment must initially come from them so that the Japanese can see that they are willing to be integrated, assimilated, and be accepted as one of them. Along with this willingness and determination, they identify factors that must be considered in the process of intercultural understanding in Japanese society. These are, learning the Japanese language, appreciation of difference, treat each other with respect, love Japan, make sense of one's own background, and imbibe the values and cultural practices of the Japanese. Aside from these factors, the Filipino-Nikkei jin students revealed that they underwent a process of developing intercultural understanding. Initially, common thoughts pertaining to ethnocentrism was experienced due to superficial knowledge of the Japanese society. Secondly, as they learn the language, and interact with the Japanese, they develop an understanding and appreciation of Japan and its people. Lastly, they were able to make sense of who they are in the midst of Japanese society. They develop an appreciation of the culture they grew up with and the culture they are bound up with at present. They manage to integrate themselves and find ways for a common ground so that they can exude the best in their rootedness while adapting the acceptable ways and practices in the host society. Hence, intercultural understanding is developed through time and in different stages.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

N/A

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

The research output will be submitted to Asian Journal of Social Science or Asia Pacific Social Science Review. I will notify the Sumitomo foundation of the release of the publication. Rest assured that I will acknowledge the help of the Sumitomo Foundation in this research.

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