

Perception of the undergraduate students regarding global human resources

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要旨： 「グローバル人材」は日本の大学教育の重要な成果の一つとなっている。本調査は、グローバル人材と、学生の関心を引き付けたグローバル人材に関する大学生の認識を分析することを目的としている。本稿ではまた、グローバル人材になるために学生自身が知っており、身につけたいスキル、そして大学で、これらのスキルを身につけるために大学から受けた教育方法について調査した。

キーワード： グローバル人材、グローバル化、大学教育

1. Introduction and Objectives

Japan is facing rapid aging and low birth rate problems. Therefore, there is a need for Japanese companies to expand their business to the global market and to hire human resources who are competitive globally. Since 2011, Japan government has recognized the need of “global human resources – global jinzai” and had defined the concept of “global jinzai” by 3 factors: Factor 1 (linguistics and communication skills; Factor 2 (self-direction, positiveness, challenge spirit, cooperativeness, flexibility, accountability); Factor 3 (multiculturalism, Japanese identity). One of the output of the Japanese universities is to produce adequate global jinzai in quality and quantity.

In Japan, university students in Japan are exposed to foreign languages and cultures at various degree depends on locality, family situation and own interest. Unlike in the metropolitan hubs, the students at a local prefectural city may have different perception, interest and need toward globalization and global jinzai education. Understanding the perception and need of students could shed a light into improving global jinzai education process at university level, bring more competitiveness to the

universities not located in the urban hubs.

This survey aims to analyze the perception of the university students regarding globalization and global jinzai education, as well as the aspects of global jinzai that attracted their interest. This survey also identified the skills that students themselves are aware of, and want to obtain, in order to become “global jinzai”, and what kind of education method they want to receive from the university in order to obtain these skills during the 4 years of university education.

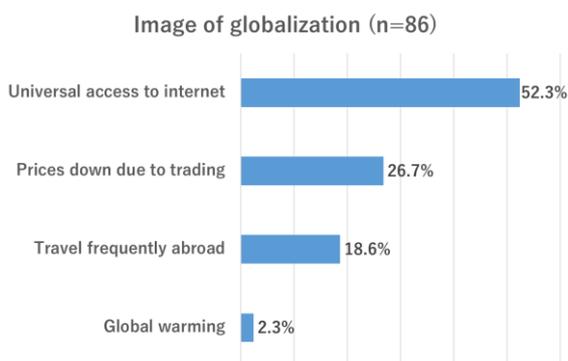
2. Method

The data was collected both qualitatively and quantitatively by questionnaires, group discussion and face to face question and answer with undergraduate students who attended the lecture series on cultural diversity as an elective subject. The subjects were 94 students in their 1st year or 2nd year who were selected multicultural understanding as an elective study subject. They were from various faculties: integrated art and science, engineering, bio-industry, dentistry. There were 14 international students (Sweden, Canada, China, Vietnam), who were either regular, or on a one-year

exchange program. A simple questionnaire was delivered to the students in order to investigate common sense and perceptions of the students about global issues. Then, the students are challenged to give their opinion via further group discussion, verbal question, self-introduction and games.

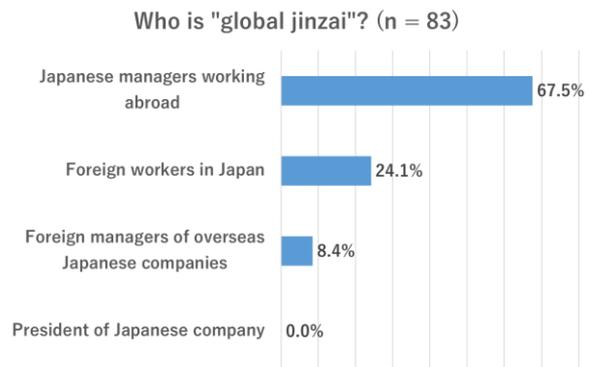
3. Results

Although the concepts of globalization issues are widely used in mass media, every person perceive these concepts in different way, which reflects their interest and need towards globalization issues. The answer of these questions have shown how the students related themselves with these concepts.

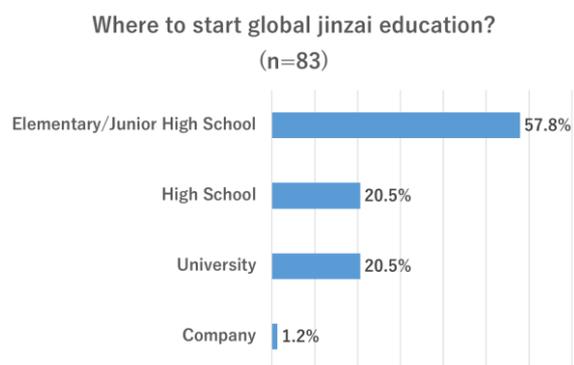


To the question on how they perceive the globalization process as the first thing to come, more than half of the students regarded internet as the sign of globalization. Further group discussion had shown that although the students could understand various aspects of globalization, the technological progress seems to be the most visible sign for the young people to recognize the progress of globalization. Only a quarter of the students had recognized that “Prices are down due to trading” as the primary sign of globalization, although this is the image closest to the original concept of global jinzai. The students also recognized that “global warming” must be one of the consequences of global industrialization, but

not regard it as a primary sign.



To the question on who could be a “global jinzai” at the first sight, two third of the students regarded “Japanese staff working abroad”, which is the image closest to the government’s concepts of global jinzai. Surprisingly, a quarter of the students regarded “Foreign workers working in Japan” as a global jinzai, although this is an opposite image of the original concept of global jinzai. Similarly, some students regarded “Foreign managers of overseas Japanese companies” as global jinzai, which is not the case. Not least, no student saw President of Japanese company as a global jinzai, although it might qualify for global jinzai.

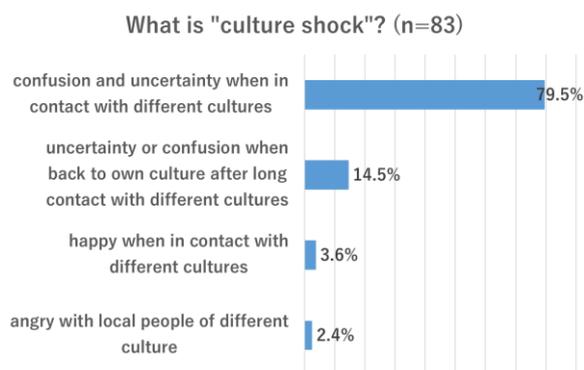


To the question on where is the most effective to start education on global jinzai, more than half of the students selected Elementary / junior high school. It fits to the original concept of “global jinzai”, as the earlier students are globally exposed, the more effective will be the outcome. Only one fifth of students choose either high

school or university, while almost no student believed that starting education on global jinzai should start after a person being employed.



To the question on what might be the mission of a global jinzai at first place, only more than a quarter choose “problem solving globally”, although it should be the goal expected from the original concept. Very few students considered technical expertise could play a role. It is no surprise that more than half of students thought that “mastering cross-cultural communication skills” is the mission of the global jinzai. Not many students saw “mastering multilingual skills” as a mission of global jinzai, since languages seem to be a tool but not a goal.



To the question on what "culture shock" might mean, three quarter of the students thought about “feelings of and strong interest about globalization, global jinzai and multicultural issues. Knowledge and need of university

confusion and uncertainty as a result of contact with different cultures”. Further discussion with students revealed that not many students have truly experienced culture shock when travelling abroad, since the duration has been usually short for a cultural exposure. However, they could imagine how it might happen to an expatriate who have to stay long enough abroad.

Via group discussion and evaluation forms, the students identified their needs for classroom activities: active learning with more interactive class activities including interaction with foreign students, group work, inclusion students with native English, quiz, games, guest speakers from different background etc. The content should be diversified and enriched with various aspects of globalization such as politics, economics, environment, science and technology, immigration etc. as well as of multicultural setting like food, lifestyle, ethnic dress, religion, music, sport etc.

The students had also identified the skill set they want to obtained for being global jinzai. Results from individual work and group work have shown that the skills set identified by each student could be close to the three factors required by Japan government: language/communication, self-direction, positiveness, challenge spirit, cooperativeness, flexibility, accountability, multiculturalism, Japanese identity. The latter could not be applicable for international students. In order to gain the skills needed, some of students are planned to engage more with foreigners, going abroad for short term study, internship or travel.

4. Conclusion

The university students have shown certain understanding students are close the definition of globalization, global jinzai and other related concepts. They recognized about

the needs to understand multicultural environment, to master foreign languages, and to obtain necessary skills during their university life, and some of them may realize about the need to become global jinzai and aware of the skill set they need to be armed with during the university years. They need more interactive class activities, more exposure to international students, foreigners, guest speakers. They also plan to go abroad for broaden their international experience. There might need more survey from university side to confirm the need of students, and to make education of global jinzai mindset to be set up at university level. The international students also have certain needs which may be different from Japanese students. In future, the global jinzai concept may need to be updated and revised, in order to address the foreign workers of Japanese companies inside and outside Japan.

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