

Outline of “National Identity & Multicultural Society” Course

◆ Theme:

National Identity & Multicultural Society

◆ Course Goal:

For this course, we shall be exploring national identity’s ever changing relationship with globalization. It is important not to only understand other national identity, it is just as important to understand one’s national identity as well. Object 1: Understand meaning of National Identity & Define your own National Identity.

With increase in immigration, both nationally and internationally, we have seen the difficulties of creating multicultural society. Making a better Multicultural Society is an imperative for the continued growth of your country. Object 2: Understand meaning of Multicultural Society & Define your ideal Multicultural Society.

◆ Institutional Visit on October 7:

Chiba City International Association

◆ Course Staff:

Facilitator :

Staff :

Staff :

Staff :

Facilitator

During only three days, discussion about two themes “the identity of the homeland” and “multicultural coexistence” was held. As prior assignments, young participants from several countries tried arranging present circumstances of their countries and their ideas and ideals about the two themes.

First, to make a common base and recognition, the young participants shared prior assignments about “the identity of the homeland” and talked about its meanings. Next, they similarly shared prior assignments about “multicultural coexistence” and talked about ideal societies of multicultural coexistence. After having focused on each theme, they reconfirmed common recognition of how these two themes had a mutual relation and discussed them from various viewpoints including problems. Then, they talked about action plans to fulfill “the ideal society of multicultural coexistence” and later discussed the importance of “the identity of the

homeland” again. Finally, as well as action plans as the group, I think that they considered their personal action plans and their efforts also in their countries enough.

I saw how each young participant understood the two themes and would work on them. I think that each one has his or her opinion, that they respect one another about the identity of each homeland, and that, as a team, they discussed enough how they create a better society of multi-cultural coexistence. About “the identity of the homeland” and “multicultural coexistence” that consist of culture and history that each of the seven countries has, I think that they deepened their understanding and spread understanding in other countries. I think that understanding the importance to connect the two themes, now they can see a new ideal society.

I think that they expressed a new form at the last presentation of the result by understanding and

respecting one another and even though the background, history, and culture of their countries are different. I am looking forward to seeing all

young participants continue taking good care of this relationship that they built, become global leaders in the future, and make a new world bridge.



Japanese Participant, Austria and Lithuania Delegation

I attended a course in which a conference on the theme of “National identity and multicultural coexistence” was held. Our course was divided into groups of about 5 to 6 people to discuss each agenda, and have a discussion in the form of presenting to the entire participants. For me, attending this conference was a particularly memorable event because it deepened the bonds with overseas youths with whom I had been discussing for three days. Our group started by getting to know each other.

First, it was very difficult to think about the subject because there are a lot of things we need to

understand, such as the history, culture, ethnic background, and roots of each country lying behind the language though we were able to share the core part of the definition of language. However, we finally come up with an idea of the ideal future society together because we were able to talk about each other seriously.

Through this conference, I realized that thinking about global issues is about crossing borders and walking together toward the future. I wanted to use this precious experience to play an active role in a global society.



Japanese Participant, Austria and Lithuania Delegation

I participated in the National Identity & Multicultural Society Course of the International Youth Development Exchange Program, in which I visited the Republic of Lithuania and the Republic of Austria, and then joined the International Youth Conference. There are two things I felt when I participated in the International Youth Conference. One is the importance of having your own opinion and speaking it out. The other is the importance of looking at things from various angles.

First of all, with regard to having your own opinion, I have been a working member of society for three years, but I often felt that I lack specialized knowledge required in my work, and I often could not speak out because I was not confident in my remarks. However, when I saw the attitude of

overseas youths speaking out their opinions loud, I felt that I had built a wall around me and stayed in my shell. I think I learned the importance of speaking out even if I am not confident, from the attitude of these overseas youth.

Regarding the importance of looking at things from various angles, I initially thought that the subject of “Multicultural Society” was the issue of immigration. However, I felt that this subject included various contemporary issues such as culture, education, and economic society.

I am very much honored to be able to participate in this conference, and I will continue to do my best to use this precious experience in the rest of my life.

Introspection, Interaction, Interrelation, Institutionalization. These are the phases that I have personally realized that we have undergone for the entire course discussion.

We started our course discussion program on National Identity and Multicultural Society last October 6, 2019. The course goal was to explore national identity's ever changing relationship with globalization. To visualize the main goal, there were two objectives being set: (1) to understand the meaning of National Identity and define our own National Identity, and (2) to understand the meaning of Multicultural Society and define our ideal Multicultural Society.

Before coming to Japan for INDEX 2019, our course facilitator gave us an assignment which was about researching our national identity and multicultural society in our country and this was to be submitted on October 1, 2019.

We the thirty-three individuals who chose to take the said program have to start with introspecting among ourselves who we really are and what are our identities. With that, we have somehow reflected upon ourselves what are our uniqueness being a citizen of our respective countries. Our course facilitator divided the us into six groups, each of the group were composed of participants of different nationalities.

The groupings allowed us to have a great interaction with our fellow INDEX delegates. In the course discussion groups, we were asked to share first about the concept of National Identity, then our own view of our respective national identities. In our group, which is composed of Peruvian, Austrian, Japanese, and Filipino delegates, we have talked about how national identity is referred to as a sense of belongingness to a nation, as well as, it may also be an "imagined nation". After which, the groups have to share in the plenary about the things being discussed in our own groups.

In the sharing about Multicultural Society, we somehow discovered how each of our countries were

interrelated. We have seen how colonization, migration, and globalization have paved the way for multicultural societies. However, we also exposed the different challenges accompanying the influx of these multicultural societies such as indifference, racism, ethnocentrism, corruption, etc. In order to eliminate these problems, we discussed among our groups about the ways we could promote and accept multiculturalism in our society. We have identified education, acceptance, holding of multicultural events and festivals, and government support as some of the best ways to conquer the aforementioned hurdles.

A great opportunity was also given to us delegates as we were given the chance to visit the Center for Chiba City International Association. We have learned from there the statistics of Japan's population and its ageing society and its measures to solve the labor and societal issues. Also, we were told how Chiba City has been organizing and helping the migrants there like helping them learn the Japanese language, giving them input about Japanese culture, and most of all assisting them in their needed papers for their stay in Japan.

As a way of institutionalizing the actions we have recognized in our previous discussions and institutional visit, each of the groups was told to create an Ideal Multicultural Society. In our team, we acknowledged our ideal Multicultural Society as with peaceful coexistence and interaction in a state of ethnic pluralism. I have personally observed how each groups were so inspired to create their ideal multicultural society and how each one of us the delegates were so motivated to implement the actions in order to achieve the so-called ideal multicultural society. This was also very evident in our final presentation shown last October 9, 2019. As a one group, we have agreed a unified definition for National Identity and Multicultural society. We performed a mix of reporting, short skit, and presentation of our course actions to promote and incorporate in our daily lives in order to understand and embrace our national identity and eventually achieve our ideal multicultural society.



Overseas Participant, Peru Delegation

What is National Identity? Do we live in a Multicultural Society? These are some of the questions that were left with me after the INDEX program. For me, even though we didn't find the answers, I think we found something much more powerful, the importance of those questions in our society.

For our course, the journey started in our home towns, writing about what National Identity was for us as well as the meaning behind the concept of Multicultural Society. Each of us travel to Japan with our own ideas and concepts. This was the main topic on day one of our discussion programs.

We were separated into groups that had a mix of different countries, after that we were asked to discuss about what national Identity was. At the end of every group sharing their consensus we could understand that there were 2 different points of view. The groups that talk about an Identity shared by a Country and the other groups talking about that

there is no National Identity, but a personal one, that could be shared by a group of people but not a complete nation.

We talk about what made up an Identity, talking about culture, language, customs and values.

After that we talked about Multicultural Society, and more important our Ideal Multicultural society. In this topic we talked about a globalized world, a world where people is a click away from each other and how this promoted Multiculturalism.

We agreed upon the idea that a multicultural society is a place where different cultures coexist together, where difference are acknowledge, accepted and respected. We talked about how enriching is to live in a country where multiculturalism is practiced, and also talked about how a multicultural society is not only made up by non-natives, but the different ethnics groups that country already has.

The second day we went to a Municipal Building

that aid foreigners of that city to adapt into the Japanese culture, we learned about the government initiatives and the current situation of multiculturalism in Japan. Coming from a very diverse country, learning about Japanese society was shocking, I couldn't believe that only 2% of the Japanese population were nonnatives. In this visit we saw a lot of room for improvement, we talked about a better communication about the activities held in the facilities, the importance of involving third parties into more friendly and holistic politics for foreign people, that can make protect them and make their insertion to society easier and lastly about how japan should have an easier access to foreign people if they are looking for workforce.

The third day we made a presentation for all the

participants in the index program, teaching them what we have learned together, this was a really fun experience, because we got to work together and come up with the conclusions of the two days of discussion.

To conclude, this course has made me appreciate the richness of my own culture and has open my eyes to learn more about it. I feel that this discussion will help all of us to think more about our own identities, as well as how can we make a better, more understanding and welcoming world. I really appreciate everyone involved in this experience, it was a huge learning process, not only about the topic but about all of the participant's countries customs, society, politics and philosophy. I will cherish everything we learned together.

