

International Student Forum Report

Acknowledgements

We are very grateful to all of you who participated in International Student Forum 2022. This forum aimed to provide an opportunity for senior high school students, who would bear the future, to share ideas and raise awareness about social issues. We hope you enjoyed discussing social issues with friends from diverse backgrounds and learned a lot from each other.

This report is a summary of the forum, which we believe will help you reflect on what you learned through the forum. The first half of this paper summarises what the participants learnt about social issues through discussion. The latter half presents the participants' ideas as to how they will be able to tackle the social issues to make a better future.

We would like to thank all of you again for joining our annual intercultural event. We hope this forum was of any help to build long-term friendships between us.

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1. What the Participants Learnt through Discussion

a. Environment



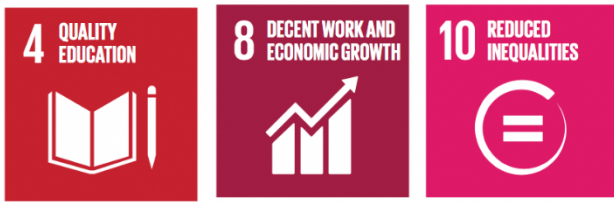
i. Plastic Pollution

- I was impressed to hear that some schools are eager to address plastic problems by many ways such as making posters and provide paper straws.
- Efforts done by different countries in reducing plastic pollution
- "I wasn't sure if there were people who bring their own cups or forks to restaurants or schools. But there was one student who brings his own outside. I was very surprised to hear that and I thought I should imitate it.
- Some school post some posters at school. I heard that they make them and post it. I haven't done it so it was very interesting.
- I was surprised that some of the members have already tried living without plastic. I haven't heard anyone who has done it around me so I was happy to talk with them.
- Everyone thinks that plastic is convenient but because of that, we can't let it go."
- I learnt we still did not know about those issues, but each students know different part of those. So we have to share the own ideas to solve the problems.
- I learnt how surface level these people's understandings of plastic is
- I learnt that different countries have different laws or methods to encourage people to use less plastic in their day-to-day lives.
- I learnt about the controversy about the paying for plastic bags in Japan.
- I learned it is difficult to solve plastic pollutions problems but it is important to reduce plastics as much as possible in our daily life and to makes posters to inform about plastic problems.
- I learnt that the issue of plastic pollution doesn't just originate from plastic bags, but also from clothes, and hand sanitisers and that plastic pollution is an issue because of SINGLE USE plastics, because people immediately discard plastic after just using it once.
- I have learnt that Japan has places with underdeveloped public transportation infrastructure in which cars are the primary mode of transport.
- A student in Japan said that it's easy to have my own bottles in Japan because some companies or school has water dispenser.
- I haven't live Alice with a car in urban area, so I couldn't thought of specific things in car life of cities. However other people had many ideas for it.
- I learned the ways there Japanese government handles plastic pollution.
- Even though point of view to the plastic problem was pretty same among everyone, opinions to how the Japanese government is doing differed between people.

ii. Carbon Emissions

- I have learnt that Japan has places with underdeveloped public transportation infrastructure in which cars are the primary mode of transport.
- Singapore students had many ideas to solve this topic which is Carbon Emissions.
- Reducing the number of cars will not only affect the air pollution but also the noise
- To encourage more users to use EV, the government and companies has to install more charging stations
- Singapore has brilliant public transport system, but how about other countries or cities?"
- Singaporean mentioned some great opinion which is Carbon Emission.
- Students in Singapore speak English so fast that I couldn't listen to them partly. I think their opinions are very realistic because they consider if the children can figure out in this method in No.3 topic.
- The students in Singapore knew about this country more than us, so they told us what kind of things the Singapore government is doing to increase the number of EVs.

b. Education



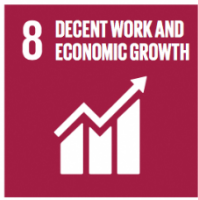
i. Inequality in Education

- I learnt more about life in a Japanese school and about how being from different cultures do not necessarily impact the way that we think.
- I learnt that Japan's education system focuses on sparking innovation among students to allow students to prepare themselves for the workplace after graduating.
- I learnt how the COVID-19 crisis is being managed differently in Singapore and Japan, and the thoughts of the people from Singapore and Japan on it
- i learnt about educational structures in Japan and how they differed from singapore's
- I have learned that even we talked about the same questions the way we see or our perspective are different from each other as we all have different backgrounds. However, we also had same points when we see the problem as a student.
- Even though the education systems in Singapore and Japan are quite significantly different, the attitudes toward education are relatively similar, and the impressions of the current education system among students were similar.
- In Singapore, most people look for good balance of traditional education and practical education same as Japan.
- the current systems of education must be changed to provide all children with education
- I was surprised at the difference between the education systems in Singapore and Japan. In Japan, the gap widens depending on whether you go to a cram school or not, and whether you have an online environment, but I learned that Singapore has a better system.
- I was able to know that the education in Japan are different from Singapore. Japan has some areas that does not have the tablet to attend online lessons but in Singapore almost all student have the environment that can do online learning.

ii. Shortage of Teachers in Japan

- teachers in Japan need to go through recertification every few years. They also tend to not use technology in their classes and rely more on traditional ways of teaching. In Japan, not many youths want to be a teacher but there some still want to for their passion.
- how different the culture is in Japan as well as the educational system
- I learnt that everyday appreciation can have a surprisingly large impact on one's attitude towards their work
- One of the reasons for the heavy workload of teachers is that club activities are a big part of it. In addition, the digitization of public schools in Japan is not as advanced as in Singapore due to financial issues and other reasons, adding to the extra workload. And because of these, not only the general public, but also teachers themselves, have voiced their concerns about the difficulty of the job, and this has created a black image of the teaching profession.
- Students in Japan and Singapore of reasons why you want to be a teacher and the differences of motivation.
- I learned that there were many different perspective.
- I learnt that there is no Teacher's Day celebration in Japan and that there is a severe shortage of Teachers.
- Due to our research about Singapore's teacher status rankings, we found that it is higher than almost every countries, however, according to local students, it seems that it isn't true. Singapore students also has a negative image to teachers (working too hard)
- We did another research about teacher's day, which was true that local students give flowers or message cards to them. (They even do a performance) Additionally, a Japanese student in our group didn't even know about the teacher's existence in Japan.
- Japanese school (in Japan) doesn't use google classroom. Local schools uses.
- I was surprised to hear that there's a committee that plans what to do on teacher's day in one of the school in Singapore. It was true that teacher's day is celebrated every year at any school in Singapore. However, there was one thing we haven't expected to hear that teachers' status aren't that high in Singapore, which was the opposite thing from what we have researched.

c. Jobs



i. Unemployment

- I learnt more about the different groups of people affected by unemployment in Japan, as well as some ideas as to how companies could ensure that employees work productively when they work remotely. I also found out some methods on how the Japanese government campaigns through posters on public places and transportation and social networking services
- Issues regarding the unemployed created by the Covid19 disaster
- I learned that there are many perspectives and if we don't hear opinions from people with different backgrounds we will end up judging with prejudice.
- I focused about job responsibility and structure of a company, but they focused about individual problems such as privacy and working environment. The labor issues seems to be an irrelevant topic for students like us. However, I learned that using social media around us might solve this problem.
- That Japan's way of tackling unemployment is very different from Singapore. Especially when it comes to avenues that unemployed people can reach out to for help
- There are differences in consciousness and common sense depending on the location, race, and of course, individuals. If [natural] appears in the world, it will not work.
- Technology can help with economic recovery amidst covid
- I thought that using the Internet to spread information about support for people who lost their jobs, but I noticed that it is not good for elderly people. One of my group members said that in Singapore, putting poster at CCs is good for every people, so I agreed with that idea.

d. Human Rights



i. Discrimination & Racism

- I learnt more about the social landscape and views towards foreigners in Japan
- I am glad that I was able to have a serious discussion and participate. I have had the opportunity to learn about human rights and racism since I was little. And I am consciously trying not to make discriminatory remarks or actions. However, in fact, I learned that depending on the feelings of the recipient, it may be unexpectedly hurt. As I deepened the discussion, I thought that "let's start by knowing the other person" and "let's abandon my preconceptions" are important. It's a delicate problem and it's difficult to solve it completely, but I learned that being interested leads to solving the problem.
- I was surprised to hear not much people had witnessed or experienced racism although Singapore is a multicultural country. But it was a good opportunity to tell them my experiences. I learnt the importance of sharing my opinions and accepting opinions from a whole new point of view.
- It is important to go beyond performative actions as solutions and immerse ourselves into the cultures different from ours for better understanding and empathy
- We should use SNS for solution because it is popular among young people and easy.
- From the Japanese student, I learnt that many Japanese people felt scared to talk to foreigners because they are not really familiar with foreigners.
- From the Singaporean students, I learnt that Singaporeans have racial harmony lessons from very young ages, and also older students teach younger students how Singapore values racial harmony, which is like passing down the spirits between generations. The reason why Singapore think much of racial harmony is because in 1964, when Singapore was still a part of Malaysia, there was a big fight in between Malays and Chinese, which caused death, and from that on Singapore started to let Singaporeans understand about each other's cultures. Also, I could learn about how foreigners evaluate Japan. Since Japan has developed own culture in Edo era for about 400 years, one of the Singaporean students said it is difficult to compare Japan and Singapore, but he mentioned that trying not to have stigmas and trying to embrace other cultures are important. In addition, other student mentioned that some people tend to be race-blind, but race is the thing that cannot be ignored so we should be recognizing different races, and then accept and respect those cultures those are different from ours."
- Schools in Singapore have opportunities to learn the importance of making multiethnic societies.
- I learnt that coming from a race that forms the majority, I have overlooked many inequalities in my society. In addition, I should not overlook the effect that policies have in dividing citizens.

ii. Discrimination & Online Bullying

- That in Japan there is a Act for Eliminating Discrimination Against People with Disabilities, which Singapore does not have. We discussed different government policies to protect people with disabilities.
- That there are different ways to solve every problems. In our group, I heard that there are classes to think of discrimination in Singapore. That might be a solution for solving the problem in Japan or other countries that don't have those kind of stuffs.
- "1 all of them think education is important. Lack of knowledge to handi capped people leads discrimination. On the other hand, many of them say that when they see such people, they are too shy to help. Though they understand how hard handi capped people are, they are not sure what to do to them.
- 2 One of them has seen online bushing which his frined did. He couldn't see anything because he was bit afraid. Additionally, all of them say if the people is not close, they won't do anything. In case of their clodse friends, they can ask them to stop such a thing. One of the solutions is that using report buttom. It's invisible but it might work well we thought. Or, we broke the friend and stop diffusion."
- Discrimination is everywhere, and we should not just point it out, but think of a concrete solution.
- It is important to know that we might have different opinions.

iii. Child Labour

- One thing I learnt from the Japanese group members about how children who commit crimes in their country are subject to a different set of laws, and hence the line between rehabilitation and punishment is blurrier. This complicates the issue of what party should take responsibility for these children's misdemeanors (schools? parents? friends?), as they would be directly responsible for whether the children do learn from their mistakes.
- I learned that in Singapore some people cannot join in activities because they don't take vaccines. From that not taking vaccines people can protect themselves.
- I found that now, there is no perfect solution to the children's right issues. Through this discussion I strongly felt that. However, I think we have to discuss many times and lead to better solution.
- "I got an insight into my group members' experiences with fair trade products.
- On topics regarding children's rights and parents' obligations, our opinions were largely the same and we agreed that proper communication is important for respect to go both ways. "
- everybody thinks that child labour is bad and measures should be put into place to prevent it. This can include government policies as well as education.
- I learned that causes and reasons of child labour and the effects it will have on the child's future and effects on the company's business.
- We talked about children taking vaccine, and come to conclude that not only adults but also children should have the opportunities to learn about the virus and the importance of medical cares.
- That changing the educational system not only in schools but in companies could make a big difference.

2. What the Participants Will Do to Create a Better Future

a. Environment



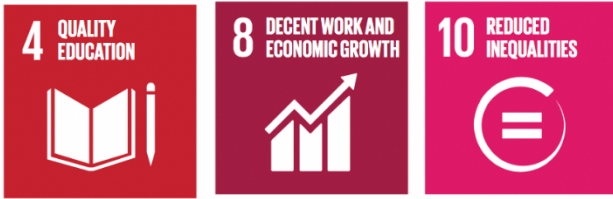
i. Plastic Pollution

- I'll try to live without plastic and spread that idea to my friends.
- Reduce plastic usage - for example, try to use reusable containers & cups when buying food outside/in school
- "Spread the activities to tackle the problem by using SNS. For example, by using hashtags, we could spread the ideas easily.
- I think schools should create the opportunities to know more about the problems in the world. I think most of the students are interested in SDGs but they don't have the opportunities to speak with friends at school. So, schools should take time for the students to know more about it."
- "Firstable, we have to know how the problem affects and serious.
- And then, as the world, we have to address those issues not as just a country.
- Having the same view and initiate."
- I would try to find places where I use a lot of plastic and try to cut down on the amount of plastic I use by using more reusable products.
- I would bring awareness of these plastic pollutions in the world through sharing community projects via social media; encouraging people to join. I would also do my part by using less plastic products through initiatives such as bringing tote bags to supermarkets.
- I use SNS hashtags to inform people of the horror of social issue and do something I can do.

ii. Carbon Emissions

- I want to purchase some bags from IKEA (the big blue ones), and use that for grocery shopping, because it is durable, and can be used for a long time.
- I learn about the social issues while students. And when I become a college student and a member of society, I'll work for the issues such as volunteering or donating.
- I would like to look for place that should have ev charging stations.
- Being a part of the prefectorial board of my school, I will try to implement initiatives that promote more sustainability within the school.
- I'll share what I have learned through researches I have done and try to raise awareness of plastic to people around me.
- Reduce unnecessary plastic packages
- won't buy plastic bottles "

b. Education



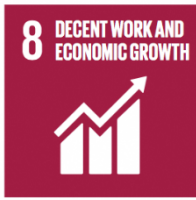
i. Inequality in Education

- I am not sure how to tackle these social issues moving forwards, but will be more open minded to different opinions (especially on education) in the future.
- I will volunteer in the community more to give back to my society, while also advocating for vegetarianism so that our society can progress sustainably while not harming the environment.
- I would first try to lower COVID-19 infection rates, and once it is low and stable, then I will try to open up the economy and encourage workers to work and spend to revive the economy
- I will try to make the educational environment around me less competitive and instead more collaborative so that everyone can learn and grow together
- To turn off the light when we are not using or when we go out
- use eco bag, bring my straw and have an interest in knowing social issues
- I want to spread the word about the existence of facilities where children can receive free education.
- To search and share about the problem that happen now
- To have interest of types of education (because I didn't know so much about them)"
- Try harder to always be aware of social issues. And to think as if I were suffering by that issue.
- I would like to continue to actively incorporate information in news and other media. I would like to practice the small things I can do and recommend them to my friends and others.
- Firstly, I will find out about what is happening in the world. There are people that doesn't even know about the global issues and it is important to act mostly in our generation. Even though some doesn't know about the issues, every single person is related in some cases so we need to spread the thinking of it. We can do small things in our school too just like the Ferris University have done it. But personally, I will try to use less electricity and reduce the amount of plastic. Small act can change the situation so I will try things what I can start from.

ii. Shortage of Teachers in Japan

- consider sustainable development in my daily actions. For example, get involved in talks about the environment and roles of stakeholders to be more sustainable. Consume less and from sustainable companies
- consider a different approach with the current qualifications of the teachers, as quantity should be prioritised in the first situation. also upgrade the teachers skills, as a lot of teachers are not familiar with technology, this could result in a lot of unnecessary work that burdens the teachers"
- I will try to do my best to help out by volunteering for issues that matter to me
- First, show your appreciation for teachers by establishing a teacher's day or saying thank you to teachers. Also, instead of teachers being the advisors for club activities, they should invite coaches from outside the school. In addition, digitalize teaching materials and assignments, and digitalize work whenever possible.
- To make students more express appreciation to teachers.
- First discussion with people and join some event .
- I will learn more about the importance of teaching and educate and encourage my friends to become teachers and to realise their key role in the ideal we want for the future.
- Be respectful to every person around you. (Care about the others as well) Spread information and make an action.
- There aren't much thing that we could do to change this world directly. However, even it's not directly relates to the resolve the issue, I think showing the interest and understanding is one of the important thing to do. Therefore, I would research what kind of problems are there and check news frequently so as to keep up with the current situation.

c. Jobs



i. Unemployment

- I will ensure that my lifestyle is such that it protects the environment. I will play my role in consuming vegetarian food, using less plastic and saving electricity. Moreover, I will try to volunteer at organisations that provide food for the low-income families to combat poverty.
- The theme of how to eliminate slacking off during telework was included in the discussion this time. I was of the opinion that if we set a quota for the day and have people submit their work as a result, there would be no room for slacking off, but others suggested that we only allow people who can manage themselves to telework in the first place.
- Do further research on the issues and raise awareness.
- I think I should know more about the current situation of social issues. Then, I will be interested and I might be talking to my friends.
- If it's an environmental issue, I try not to use plastic bags."
- reduce inequality. make more laws that reduce the chances of facing unequal opportunities in the workforce, home or anywhere.
- To join a volunteer.
- Help charities, organise VIAs
- To save poor people, I will donate money to volunteer association.

d. Human Rights



i. Discrimination & Racism

- I hope that we will be able to have a platform where we can directly ask the lawmakers of the country to consider our points and try to turn them into law in order to benefit the country
- Always think about what you can do. I want you to be in a world where everyone can live freely. For that purpose, it is necessary to recognize each other. You should throw away some stereotypes. Even if it is a bad side, it is important to accept it as well.
- Also, we often belong to some group. I think that we can create a better society if we can abandon the preconceptions of the group and spend time with new feelings."
- I will continue to share what I learnt through this forum to friends and others are interested. Although it is hard for us students to educate small children and teach them since a young age. We can also spread information through social media. Moreover, learning English is also important to help improve my understanding of the issues.
- Engage in more discussion with friends and family to raise awareness of the issue
- I will search the social issues deeply and inform it to my families and friends.
- I think trying to embrace other cultures is the most important thing to reduce racism. To achieve that, I want to be more empathetic to everyone, because if I am emphatic, I would be careful not to have prejudice when I first meet foreign cultures. Also, I want to discuss about racism together with my friends, so that I can gradually increase the number of people who are conscious about racism and respecting other cultures.
- I will learn other countries' cultures, not thinking in stereotypes.
- I will try to check my privilege and I will try to influence all my friends and family to put in their best effort towards the SDGs.

ii. Discrimination & Online Bullying

- As part of the EXCO (Executive Committee) of my school's Interact Club, I will focus on SDG's and create more opportunities for us to participate in online advocacy to support the discriminated in Singapore.
- I think I'll start from telling everyone that those issues are happening since some people don't really know about it. After most of the people knows, I'll try to stop each problems happening locally and after that, try to be part of the people who tries to solve problems happening globally.
- Always search around me for problems or anything related to them. Then, think about the solution from multiple directions and take action.
- Investigate the problem voluntarily.

iii. Child Labour

- I will keep an open mind about how the same problem may have different causes and effects in different countries, and communicate with adults to make substantial change.
- To join in the group which is tackling social issues and spread what is problem in this social. Make some posters and put it around the school or condominiums.
- I think it is important to know about the problem so I will search about the SDGs. Some people are not interested in such issues so I also try to spread the information of SDGs.
- While I don't often pay attention to the transparency of companies claiming to be ethical, some of my group mates seemed to do so and that made me realise I need to be more cautious as well. Not just companies, but even schemes like fair trade need to be looked into carefully, as some exaggerated advertisements may be deceiving.
- I will do my part to support the charities which champion these social issues as well as supporting businesses where people are treated fairly.
- Spread awareness and educate ourselves to ensure the information we are sharing is accurate.
- Do whatever we can do in our daily lives and spread the solutions that can tackle the issues.
- Look into the fair trade initiative and spread information about it to people around me.
- Not discriminate against unvaccinated people and find a way to live in harmony.