

Intercultural Encounters of a Chinese Teenager with a Family Visa in Japan

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to investigate problems faced by a Chinese teenager who came to Japan on a family visa. Much research has been conducted on the intercultural encounters of Chinese students. However, there is few research targeting high school graduates who have entered Japanese society. These Chinese students came to Japan on family visas and have a strong dream for their future in Japan. However, families cannot sufficiently support these Chinese students financially and psychologically while they live in Japan. In this study, the author interviewed a Chinese teenager, Teenager A, living in Osaka, Japan. Based on the data collected at the interview, the author found that Teenager A was unable to find a full-time job because he lacked competence in communicating with others in Japanese. As a result, his desire to pursue his dream may be unrealistic.

Keywords: Intercultural encounter, GTA, Chinese teenager

INTRODUCTION

The number of Chinese who have lived in Japan has grown rapidly, with a growth of more than 100,000 in the past five year. In 2017, the population of Chinese reached 711,486 people, excluding people from Taiwan. Out of all foreigners living in Japan, the population of Chinese is the largest. These people lived in Japan and often suffered many problems as they adapted to different cultures.

The purpose of this study is to investigate issues faced by a Chinese teenager who came to Japan on a family visa. Many Chinese teenagers who go to Japan on family visas and have a strong dream for their future in Japan. However, families cannot sufficiently support these Chinese students financially and psychologically while they live in Japan.

METHOD

1. Participants

In this study, the author interviewed a Chinese teenager, Teenager A, living in Osaka, Japan to better understand his current situation. Teenager A moved to Japan from China in 2015 and was 24 years old at the time of the interview. He had low proficiency level of Japanese, but worked part-time and earned a minimum income to live in Japan.

2. Data collection

A semi-structured interview was conducted in Teenager A's mother language, Chinese. The author first asked Teenager A some basic question, such as his age and education background. These helped the author to understand his lifestyle more easily. Table 1 showed the main questions in more detail.

Then the author asked Teenager A the following questions about his lifestyle and his plan for his future. Table 2 showed the detail item.

Table 1. Interview Questions

1. Family members and people living together (gender, age, occupation, etc.)
2. The place of birth
3. Age
4. Education background
5. Living standard (upper, middle, lower)

Table 2. Interview Questions

1. What do you think your Japanese level?
2. How many Japanese friends do you have? And how many best friends are among them?
3. When you communicate with your Japanese friends, are there any problems?
4. What are you doing during your free time? What is your hobby?
5. What kind of part-time job are you doing now? What do you feel about your job?
6. Do you like Japan or China more, why?
7. Why do you came to Japan?
- 8: Where do you want to live in the future?
9. How much do you spend in a month?
10. What is you dream in the future?

3. Data Analysis

The Grounded Theory Approach (GTA) Method of Data Analysis was used. The author analyzed the data using following steps.

- a. Transcribe the recorded interview into written form.
- b. Separate the data into main ideas. Each piece has an independent meaning.
- c. Use open coding to classify the pieces of data into labels, extracting the property and dimension information and naming the labels
- d. Combine the similar labels into Categories and naming the Categories
- e. Integrate the Categories into theory

For example, one paragraph from the data was “I want to learn Japanese properly, but I do not know how to learn. I do not have a language learning environment, because my Japanese speaking is not learned at school. I even make mistakes with simple short phrases. After all I think that it is better to learn standard Japanese properly at school. At school and university, I think that it is good to get closer with teachers. Communicating with friends is good for word learning”. The author summarize and named the label as [I will study Japanese properly at school. I want to communicate with teachers and students].Then the author created the category {Want to improve Japanese skills}.

CONCLUSION

Teenager A encountered problems caused by the circumstance mentioned at Figure 1, and did not know how to solve them. In Japan, there are a group of young people like him, who need help adjusting to society. In the future, further research will be conducted to explore what led to his situation and provide suggestions to other teenagers like him.

The inadequacies of this study are as follows: The results must apply to every case, not only the majority of cases, and it must also explain the situation of the minority of cases. As for this study, the author only analyzed one person’s data. Further research is need to completely support this theory.

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RESULTS&DISCUSSION

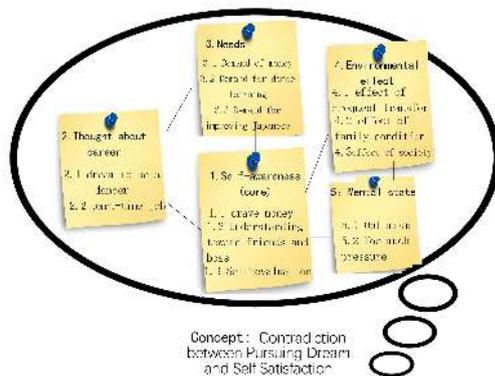


Fig.1.The Concept

As shown in Figure 1, the condition Teenager A faced was {4. Environmental effect}. Through the interaction of external {4. Environmental effect} and internal factors {3. Needs}, Teenager A gradually formed {1.self-awareness}. Eventually, his self-awareness led to the consequence as {2.Thoughts about career} and {5.Mental state}. The author suggests from Figure 1 that the contradiction between pursuing dreams and self satisfaction prevented Teenager A from making any progress in his life.