Perception of *Hafu* or Mixed-race People in Japan: Group-session Studies Among *Hafu* Students at a Japanese University

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Abstract: Japanese society is recognized as one of the highest context societies with more than 95% of Japanese race in population. Multilingual, multicultural, and multiracial are the topics to discuss while globalization is the trendy popular aim and goal of university and 'corporate education. While many studies have been done on the roles and effects that foreigners have on Japan, it seems that mixed-race Japanese (*konketsu*: 混血), or *hafu* (half: one Japanese parent and one non-Japanese parent), have been largely left out of any kind of research, study or recognition. In this paper, I gathered thirteen mixed-race university students in Tokyo and interviewed them through group sessions. The purpose of the group sessions was to understand the difficulties that the students confront due to their multi-ethnicity, to share their experiences of being perceived different, and to recognize how Japanese society treats them as a whole. The result of the discussion and interview sessions turned out varied, and the students are more comfortable with their identities as mixed-race than what might have been expected. This is in contrast to the past when the image of bi-cultural, and multi-cultural *hafu* (half-Japanese) might have been one of an outsider. The reasons for this are multifold: a great deal has to do with the recent attention given to *hafu*, their popularity in media and entertainment, as well as being university students, who have matured and are in a more tolerant environment, and perhaps the greater cultural diversity of Japan as a whole. Despite a trend of more understanding the students still expressed being exposed to rather bitter experiences in the past, usually during childhood. In this paper, group sessions of *hafu*, or mixed-race Japanese, provide an insight into diversity in Japanese society.

Keywords: *Hafu* (half), mixed-race Japanese, diversity, multiculturalism, multiracialism

1. Introduction - Mixed-Race Japanese as a Minority

Htun (2012) says that there is a complete absence of research on minority groups focusing on how minority individuals perceive their changing positions in Japanese society. He states, "by examining the social realities of minority group identification in Japan, …we can take some small but important steps forward in understanding the complex interaction of social relationships between majority Japanese and minority groups in contemporary Japan (p.3)." Htun's studies mainly focus on minority groups such as Ainu, Buraku, and Zainichi Korean, however, *hafu* Japanese are certainly another minority group in Japanese society.

In many societies in the world, it is not uncommon to discuss identities of mixed-race. However, this is not the situation in Japan. Foreigners are openly viewed as the minority and

Japanese as the majority; Japanese of mixed-race on the other hand, are rarely considered or may have been deemed to be in the same category as foreigners. According to Japanese governmental statistics, there were 39,511 international marriages in 2004 (Ministry of Justice, 2013), which are the most recent statistics available as of 2013. This accounts for about 5.5% of all marriages in Japan. A high number of them are between Japanese and Chinese (13,019), Philippinos (8,517) and Korean (8,023). There were 1,679 marriages between Japanese and Americans, 524 between Japanese and Brazilians, 403 between Japanese and British. Lise (2010), a sociologist who is also mixed-race Japanese herself says, "visible hafus are a minority of the minority""". The visible difference in appearance determines different attitudes by mixed-race Japanese themselves, as well as how people and society as a whole treat them. Whereas mixed-race Japanese whose appearance makes it obvious that they are of mixed ancestry have no choice over whether to divulge their race, mixed-race Japanese of Asian ethnicity can choose whether to be open about their ethnic identity or not. This means that there are more mixed-race individuals in Japan than it would seem on the surface.

However, even these numbers do not accurately reflect the reality of mixed-race Japanese in Japan. These statistics only account for international marriages between different nationalities. No statistics exist for those interracial marriages or populations by ethnic background in the Japanese census. Sometimes non-Japanese ethnic background or mixed race individuals with Japanese nationals are confronted by difficulties living in Japan. They are born and raised in Japan, speak nothing but fluent Japanese and may even have Japanese nationality, but they are still viewed as foreigners or as mixed-race Japanese, called *hafu*. In any case, mixed-race Japanese are a minority group in Japanese society, whereas in Hawaii they are a majority subgroup within the Japanese segment of the population of Hawaii.

Hawaii is considered one of the more multiethnic and multicultural societies due to its own unique history of immigration since the 1800s (Hormann, 1972, 1982). Among its population of 1,360,301 in 2010, 38.6% is Asian, 24.7% is white, 23.6 % have two or more races, 10% is native Hawaiian or from some other Pacific island, 8.9% is Hispanic or Latino, 1.6% African or African American, 1.2% from some other race, and 0.3% is native American (United States Census, 2010). The largest ethnic group is Asian American, which consists of 13.6% Filipino, 12.6% Japanese, 4.1% Chinese, 3.1% Korean or other, including Vietnamese and Indonesian. 10% of those who claim to be native Hawaiian are mostly partially Hawaiian and some other islanders including Samoan and Tongan. Put simply, everybody is a "minority" in Hawaii.

Table 1. Population of Hawaii (2010)

Ancestry	**Percentage**		
Filipino	13.6	Korean	3.1
Japanese	12.6	Mexican	2.9
Polynesian	9.0	Puerto Rican	2.8
German	7.4	Italian	2.7
Irish	5.2	African	2.4
English	4.6	French	1.7
Portuguese	4.3	Samoan	1.3
Chinese	4.1	Scottish	1.2

According to the United States Census Bureau, 23.6 % of Hawaii's population is from two or more races. The actual mixed-race population, however, seems to be greater than the number recorded in the statistics. When the author stayed in Hawaii to research multicultural individuals in 1995 and 2005, questionnaires on ethnic identity were distributed to more than 600 people in Hawaii. In the result of survey research in 2005 (ages ranged from 12 to 80), 44% of those surveyed claimed to be of mixed-race (Oshima, 2006). Narrowing the focus to those under 20, 57% claimed to be mixed-race with two or more ethnic backgrounds.

The unique environment of Hawaii lends itself towards the peaceful co-existence of different ethnic groups (Okamura, 1993; Hormann, 1972). People of mixed-race in Hawaii tend to identify themselves as a "local" instead of listing the names of ethnic groups and are, as a general rule, proud of their mixed-ethnicities (Oshima, 1996; McDermott, 1980). They also refer to themselves by the Hawaiian word *hapa* (half), or persons of mixed ethnic background. Brook Mahealani Lee, who was Miss Universe in 1998 commented, "(being Miss Universe) is about being open to a lot of different cultures. I've been to thirteen countries in a year, and wherever I go, they think I'm that ethnicity. So it's about being able to accept people for whatever they are. In Hawaii, we're like that by nature. I'm Hawaiian, Korean, Chinese, Dutch, English, French, Portuguese. So they all had to get along for me to be born" (on The Oprah Winfrey Show, May 7, 1998, cited in Fassler, 1998, p.9). The people of Hawaii claim to be "color blind", i.e., they don't see the colors of a person's skin, hair, or eyes, because mere appearance does not define him or her. The author of the photo book, *Rainbow Kids* (1998) later commented, "Rainbow kids are now not only accepted, but appreciated" (Fassler, 2010).

Turning once again to the multiracial situation in Japan, colorful mixed-race Japanese have not been always accepted nor have they been appreciated. In this paper, I am attempting to relay the reality of people of mixed-race in Japanese society and the observations that I made, through a series of group sessions, of the changes they have undergone over the course of their lives.

2. Definition of Hafu and Mixed-Race Japanese

The term *hafu* has often been used in Japan since the 1970's to indicate mixed-race Japanese who have one Japanese parent and one non-Japanese parent. It comes from the English word "half" and means half-Japanese. The definition of *hafu*, however, doesn't seem to be limited to half-Japanese alone. The term *hafu* can also be applied to mixed-race Japanese who have three or more ethnic backgrounds. In this sense, the term "biracial," which is widely used in this field of study is not an accurate translation of the word *hafu*. Another aspect of the word *hafu* is, it indicates individuals who are part-Japanese. For example, when referring to someone who has a Filipino mother and Chinese father, he/she would simply be called a foreigner instead of a *hafu*.

It has been argued that the word, *hafu* implies that the individual is merely half a person, and during the 1990s, the term *daburu* (double) was suggested as an alternate choice to use instead. *Daburu* has the positive image of having two cultural, racial, and linguistic abilities in each individual, rather than negative image of only possessing half of any of the above. There are different terms such as, mix, mix-roots, multiethnic, but none of these are commonly used

even by *hafu* individuals themselves. According to Haefelin (2012) who is *hafu* herself (with a German father and Japanese mother), most mixed-race Japanese are more comfortable with the term *hafu* because *daburu* sounds too "self-assertive (*jiko-shucho*:自己主張)".

According to Nishikura and Takagi, who are co-producers and co-directors of a documentary film "Hafu" (2013), the *hafu* themselves also define themselves and individuals in the film *hafu*. They comment on their website that they are aware of other terms such as *daburu*, but living in Japanese society, which places a high value on conformity to social norms, using the term *daburu* functions to exclude them from society due to the previously stated reason, and because people are not commonly aware of the term. Therefore, most half-Japanese prefer the term *hafu*, due to the overall acceptance and some even view it positively, as it is a unique concept peculiar to Japan.

In this paper, the author respectfully adopts the term *hafu,* as a term that is widely used by the Japanese to indicate mixed-race Japanese in Japan. Not all mixed-race Japanese are comfortable with the term, however. Some have more complicated ethnic backgrounds, such as having parents of mixed-race. While they feel that *hafu* is not an appropriate term in their own case, they are also adverse to the term "mixed," as it has negative connotations for them and can sound like "mixed-up (*gocha-maze*: ごちゃまぜ)" in Japanese society. They are searching for a term to identify themselves and often turn to using "just simply me (*jibun no kosei*:自分の個性)".

Tajfel (1974) defined social identity as "the part of individual's self-concept which derives from their knowledge of their membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance of that membership (p.69)." However, it takes certain process and period of time to adjust social identity and establish membership in a society.

Kich (1992) suggested three stages individuals with one Japanese parent and one white parent go through; 1) an initial awareness of difference and dissonance between self-perceptions and other's perceptions of them (initially, 3 through 10 years of age), 2) a struggle for acceptance from others (initially, age 8 through late adolescence and young adulthood), 3) acceptance of themselves as people with a biracial and bicultural identity (late adolescence throughout adulthood) (p.305).

The aim of the group session interview in this research is to examine if participants' development process will match Kich's theory. And the group session also aims to understand the difficulties they confront by being mixed-race, and to share their experience of being different, as well as understand how Japanese society is treating them.

3. Research Method

In October 2013, the author conducted a project group called the "Rainbow Project" with some students in the author's seminar class. The purpose was to gather *hafu* students at Bunkyo Gakuin University in Tokyo, and arrange group sessions. A total of thirteen *hafu* students completed a questionnaire, which asked about their age, sex, mother's race, father's race, experiences overseas, the language(s) they speak, and educational background. The *hafu* students were then divided into three groups for group sessions, and discussed questions such as the ones listed below.

Since racial identity is a personal and sensitive issue in nature, group sessions seemed more appropriate than individual interviews, as they deal in terms of comfort and sympathy. Morgan (1997) states that a group session is "a technique that collects data through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher" (p.6). It is also a "way to better understand how people feel or think about an issue, product, or service" (Krueger & Casey, 2000, p.4). Oikawa and Yoshida (2007) also conducted similar focus groups to analize biethnic identity. In the case of the author's group session, it helped students to feel comfortable discussing their family situations and social issues, because they are all students of the same university, and many were already friends, or at least familiar with one another.

The sessions were held in a familiar setting – a meeting room on campus which was known by all project members and participants. In order to comfort and relax the participants, the project members provided snacks and drinks, as well as cups to share with each other. The project members and participants spent 10 to 15 minutes chatting and pouring drinks for each other before the session began. One of the project members took the role as of MC or facilitator, and directed the discussion and provided questions when needed. Each group session was 90 to 120 minutes.

Discussion Questions:
1. Childhood
> Have you felt that you are different from other children?
> Have you been treated differently by others?
> Have you discussed your race, where you are from with your parents?
> Have your friends asked you about your race because of your appearance/language?
> Have you been asked what language you speak?
2. School life (up to high school)
> Have you felt uncomfortable not being fully Japanese race?
> Have you felt that nobody understand you?
> Did you want to find out more about your non-Japanese part of yourself?
> Did you feel like you should learn your root language?
> Did you feel like you have to act like Japanese?
> Did you feel you are more comfortable living somewhere else except Japan?
> Have you been feeling differently about your identity as you grow up?
3. University life
> What advantage do you feel that you have?
> Do you feel uncomfortable with people at first meeting because they would ask questions that they wouldn't ask if you were not *hafu*?
> Do you feel that you are proud of who you are?
> Do you wish to be a bilingual?

These questions are asked because some past research has shown that many biracial people change their attitude toward their identity as they grow up (Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007; Yoshida & Oikawa, 2012; film "Hafu", 2013). A total of three group sessions were held between November 29th and December 20th of 2013, with 4 to 5 participants in each group.

The age of participants ranged from 19 to 22, and all were university students of the foreign

language department of Bunkyo Gakuin University in Tokyo. Most of them have been raised mostly in Japan. Among thirteen participants, two were male and eleven were female (see Table 2).

Table 2. Participants in the "Rainbow Project"

Name	Age	Sex	Father's ethnicity	Mother's ethnicity	Use of non-Japanese language	Type of school Attended
Risa	22	F	India	Japan	none	public school
Marina	20	F	Japan	Korea	none	public school
Moi	19	M	Pakistan	Japan	Urdu, English	public school
Kai	20	F	Okinawa	Japan	none	public school
Colin	20	F	America (Unknown)	Japan	none	public school
Hikaru	20	F	Japan	Philippines, Italy	none	public school
Nozomi	20	F	Japan	Korea	Korean	public school
Samina	21	F	Pakistan	Japan	English	public school
Tomoe	21	F	China	Japan/China	Chinese	public school
Marie	21	F	Unknown (Caucasian)	Japan	none	public school
Mika	22	F	Korea/Japan	Korea/America (Caucasian)	Korean/English	public school
Masayo	20	F	Unknown	Okinawa	none	public school
Sebastian	20	M	Peru/Japan/Spain	Peru/Africa/Italy	Spanish	public school

Before entering university, most of the participants attended Japanese public elementary school, private or public junior high and high school up to the age of 18. The exceptions were Moi (19, Male) who had lived in Dubai for three years in junior high school and attended international school (English), and Mika (22, Female) who had lived in the States and Korea up to the age of 8 (2nd grader in elementary school) and has been in Japan since.

Some didn't fill out the ethnic background of their parent because the parents were divorced at a young age and the parent 'didn't want to talk about the former partner, or the participant herself didn't want to share the information.

4. Analysis of Group Sessions

Oikawa & Yoshida categorized their biracial identity models into three: "Unique Me", "Model Biethnic", and "Just Let Me Be Japanese" (Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007). The first group called Unique Me are "individuals who did not like to be stereotyped and who wanted to be seen as unique individuals" (p.644). The individuals in the second group Model Biethnic are respondents who "were pleased to be associated with the prevalent stereotypes, most of them being positive, of Biethnic individuals in Japan. Currently, there are many models and celebrities who are Biethnic and many Japanese believe that Biethnic individuals are better looking and more cosmopolitan than the average Japanese" (p.644). Lastly, individuals in Just Let Me Be Japanese group "just wanted to be like everyone else. They wish they looked more

Japanese so that others would not think of them as being different" (p.644).

Most of the participants of "Rainbow Project" went through two stages in their development. First, in childhood and early into their school experience, they wanted to be just like other Japanese, but later, accepted the fact of being *hafu* and began to feel more comfortable, adopting the attitude of "Unique Me".

4.1. Childhood

Most participants didn't notice being different from other children, nor did they remember being treated differently. The parents spoke Japanese at home and treated the children as Japanese. Participants in our group session thought of themselves as "normal" Japanese. Risa (India/Japan) never had any difficulty as a child, and always thought herself as Japanese. Her parents spoke Japanese at home, and her appearance wasn't always noticeable as a *hafu* child. Even now, she sometimes forgets that she is *hafu*. She appreciates it when people point out that she looks foreign or when she is expected to speak English upon first meeting, because then she realizes that she is *hafu* and should study more about English and her ancestry in India.

In comparison, others have had more difficulty adjusting. Mika (Korean/Japanese/America), who was raised in the States and Korea up to 8 years of age, thought herself as a Korean until she came to Japan. Sebastian (Peru/Japan/Italy/Africa/Spain) also had a different experience in Japan. His parents spoke Spanish at home and raised him as a "foreigner," and he says he has always had problems hiding his emotions in front of Japanese people. The experience of being bullied when he was small also had a negative impact on his perception of being mixed-race; in fact he doesn't believe he is *hafu*. His reasoning: if he were half Japanese, he figures his behavior would be more Japanese.

Marina (Korea/Japan) has also been in a different situation. Her mother is Korean Japanese who has been fighting against prejudice for generations in Japanese society. Due to this prejudice, Marina has been bullied by relatives on both her mother's and father's side, and has said that she feels that there is nowhere to go for peace. Marina is a person with strong personality and she is a mature individual. While the experience was painful, ultimately she has been made stronger by it, and not afraid of being discriminated against or bullied anymore.

It seems that the experience within the family differentiates the participants' attitude toward being hafu. The language they used with parents and siblings, food that they ate, customs, and attitudes of the family at home played largely into the creation of their identity during childhood.

4.2. School Life (up to High School)

When the participants enter schools, they start comparing themselves with other children and begin to notice the difference. They notice that teachers treat them differently. Mika (Korea/Japan/America) and Nozomi (Japan/Korea), who both have mothers with Korean roots, spoke how Korean mothers act in front of their friends. When Mika brought her friends home, her mother would cook lots of dishes and try to have them stay for dinner. She only wanted her mother to bring some cute looking cookies and strawberry cake just like any other Japanese

mothers would. Nozomi's mother also served meals for her friends in the early afternoon, she would follow the class on the day of fieldtrip, and call out Nozomi's name to support her on parents' day when parents observe children's class (parents are supposed to be quiet). She was embarrassed by these actions and they had a lot of arguments over this matter. She never hid that she is half Korean, but she tried to hide her mother from public view.

Colin's (America/Japan) experience of and her attitude toward being *hafu* is interesting. Her parents were divorced when she was three, and she doesn't remember her father. When she was small, she spoke English with her father, but doesn't remember any English. Because of her appearance, people ask her if she speaks English, but she always jokingly answers "OK, apple." She finds the puzzled face that people make when they find out that she is not a foreigner amusing. Sometimes she makes jokes on other people - when someone talks to her in Japanese, she will give them a look that implies "I don't understand Japanese," and then they will try to speak English. She doesn't mind people asking her about her roots, and then to Colin, being *hafu* is just another part of her personality or character.

Moi (Pakistan/Japan) was uncomfortable when people called him "foreigner" when he was child, but as he has grown older, he appreciates that there are some benefits to being *hafu*. For instance, in his high school, his Japanese teacher thought Moi didn't know much Japanese because of his appearance. When Moi did poorly on his Japanese examination, the teacher gave him a good grade. He is also blessed that Japanese young people are ignorant about situations of the world. When he tells them that he is half Pakistani, most of them don't even know what Pakistan is like or even where it is, so they don't have negative image of his roots. He is thankful for that.

On the other hand, Samina (Pakistan/Japan) hates the fact she is half Pakistani. She has no interest in Pakistan because her father always spoke about how dangerous it is there and how wonderful it is in Japan. She says she has never been to Pakistan, and never will. She didn't like how she looked different, and used to cut off her long eye lashes to make her eyes look smaller when she was in junior high school. She also has had trouble accepting being Muslim. She doesn't want to consider herself as a Muslim, but her father and her relatives, including her close cousins, are Muslim and they force her to act like one. Samina and her mother are not allowed to eat or keep pork in the house. When her father is gone, they eat pork for dinner and clean the room, refrigerator, and freshen the air in the house before he comes home. She thinks it is pretty funny now.

Kai (Okinawa/Japan) and Masayo (unknown/Okinawa) are both from Okinawa, and they were raised in Okinawa until entering university in Tokyo. They always thought of themselves as Japanese until they came to Tokyo, where they discovered that the people in Tokyo had a different culture and seemed like different people altogether. They now identify themselves as Okinawan.

Hikaru (Japan/Philippines/Italy) said she kept mostly quiet about her ethnic background because if she 'didn't mention it, most Japanese didn't notice. She feels that she is lucky to have homes around the world because she has relatives in the States, the Philippines, and Canada. On the other hand, she feels that she should study English more to communicate with them better. She is comfortable living in Japan and considers herself as a Japanese person with a slight advantage.

Tomoe (China/Japan) always thought of herself as Chinese Japanese. Her mother speaks Chinese with her and her father speaks Japanese. She usually doesn't tell people that she is part Chinese because people don't notice. It seems that she is a Japanese who is good at Chinese language. She said she is careful who she tells about her ethnic background, and that if some people talk badly about Chinese in front of her without knowing that she is part Chinese, she said she would keep quiet.

4.3. University Life

Marie (Caucasian/Japan) grew up with a sister and a brother. All look *hafu*, but they have never asked their mother (Japanese) about their ethnic background. Her parents were divorced when she was 8 years old and she hasn't seen her father since, so she doesn't remember her father. She considers herself to be nothing but Japanese. She only speaks Japanese and was born and raised in Japanese society. Even at home, she can't find anything that's non-Japanese. She has difficulty when people ask her where she is from. It takes some time for anyone to believe that she is Japanese. She doesn't even know the ethnicity of her father, and because of this is unable to identify herself as anything other than Japanese. She has always hesitated when talking about her father with her mother and so have her siblings. But after this group session of "Rainbow Project", she realized that she would like to ask her mother about her roots. She wants to understand and be proud of herself just like other *hafu* friends that she observed in the group session.

Moi (Pakistan/Japan) feels that being *hafu* is an advantage. When he went to a job interview at an Italian restaurant, he was hired at a better hourly wage because of his looks. The restaurant manager said, "you provide a good atmosphere in this place". He sees there are always a good side and bad side of a matter. Now that he is grown up, he can see the better side of his identity. He considers himself to be 70% Japanese, 30% Pakistani.

Samina (Pakistan/Japan) always hated being half Pakistani, she said, "If I'm half European, like half English, it would be so much better. I would like myself better". However after the group session, she said, "It was an interesting discussion. I never felt so good about myself. Now I'm interested in my other root - Pakistan. Maybe I will visit Pakistan someday."

Sebastian (Peru/Japan/Italy/Africa/Spain) feels uncomfortable when people ask him about his ethnic roots. He hopes that he will not be forced to make a list of his ethnicity every time he meets someone new. Not only his appearance, but his Latin background and his parents' behavior make him act differently than Japanese people and he says he often doesn't know how he should behave. He feels that he is more himself when he can talk loud with big gestures, kiss and hug his friends, but at the same time, he knows that his Japanese friends are uncomfortable with this behavior. He considers himself "just simple me", with no ethnicity involved, and wishes that other people would think that too.

Nozomi (Korea/Japan), Mika (Korea/Japan/America), Colin (America/Japan), Hikaru (Japan/Philippines/Italy) are comfortable in Japan, especially now that they are adults. They accept their own personalities, and find most incidents involving being a *hafu* to be laughing matters.

Multiracialism doesn't necessarily equate with multiculturalism. Some research has

already shown that two or more cultures coexisting within one individual at the same level is not possible in the process of acculturation (McFee, 1968). This seems to be the case with the participants of the group sessions, as many of them feel that they are more Japanese than other roots.

4.4. Development Process of Mixed-Race Identity

Participants in the group sessions discussed and shared their experiences and thoughts on their identity. Over the course of the session some of them developed their thoughts about themselves during the sessions. The result of "Rainbow Project" group sessions tells us that experiences of participants seem to match the three stages that Kich (1992) suggested.

The participants identify themselves differently at different stages of their growing process. Most participants in the group sessions didn't see themselves as different when they were children (most likely before entering elementary school at the age of 6 to 7) unless their parents intentionally raised them as different. This is stage one, an initial awareness of differentness and dissonance between self-perceptions and others' perceptions of them.

Then later during the school period between the age of 6 to 18, they were much more likely to hate being different from others. As Sophia's comment, "when you are young, you want to be just like everybody else" (film "Hafu", 2013). In this sense, younger hafu can be categorized as "Just Let Me Be Japanese" in the analysis of Oikawa and Yoshida (2007). In Kich's three stages (1992), this would be the second stage, or period of struggle. In the group session, Samina (Pakistan/Japan) cut her eye lashes, and Hikaru (Japan/Philippine/Italy) and Tomoe (China/Japan) kept quiet about their ethnic background when they were in junior high school. Nozomi (Korea/Japan) and Mika (Korea/Japan/America) also struggled with the perceived difference in their mother's behavior. Lastly, Sebastian (Peru/Japan/Italy/Africa/Spain) was bullied in junior high school.

As they mature, they establish their own identity, including an acceptance of being *hafu*. They find their own way to handle how people and society treat them, and some are even able to enjoy the fact, while others learn to take advantage of it. This is Kich's third stage. Some university students in the group sessions, had long before reached the third period. Some were still in the second stage. However, Htun (2012) says, "achieving a positive social identity might not be the goal that minority identity are aiming for. Rather, feeling positive about one's own minority identity is consequent on the degree to which an individual attributes significance to their minority identity (p.14)". This statement also seems to indicate Kich's third stage.

The outcome of group sessions also supports Yoshida and Oikawa's analysis (2012). They found four factors of being biethnic in Japan: "acting Japanese leading to identity confusion", "being treated differently", "interest in their non-Japanese culture", and "biethnicity as an advantage". These factors also show the continually developing process of mixed-race identity.

5. Conclusion

Japanese society is rapidly changing. It is in a forceful movement towards globalization as the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology had recently

announced the concept of "global human resources". A committee was established to consider certain qualities of global human resources which include: language and communication skills, an independent spirit, cooperativeness, flexibility as well as a sense of responsibility and purpose. The committee also suggests that global-minded people should be open-minded to understand other cultures, have a sense of identity, and respect diversity (website of MEXT, 2013).

This concept has been widely respected and reflects university education systems and hiring and education policies of corporations in Japan. The movement toward globalization seems to be rapidly creating a more tolerant and acceptable environment for foreigners and *hafu*, at least in urban areas. Sometimes they are even admired for their advantages. While Japan may have a long way to go before reaching true racial diversity, the population of foreign nationals living in Japan has increased from 342,655 in 1947 to 2,049,123 in 2013 (website of Ministry of Justice, 2013). From this number, large numbers of mixed-race or non-mixed-race Japanese are expected to be living in Japan.

Mixed-race individuals are the key to the peaceful co-existence of different race groups in Hawaii. They contribute to making the society a matured multiracial and multicultural one. The mixed-race Japanese or *hafu* have an advantage in, and will certainly contribute to the diversity of Japanese society.

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank members of the "Rainbow Project" and mixed-race Japanese participants in group sessions. They are making Japan a rich and colorful society. During the sessions, I and project members called participants "rainbows" as a new term to make all participants comfortable sharing their personal experiences. I want to thank them for taking their time and effort. Finally, I want to thank all faculty members who supported this project.

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Akase, Mami	Kaneko, Mika	Taku, Naoto
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