

## COMPLETION REPORT

University of the Philippines Los Baños

Rhea Ledesma Gumasing

### **Title: Inspiring Change: Japan's Youth Civic Engagement**

In the study, we examined the extent of civic engagement in three domains – cognitive, affective and psychomotor – among the youth in Japan, the motivation behind it, and various ways in which it can be promoted. This was done primarily because

of the apparent decline in civic and political engagement among the younger population in Japan over the past 20 years. Similarly, this study was inspired by the fact that the voting age was lowered from 20 to 18 due to the passage of the Public Election Law in 2015. A total of 138 respondents completed the online surveys. We also conducted in-person interviews and focus group discussions with youth aged 18-29 living in Nagoya, Osaka, Kyoto, and Tokyo, as well as with two Nagoya-based nonprofit organizations. The surveys were conducted from June to December 2022. It took five weeks to prepare and translate the survey and interview instruments. We also obtained an ethical clearance certificate for the research to ensure that we adhere to the protocols of conducting research.

Overall, we found that about 30 adolescents, or 21.92%, cognitively engaged in matters affecting their community daily. The affective and psychomotor dimensions of civic engagement show that, on average, 88% have not engaged in their community in the past 12 months, while 93% reported that they have not organized any civic engagement activities, mainly due to the constraints of the pandemic. And of those who have participated in or initiated activities, they are in the areas of environment and education. Our study also shows that youth are motivated to engage when the issues are related to their current life situation and when their families and peers are involved. With the right informational and structural support and economic resources, youth could engage more frequently and on a variety of occasions, reflecting a value system and an understanding of their role as contributors to the development of their community. In cases where they have not been able to participate, it is due to lack of time, resources, and access to information for such opportunities. In addition, it is important to note that the social cohesion indicators reflect a score of 91.54%, suggesting that respondents have a positive feeling about their community, that they like where and how they live now. Their responses also indicate that they have confidence in government to provide jobs and believe that its efforts can have an impact on their community. The above findings among those surveyed are somewhat in contrast to the earlier finding that the younger population's engagement with their communities appears to be declining.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

1. December 9, 2022, 16:20-17:50, SA302, Sendagaya Campus, Tsuda University, The 6<sup>th</sup> TU-RIPS Seminar: The Pandemic, Food Security, and Youth Rights; “Initial results: Youth civic participation in Japan, presented by Rhea L. Gumasing
2. July 20, 2023, 18<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Interdisciplinary Social Sciences: Agency in an Era of Displacement and Social Change, 14:30-16:10, Oxford Brookes University, Gypsy Lane Campus, “Inspiring Change: Japan’s Youth Civic Engagement,” presented by Rhea L. Gumasing

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

(on process) Submitted to Social Science Japan Journal <https://academic.oup.com/ssjj>

Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)