

# Education and Culture in the Multi-ethnic Society : Japan's Challenge

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1. The structure of a multi-ethnic society in Japan
  2. Case study of Japanese-origin Brazilians and their families in Oizumi-town
  3. The role and development of education in a multicultural society
  4. The problems of education and culture posed by a multicultural society
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## 1. The structure of a multi-ethnic society in Japan

In the 1990s, Japan became a multilingual and multicultural society with a great number of migrant workers and their families coming to Japan.

As of the end of 1990, number of foreigners staying in Japan was 1,075,317 representing which shows the most in all of Japan's history.

However in reality 200-300 thousand illegal migrant workers will be added. The majority are Asian (86%), including Koreans (64%) and Chinese (14%). After the Immigrant law was revised in 1989, especially the 2nd and 3rd generation of Japanese-origin Brazilians and Peruvians with their family increased steeply. Japan belongs to a Chinese confucianism culture which has a tradition placing much value on blood linkage.

**Table 1** Number of Foreigners Staying in Japan Classified by purpose and nationality

Unit : person

FOREIGNERS WHO ENTERED JAPAN		REGISTERED FOREIGNERS	
Classified by purpose	Total(3,504,470)	Classified by nationality	Total (1,075,317)
short-term stay	2,705,533	S.& N.Korea	687,940
Stay based on agreement	148,001	China	150,339
Stay as consort of Japanese	104,369	Philippines	49,092
Permanet residents	91,464	U.S.A.	38,364
Entertainment	75,698	Brazil	56,429
For study	55,935	U.K.	10,206
Home stay	51,933	Viet Nam	6,233
For attend school	47,150	Thailand	6,724
For training and study	41,090	Canada	4,909
For investment and management	40,974	Peru	10,279
Settlers	24,131	Malaysia	4,683
For consulting and accounting	22,956	Germany	3,606
Stay as a consort of permanent resident	19,491	Australia	3,975
Others	75,745	France	3,166
		Others	39,372

Source : Ministry of Justice, 1990

### 1) Law and system

There are two kinds of migrant workers at present, that are workers with a "working visa" and the others are illegal workers who entered Japan with a "tourist visa" and work at Japanese farms, and after the "tourist visa" has expired are still staying and continuing to work in Japan.

Migrant workers receive coverage with regard the labour standards law, labour safe sanitation law, labour accident insurance law, employment insur-

**Table 2** Percentage of Companies Employing Migrant Workers

Classified by industry and size of enterpris

Unit : %

	Now employing	Employed in the past But not now
Total in industries surveyed	10.3	5.0
Construction	4.0	3.7
Manufacturing	10.7	4.7
Transportation/communications	4.7	3.1
Wholesaling/retailing, and restaurants	10.8	4.2
Finance/insurance	14.3	6.3
Services	14.3	6.3
Over 5,000 persons	66.3	3.4
1,000-4,999	26.3	6.7
300-999	14.2	6.2
100-299	6.0	4.4

Source : Ministry of Labour "White Paper on Labour", 1990

ance law, minimum wage law and secured working conditions, the same as Japanese workers. For illegal migrant workers, that labour law is not applied and they have to look for work themselves. They live in Japan being frightened with forcible repatriation.

There are foreigners entering with a "trainee visa" under a training system to transfer Japanese techniques and skills to developing countries and to contribute internationally. They are not workers, but trainees and all the laws concerning labour are not applicable.

**Table 3** The Trends of Registered Foreign Trainees

Unit : Person

Year Country	1984(*)	1986(*)	1988(*)	1989(*)	1990(*)
Total	4,720(100)	5,175(121)	8,727(204)	10,817(253)	13,249(310)
China	1,323(100)	2,211(166)	2,884(217)	3,036(228)	4,831(363)
Thailand	442(100)	278(63)	1,487(336)	1,211(274)	1,511(342)
Philippine	273(100)	286(105)	1,005(368)	1,616(592)	1,296(475)
South korea	303(100)	412(136)	806(266)	769(254)	1,193(394)
Indonesia	204(100)	210(103)	330(162)	528(259)	1,047(513)
Others	1,716(100)	1,778(104)	2,215(129)	3,657(213)	3,371(196)

\* An index number

Source : Ministry of Justice, December 1990

The intention of the government is not to admit to a great deal of illegal workers actually existing. This system treats trainees under equal conditions of Japanese workers and after their return, it is to contribute to their own job and economy of their home countries. It is prohibited to bring his or her family to Japan and they can not stay more than 2 years in order to avoid a long settlement. They are not workers, accordingly all the laws concerning labour are absolutely applicable. In October 1991, the Japan International Training Cooperation Organization (JITCO) was created to facilitate accepting foreign trainees for possible employment.

**Table 4** The Trend of Foreign Trainees accepted into Japanese industry

The types of industry	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986
	*	*	*	*	*
Car	445(1)	687(1)	819(1)	825(1)	688(1)
Industrial Machine	274(2)	318(2)	166(2)	216(2)	162(2)
Construction	72(4)	71(6)	64(5)	74(6)	116(3)
Communication's Computer	84(3)	94(3)	107(4)	115(3)	106(4)
Chemical	60(6)	65(7)	62(6)	77(4)	101(5)
Iheavy Electrics	65(5)	87(4)	133(3)	76(5)	96(6)

Source : No. 4 "Kokusai Jinryu"

\* An order of popularity

At the revision of the immigrant law in 1989, besides Japanese-origin migrant workers and the above mentioned trainees, "Crime promoted to the increase of illegal migrant workers" and the law was set to punish not only the illegal migrant workers but also employers who recruited the illegal migrant workers.

These laws formed characteristics of the Japanese policy on migrant worker problems.

## 2) Structure

The migrant workers are engaged in the so called 3D (Dirty, Difficult and Dangerous) simple work in manufacturing, serve in transportation and wholesaling, assistant cooks or waitress in service areas where the work force is short. Their age ranges between 20-35 years and their education standard is high, including 42% university graduates, and 25% post-university graduates.

Among illegal migrant workers counting 200,000-300,000, 51% of them are Filipinas and 7% are Thai women. They came to Japan on an entertainers visa with a duration of 6 months but stay over continuing their work. Next is male

**Table 5** Percentage of Companies Employing Foreign Workers Classified by Education Background

Industry	Graduation high school	univer- sity	post univer- sity	spcial training school	others	un- known	%	number of workers
Construction	51.2%	24.4%	12.2%	9.8%	2.4%	—	100	41
Manufacturing	16.3	57.9	17.6	3.2	0.5	4.5	100	221
Transportation, Communication	21.1	7.9	1.3	—	—	69.7	100	76
Wholesaling, retailing and restaurant	29.8	39.1	3.6	6.2	1.0	20.3	100	419
Finance, Insurance	0.5	83.1	15.9	0.5	—	0.5	100	195
Services	5.1	36.5	37.4	4.7	0.7	15.7	100	1,200
Average Total	12.1	42.2	25.1	4.3	0.7	15.7	100	2,152

Source : "Present condition of foreign workers" by kazuaki Tezuka,  
Chiba National University, January, 1990

Pakistanis, mostly working in the field of construction. In fact Filipinas and Thai women are different from the official entry into Japan as entertainers, they are often forced to do work not specified, such as working as bar hostesses or prostitutes.

Table 6 Illegal Workers

Nations	Job	Total	Bar hostesses	Civil engineers	strip-teaser	prostitutes	operatives	Various duties	Waiters	Clerks	Street vendors	Cooks	Others	The organization percentage
Total		11,307	6,086	1,863	260	203	1,101	630	283	200	265	103	349	100.0
(men)		4,289	—	1,862	1	—	1,036	515	187	132	251	96	206	37.9
(women)		7,018	6,086	1	259	203	65	88	96	68	12	7	143	62.1
Philippines	(m)	2,253	—	1,379	—	—	229	231	152	47	—	21	121	19.9
	(w)	5,774	5,103	1	210	162	30	47	75	32	—	3	106	51.5
Thailand	(m)	1,067	—	76	—	—	113	44	8	20	—	14	15	2.6
	(w)	777	702	—	1	30	—	11	7	15	—	14	11	6.9
Pakistan	(m)	905	—	200	—	—	350	84	8	10	234	1	5	8.0
	(w)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
China	(m)	494	—	22	—	—	16	63	12	33	—	51	13	1.0
	(w)	284	195	—	7	11	3	18	11	19	—	1	10	2.5
Bangladesh	(m)	438	—	146	—	—	145	82	2	15	5	—	23	3.9
	(w)	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.0
South-Korea	(m)	208	—	27	—	—	66	6	—	4	—	1	5	1.0
	(w)	99	43	—	—	—	31	12	2	1	—	3	1	0.9
Columbia	(m)	32	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	(w)	32	4	—	27	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	0.3
Hong Kong	(m)	23	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	2	—	0.0
	(w)	20	20	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.2
Israel	(m)	23	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13	—	—	0.1
	(w)	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10	—	—	0.1
Malaysia	(m)	18	—	7	—	—	—	4	1	—	—	3	—	0.1
	(w)	3	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	0.0
Burma	(m)	16	—	—	—	—	11	—	—	1	—	—	4	0.1
	(w)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ohters	(m)	56	—	5	1	—	7	—	4	3	2	3	13	0.3
	(w)	18	6	—	8	—	—	—	1	—	2	—	1	0.1
The organization percentage		100.0	53.7	15.5	2.3	1.8	9.7	5.3	2.5	1.8	2.4	0.9	3.1	

Source : Ministry of Jucsize in 1987

**Table 7** Destination, Number and Occupation of Filipina Overseas Workers  
(some estimates)

Country	Number	Occupation
Hong Kong	45,000	mostly domestics
Singapore	30,000	mostly domestics
Japan	51,000	mostly entertainers
Italy	100,000	mostly domestics
Spain	42,750	mostly domestics
U.S.A	7,000	mostly nurse
Saudi Arabia	50,000	domestics, nurses
Australia	11,325	mail-order brides
Britain	15,000-20,000	domestics, service workers
Malaysia	4,000-5,000	domestics
Kuwait	5,000	domestics
Canada	5,000	domestics
Sweden	500	domestics

Source : Briefing Paper, Cabinet Assistance System, July 29, 1987

However, there are a number of voluntary support groups to protect their human rights. In April of this year, the Second Forum on Migrant Workers' Problems was held under the theme of "For walking together with migrant workers" and the situation of many problems such as unemployment, work without pay, hard labour under virtual confinement, lack of compensation for injuries due to work related accidents, children's education, female migrant workers, and welfare aid were reported and discussed for solutions. Illegal migrant workers attended also and declared an appeal. The following are the support groups in Japan.

Tochigi International Life Line  
 Kanagawa Association and Occupational Disease Center  
 Foreign Labourers Christian Association  
 Foreign Labourers Defence Counsel  
 Asian Womens Shelter

Concerning wages or salaries of migrant workers, it is not legal for an employer to pay less than the amount fixed by the Minimum Wage Law which varies depending on the area or region of work place. On the average it is 500 Japanese yen (\$4 U.S.) and 4,000 yen (\$32 U.S.) per day.

However, looking at the GNP by per capita, the difference of income standards and economic power, between Japan and countries sending migrant workers, are as follows. 98.6 times of Bangladesh, 26.7 times of The Philippines, 52.6 times of China, even 5.9 times of South Korea. It shows migrant workers acquire an income in Japan, which is many times higher than wages in their own countries.

**Table 8** GNP at Asian Countries

	GNP per capita	Index
Japan	15,770	100
South Korea	2,690	17.1
Malaysia	1,800	11.4
Thailand	840	5.3
Philippines	590	3.7
Indonesia	450	2.9
Pakistan	350	2.2
China	300	1.9
Bangladesh	160	1.0

Source : "World Bank Atlas", 1987

## 2. Case study of Japanese-origin Brazilians and their families in Oizumi-town

### 1) The formation of the Japanese Brazilian society

Oizumi town is 50 kilometers north of Tokyo in Gunma prefecture, it is a small town with a population 40,000. Before the war, there was an airplane factory, which was the major industry, it employed many labourers from all over Japan, and then North and South Korean came to Japan as drafted workers, and after the war, some continued to stay in Japan. After World War Two, American soldiers were stationed in the town, new industries such as Sanyo, Fuji Electric Industries replaced it. In 1986 Japan had a shortage of Labour, as a result Filipinos, Thai and Chinese started to come to Japan seeking work.

In June 1989, Japan revised its immigration policy. And it became more difficult for Asians to enter Japan. Japanese Brazilians and Peruvians started to come to Japan, which was actually replacing the former Asian groups. The change in the immigration policy allowed Chinese to enter as trainees. In June 1991, the number of registered foreigners of the above groups were as follows ; Japanese Brazilians 1,127, Japanese Peruvians 256, Chinese trainees 62 and Filipinos 63.

In August 1991, the Oizumi administration carried research interviews for 100 Japanese Brazilians. These results were; single people 56, family groups 43. Also the answers included the following ; second generation 59, third generation 37, dual nationality 2.

Japanese Brazilians worked at the Sanyo factory, this type of work is called 3D (Dangerous-Difficult-Dirty).

They got the same rate of hourly salary as the Japanese, it's higher than other Asians receive. They wanted to work a lot of overtime to make more money.

Their occupations before coming to Japan are as follows ; General salarymen 55, Technicians 12, Self employed 9, Students 9, Teachers and Professors 4, Government workers 2, No previous employment 5. Most of them had university educations.

**Table 9** The Trend of the Number of Registered Foreigners in Oizumi

Unit : person

Nationality	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Argentina	0	2	12	32	25	24
Australi	2	1	1	0	0	0
Bolivia	0	0	1	0	0	15
Brazil	0	6	36	277	821	1127
Bangladesh	2	0	1	0	1	1
Cambodia	10	10	10	10	6	6
China	6	14	14	26	46	62
Germany	0	3	1	1	1	0
India	0	1	1	1	1	0
Ireland	1	1	1	1	1	1
South & North Korea	160	153	161	151	149	151
Mexico	0	0	6	5	0	0
Paraguay	0	2	2	1	0	1
Philippine	25	40	35	49	62	63
Thailand	2	19	15	0	4	5
Tonga	2	2	2	2	6	7
America	5	5	5	5	8	6
Vietnam	8	8	8	8	7	7
Malaysia	0	0	0	2	0	0
Pakistan	0	0	0	1	2	3
Peru	0	0	0	51	175	235
Total	222	267	312	623	1315	1736

Source : Oizumi Town Hall, 1991

## 2) Living conditions

Oizumi-town's policy for the foreigners

Their policy for foreigners was to guarantee fairness, equality and human rights.

- (1) They opened Japanese language classes at all elementary and junior high schools as quickly as they could.
- (2) The city hall employed a staff, who could speak Portuguese.
- (3) At the Oizumi Town Festival, the Brazilians joined as a samba team
- (4) Oizumi distributed a Daily-living guide book, written in Portuguese and Japanese for daily life support information. They also publish a monthly magazine, its called "Garapa", which means the foreigners get the information easily.
- (5) The Town Hall carried out research with interviews of 100 Japanese Brazilians.

Oizumi-town welcomed the Brazilians to the community, and they apparently enjoy their life there.

#### The companies and the foreign workers

Companies in the town formed an association for the purpose of employing foreigners of Japanese origin directly, also there is a counselling system for foreigners to help with the daily life.

Companies also paid their home rent. The most important thing is a companies posture to receive foreign workers.

#### Living conditions in the community

Public administration service is standard for Japanese and foreigners. Recently, they started to participate in Japanese city festivals and "Karaoke" contests.

There are four Brazilian restaurants. At a supermarket, there is a price list written in Portuguese. The supermarket sells Brazilian food, they also have Brazilian staff.

Taxes are charged from the second year on. They are planning to return to their own country, so they are not entered in the national pension scheme.

Should they use a nursery school the first years fee is free, from the second year on, they must pay the same as Japanese according to the Japanese Tax System. The health care service for children, for example, the 3 year olds medical exam, and immunization. The parents are informed by using the

Portuguese language.

### Language Communication

They have a higher ability in the use of the Japanese language compared with other foreigners. By the answers of the above-said; Able to speak easy daily conversation 55, Minimal conversation 18, Able to read and write 3, Unable to read or write 23. Second generation; some can speak Japanese, however it depends on the family (if it was taught at home), third generation ; unable to speak Japanese. 80 people felt that the language is difficult. 43% have a problem with communication which causes them to worry. This causes, a communication problem between Japanese and Brazilians, thereby reducing the chance of understanding each other.

The town hall directly employed staff who can speak Portuguese. It's an unusual practice in Japan.

### Japanese Brazilians and the difference of culture

The difficulties about a foreign life style are how to feel and think, and every day life activities. For example, Japanese Brazilians are more relaxed, less worry. They like to take time to eat and socialize. During their life, work is not so important.

But at first as labourers, Brazilians came to Japan, if they live in Japan a long time, they start to enjoy their life in the Japanese local area society, for example, they can teach design at the community center. Brazil is basically a catholic country, however they don't have a close relationship with religion.

There is a big difference from what their parents told of Japan and what that they actually saw. The image their parents described is a Japan that was forty years ago. When Japanese Brazilians lived in Brazil, they were called Japanese, and when they came to Japan, they were called Brazilians. "We are Brazilians." If one Brazilian comes to Japan, his close family will come, too. The human relationship is more close than the Japanese. They do not want to live forever in Japan. From the questionnaire, 83 Brazilians gave that response.

Brazil is a better place to live than Japan. Japanese life style is too full, busy, too speedy etc. Cost of living in Japan is expensive. But when thinking about the Brazilian economy to-day, most think about coming to Japan, saving money and then return home.

In order of priority, Oizumi Town Hall received the following major problems ; 1) Recreation and amusement 2) Racial distinction 3) Support information 4) Housing problems 5) A counselling center for Brazilians 6) Opening of Japanese language classes 7) Events which allow communication between Japanese and Brazilians.

### **3. The role and development of education in a multicultural society**

The education in the multicultural society ; 1) Language 2) Culture 3) Job training 4) Civic education are the main issues.

#### **1) Language**

##### **School education**

The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture carried out a survey on the " Present Situation on acceptance of foreign students at public elementary and junior high school who find it necessary to study Japanese language, and teaching" in September, 1991. The result of the survey shows that the total number of students in public elementary and junior high school in Japan who find it necessary to study the Japanese language is 3,978 in 1,437 elementary schools and 1,485 in 536 junior high school. The total being 1,973 schools, total students 5463. There are 43 kinds of foreign native languages, Portuguese is 35.4%, Chinese 29.7%, Spanish 10.9%. In total, 7 languages according to priority account for 90%. At elementary school, the comprehension of Japanese in daily conversation areas follows, Can understand mostly 41.1%, Can understand a little 46.1% and Cannot understand 12.2%.

At the junior high school level, Can most 45.7%, Can a little 43.4% and Cannot 10.7%. Conditions of teaching in the class, studying together with Japanese students depends on the situation, if the students do not understand, the teacher will explain is most. Schools which teach Japanese, as the extra curriculum to help Japanese learning are Elementary schools 373 (26%), Junior high schools 195 (36%).

**Table 10** Present Situation on Foreign Students at Public Elementary and Junior High School who find it necessary to study Japanese language and teaching

Unit : Person(\*) : %

	Portu- guese	Chinese	Spanish	S.& N. Korea	Vetnamese	English	Phili- ppines	Other (36)	Total
Elementa- ry school	1,665 (41.9)	999 (25.1)	451 (11.3)	139 (3.5)	170 (4.3)	118 (3.0)	94 (2.4)	342 (8.6)	3,978 (100)
Jr.high school	267 (18.0)	625 (12.1)	145 (9.8)	187 (12.6)	93 (6.3)	37 (2.5)	27 (1.8)	104 (7.0)	1,485 (100)
Total	1,932 (35.4)	1,624 (29.7)	596 (10.9)	326 (6.0)	263 (4.8)	155 (2.8)	121 (2.2)	446 (8.2)	5,463 (100)

Source : Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, September 1991

From 1992, the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, implemented the following measures ; (1) Produce Japanese language teaching materials with information as to the daily life at school (2) Employ teachers to teach the Japanese language, (3) Research and study on how to teach to the foreign students at elementary and junior high school. It is not recognized as schools for ethnic minority students in Japan as in European countries.

In Oizumi-town, there are Japanese classes, which have four levels A, B, C and D (The A class has no problem about learning daily Japanese conversation). Children can adapt, and quickly learn Japanese. However when their parents come to see the class, there is a big problem in language communication. At kindergarden, children can learn Japanese when playing and general activities. One problem is they are forgetting Portuguese.

#### Adult Education

The International Literacy Year in 1990 became a momentum guarantee the

rights of learning Japanese language for foreigners, who live in Japan.

Osaka is one of the major cities to offer the Japanese language studies at "Kominkan", adult education center.

Yomikaki Chaya (a reading and Writing class for adults) is Moriguchi city, Osaka

Not only to study Japanese, but to also make friends of people other countries, and to understand their cultures. The members are from South and North Korea, China, Singapore, Brazil, America and Nepal. There are 29 women and

**Table 11** The number of students at Yomikaki Chaya

	Men	Women	Total
Japan	0	1	1
South & North Korea	0	20	20
China	0	2	2
Singapore	1	0	1
Brazil	1	4	5
America	0	1	1
Nepal	0	1	1
Total	2	29	31

Source : Moriguchi City Hall, January, 1992

2 men as of January 1992. Teaching system is one to one by volunteers. Yomikaki Chaya has published a newsletter called by same name.

Japanese, Portuguese language class in Oizumi-town, Gunma prefecture

They have opened two language classes, one to teach Japanese, and one to teach Portuguese. The classes are of a 2 hour duration, and following the class, they all talk with each other for 30 minutes using the words which they have learned. It is opened during July and August in the evening for 5 times, at the

**Table 12** The Types of Students at the Junior High Night School

	All Japan(1990)		All Japan(1991)		Osaka (1991)		Tokyo(1991)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Japanese adults (over 20 years old)	514	19	601	21.3	388	21	52	15
Japanese young students	149	6	108	3.8	29	2	55	16
South, North Korean Returnees of Japan	1,423	63	1,427	51.0	1,119	60	51	14
Japanese residents from China	442	16	435	15.5	220	12	141	40
Settlers (Brazil & Peru)	26	1	46	1.6	11	1	9	3
Refugees(Vietnam & Cambodia)	144	2	83	3.0	29	2	29	8
Others	90	3	106	3.8	43	2	16	4
Total	2,788	100	2,816	100	1,839	100	353	100

Source : The Coordinating Council of Night Junior High Schools in Kinki Area,  
February, 1992

Kominkan. The number of people accepted are 15 in each class. The teachers are the staff of "Garapa", Brazilian group.

## Night junior high school

The night junior high school system, which is not recognized by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture was opened by The Board of Education in Tokyo, Kanagawa, Osaka and Hyogo prefecture. According to the survey in September, 1991 people who didn't have the opportunity to get the compulsory education, 35 schools with 2,818 students in all over Japan. At present there are included South and North Korean 1,428 (51.0%), Returners from China 435 (15.5%), Settlers 46 (1.8%) and Refugees 83 (3.0%). The curriculum at these night junior high schools is the course of study by the Ministry of Education.

Before entering the night school, 45.3% of the people "Never went to school", 18.1% "Never graduated from elementary school", so one class includes different levels of students, "It doesn't work!" The regular text book is of no use, so the night junior high school must create their own text. If they graduate, they will be given their certificate by the Municipal Board of Education.

## Adachi-ku Womens Center (Tokyo : Training of Japanese language volunteer instructors)

From 1970, womens volunteer activities started to manifest in Japanese society for the development of their own abilities, so housewife volunteer activity was getting vigorously popular. One of the activities, is as a Japanese language volunteer. Adachi-ku womens Center is the focal point of the training for Japanese volunteers and their activities with these people who finished their language training. The teachers are professional Japanese instructors.

The training system was in 3 steps, and as so far 70 volunteer instructors were trained. Also foreigners who learned Japanese at the center have their own network. The Japanese volunteers also learn a lot of things eg ; value system and culture, from foreign students through the network. And Japanese volunteer instructors have the opportunity to observe Japanese language from the outside.

The attractive aspect of this system allowed Japanese instructors to teach Japanese without the knowledge of understanding a foreign language. The following are a lot of the nationalities who joined the activities. The activities are on Weekdays in the morning, so 80% were women (housewives), who joined.

Brazil, Mexico, South Korea, China, Taiwan, Laos, Hongkong, Vietnam, Thailand, Philippines, Pakistan, Iraq, Russia, America, U.K.,

France, Sweden, Denmark, Australia, etc.

The Womens Center supports information eg ; supplying learning material, printing some data, and helping with nurserys. As students improve in their studies, they wish to learn more advanced levels towards an examination to get a qualification of Japanese language skills, and business language, but the instructors can not adjust to their needs. There is a gap between the students and the instructors.

The administration problems are, how to teach, and there is no follow up training for instructors after their initial training course.

Volunteer instructors work free. They also must think and plan about text and training aids.

## 2) Culture

The main differences are in the values of thinking, life style and culture. In the daily life at Japanese schools, students can't bring confectionaries, and put on accessories, these are the school rules. Because of the language problem, they become frustrated, and some of them do not come to school. They seem to like the school in general, but they can't follow the class routine.

A questionnaire of foreign labourers, revealed that 66% had no problems in the Oizumi Survey. But they felt that Japanese companies take a long time to do something, too much overtime, its hard to get paid holidays. There is a culture gap between Japanese companies and foreign employees.

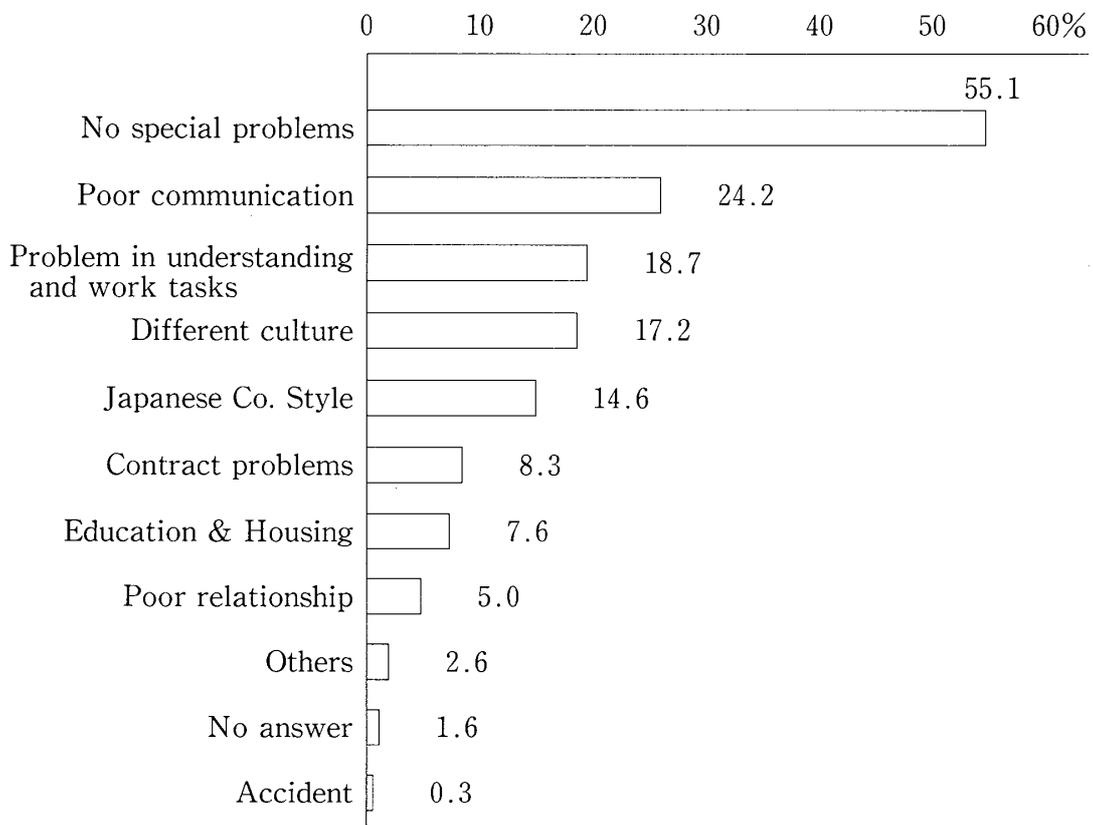
Philippine workers have a problem with Japanese regarding Christianity versus Buddism, Chinese have the problem of socialism versus democracy, Iranians have the problem of Islam versus the Japanese culture.

In the future, it may be possible for cultures to adjust, but at present we must carry on as we are. Maybe some migrant workers and their families will return to their home country after two or three years. It seems to me that the common project in participation is useful.

In multicultural learning, we have to develop the method of understanding each other cultures and if we have some similarities we should work together to expand on common problems using individuality and ability, creativity, and imagination in the daily life of the community.

In 1990 the U.N. passed the "International Convention on Protection of the

**Chart 1** Problems of Foreign Workers at Japanese Companies  
(1270 companies received a questionnaire, many problems were cited by the companies)



Source : Ministry of Justice, Immigration Bureau,  
"Survey on Foreign Workers", November, 1988

Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families", migrants were allowed to maintain their own culture and language, as well as a right to enjoy the language and culture of the host countries and clearly indicated that assistance should be given for it. OECD has expanded their thoughts, and suggestions, on the idea of this inter-culturalism.

### 3) Civic education

Japanese don't want to rent housing to foreigners, because some foreigners may use housing with a lot of people, making excessive noise. So the conditions of the community are getting worse.

Foreign workers and Japanese live together in the same area, so we should try to be at the same level in daily living. And it should be requested to have opportunities to participate together (eg ; festivals, sports, concerts and symposiums) to understand each other and make a better community. A creation of a new culture by inter learning of each different culture. Now many of the local municipalities and NGO groups, are trying to help and support foreigners, in publishing magazines in various kinds of foreign languages and distribute them. However, other local municipalities, which have not accumulated experience with foreigners, are only in the stage of the guarantee to the rights of life.

#### 4) Job training

There are some cases where foreign workers have accidents, because they can't understand Japanese, eg ; "Dangerous!". The first thing which is needed is the understanding of Japanese well, also safety and health training.

The number of foreign trainees is increasing year by year under the training system, 75% of trainees are from Asia, especially, China, South Korea and Thailand. The types of training are, construction building, agriculture, manufacturing, computer and trading etc.

The Government proposed in the report of "Problems on foreign workers" on June 3, 1992 that foreign trainees should be recognized to work a certain decided term, and extending their term with a training contract with a company.

In this case, the most important factor is, in order to secure equality and objectivity to decide the level of skill standard for foreign workers in the existing skill qualification system included are 133 types of skills for Japanese workers.

#### **4. The problems of education and culture posed by a multicultural society (conclusion)**

##### 1) Imbalance of the wealth in the world

Today in Japan, foreign workers who legally enter Japan and their families are secure under human rights by laws, but illegal aliens do not have this protection. Universal imbalance of the wealth is a kind of oppression.

How can we solve this problem? By work or by official development assistance? We should have a value system and policies for Japanese and

foreign workers living together and sharing life.

## 2) Communication and the literacy in Japanese language

The biggest problem for foreigners in Japan is communication. This language problem for foreigners is a concern for their survival. The Japanese language belongs to the Ural Altaic, so it is different from the western language. In Japan today the number of people who can speak English is getting larger. If a foreigner can speak English, they probably may not have as much difficulty in communication, except the complicated issues, for example a contract.

However the foreign workers and trainees will return home after 2-3 years, what should we teach them in useful Japanese on daily living and work, etc. And especially, as functional literacy, we should develop the contents, method and teaching materials. The trainees would do better to study Japanese before they come.

The problem of learning Japanese, is the three types of letters, that is Hiragana, Katakana and Kanji (Chinese character).

Japanese women have a high education level, and they have the potential ability to be Japanese language volunteers. It is expected that there will be the training of more Japanese language volunteer instructors.

## 3) Japanese feeling and activities based on human rights and internationalism

Japan has a climate of sensitivity to the increase of the foreign population. In the process of modernization from the Meiji era, Japan wished to enter the western countries and left out Asia. However, this policy created discrimination to other Asians, along with an inferiority complex regarding Anglo-Saxons. At first, consciousness and attitude of the Japanese from the peninsula nation's, feeling and racial prejudice should be changed. The foreigner falls into mental alienation a cultural isolation in daily life in Japan. Therefore, they have uneasiness in their daily life. Today, international order is based upon human rights a fundamental freedom and democracy which means to eliminate racial and sex discrimination, and sharing wealth, information, knowledge, skills and ideas of living together in the global village.

Foreign workers are not only providers of labour, but also are people with their families the same as us. They find it difficult to communicate in the

Japanese language with us, but they are adults with rich knowledge and experience. We should use more of the foreigners knowledge and technics, that is diversity and similarity of culture in the daily life in the community.

#### 4) The examination of international qualifications

The examination of international qualification standard of job and training to foreigners, labour standard laws are applied as to the Japanese, but in fact it is not always practiced, even though the foreigners are high school, and university graduates.

The ILO has a standard, "the same work", "the same wage" and this must be maintained in Japan. The research and development at the EC European Center for Development of Vocational Training in Berlin is useful to Japan. Today is a qualification society.

#### 5) Re-examine on shortage of the labour force and of policies

After World War II , at the reconstruction of war damage and the term of high economic growth European countries invited a great deal of migrant workers. However in Japan at the high economic growth start-ing 1955, junior high school graduates from poor farmers, villagers and housewives were employed and tided over. After 35 years, Japan faced seriously a shortage of labour, because Japanese companies opened their firms in foreign countries and became multi national enterprises. Many enterprises used the robot system in their production and employ older people.

The UN adopted in December 18, 1992, A convention guaranteeing the rights of all foreign workers and their families. This convention gave the same rights to foreign workers as Japanese, eg ; Fundamental human rights, Wages, Working conditions etc. I suppose this makes a strong influence on the Japanese administraiton, regarding foreign workers in Japan.