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Research Paper

What are the future prospects for Japanese-North Korean relations

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Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ryoseon Bae', written in a cursive style.

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List of Abbreviations

DPRK Democratic People's Republic of Korea

KIC Kaesong Industrial Complex

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Abstract

In this research paper, it is discussed if there are some possibilities of normalization between Japan and Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). Two countries have had no relations for many decades due to political reasons. News of the DPRK coming to Japan is always about nuclear weapons, abductions, missiles and its regime, therefore Japanese people regard the DPRK as a problematic country in general. Since 2002, no meetings have ever happened between Japan and the DPRK.

If it becomes absolutely clear that new markets related to the DPRK would bring success in Japanese economy, Japan might consider stabilization with the DPRK. Yet, it is not clear if Japanese are willing to agree with normalization even after they confirm that the DPRK has economic potential and benefits for Japan. Then, by doing surveys and interviews, we will reveal if Japanese are really willing to normalize with DPRK and if so, what approach is needed for both governments.

Then, the overall research question is "What are the future prospects for Japanese-North Korean relations?". In order to support the question, there are two sub research questions, which are RS1 and RS2. RS1 is "Are younger Japanese interested in stabilization with the DPRK?", revealing thoughts of younger Japanese toward the DPRK. Another one is "If Japan does pursue stronger relations with NK, then cooperation in which industries or business areas might deliver the best returns?", finding the prospective industry of the DPRK for Japan.

The aim of this research is to understand how Japanese people are considering the normalization with the DPRK so we can accumulate its possibilities. To consider the new approach in Japanese side, the first thing which has been researched is how Japanese people, especially younger Japanese, are regarding North Korea and what issue they want the DPRK to improve and solve for moving on. To add to them, this research clarified what opinion Japanese young people have if they realize that the DPRK has economic potential in order to accumulate how much economic potential matters for Japanese people while domestic economy power is deteriorating in Japan . Later, the students' opinions were compared to the experts of the North Korean study so we could find the gap between them.

Main findings in this research is young people are interested in the DPRK both its entity and business potentials. Yet almost all young people do not agree with normalization without solving political issues with them. In this research, the reasons which young people have negative impressions towards North Korea was shown, additionally, opinions of two experts of the field are also introduced beside a journalist at Forbes JAPAN. For further improvements of this research, it would be better to have more samples and datas so we can see more exact tendencies of thoughts of Japanese students. Moreover, the ethics to normalize and help the DPRK is questioned due to all issues surrounding North Korea like abduction, concentration camps, human rights and so on. Eventually, it is revealed that the most important action for Japan in the future is “trying to share more information about North Korea” which is not only about business aspects but also culture, life and so on.

Keywords: [North Korea, Japan, normalization, abduction, nuclear weapons, colonial rule]

1. Introduction

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), which is known as North Korea, has been a significant global political player for many decades. Even though it is politically isolated, it attracts the world's attention due to its totalitarian regime, ideology, abductions of Japanese, program of nuclear weapons development, and concentration camps. And yet, some countries do invest in the DPRK (Shepard, 2010). Jim Rogers (2019), an American investor, argued that “there are vast natural resources as well as dedicated, cheap and educated laborers”. Regarding laborers of the DPRK, as Rogers mentioned, there is an important and positive story. According to Worldometers elaboration of the latest United Nations data (2020), its current population is 25,754,241. The number is growing year by year in the DPRK, while some countries, like Japan, are facing a shrinking population (Worldometer, 2020). To add to these demographic strengths, the DPRK has geopolitical advantages in terms of its proximity to powerful countries like China, Russia and South Korea. Across the sea from the DPRK, there is an economically powerful island, Japan. Thus, the DPRK has aspects which some investors may be attracted to when searching for new markets.

These years, the economy in Japan struggles with shrinking populations, then they need to find solutions to overcome this economic hardship. Japanese government(2020) reported that real GDP in the fourth quarter of 2019 fell at an annualized rate of 6.3 percent from the

previous quarter (Kalish, 2020). Kalish (2020) argued that even before the coronavirus started to disrupt Japanese manufacturing supply chains, Japan's economy had faltered following the imposition of a higher national sales tax in October 2019.

The more we search for the factors that prevent stabilization between the DPRK and Japan, we wonder why Japan should still consider the normalization with the DPRK and what would be the benefits for them. Japan ruled over Korea from 1910 to 1945, and the DPRK have been asking the Japanese government to make amends. Blomquist & Wertz (2015) showed how Japan implemented harsh and restrictive policies towards the Korean people throughout the colonial rule, with policies of forcible assimilation hitting a peak as Japan expanded its empire during the 1930s and 40s. Due to the harsh periods, the DPRK is not willing to stabilize unless Japanese government makes an official apology or amends. This reflected North Korea's anger towards Japan as a former colonial power, as well as the failure to resolve the Korean War, meaning North Korea is still technically at war with many regional powers.

Conversely, abductions and nuclear weapons became issues later. According to the report of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan(2020), there are 17 people kidnapped in total. The North Korean government noted that eight of them died and four did not stay in North Korea, and the Ministry in Japan suspects about if the DPRK shares the right information, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. A 13-year-old girl, Megumi Yokota, suddenly vanished from a town in Niigata on November 15, 1977. She is one of the biggest controversies surrounding abduction problems as its unclear information brings many doubts. It happened on her way to the school (the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2020). After several decades, on September 17, 2002, Prime Minister of Japan at the time Koizumi visited

North Korea and had the first summit meeting with Kim Jong- Il. Kim admitted the abduction and apologized at the meeting. Both Shigeru and Sakie, who are Megumi's parents, expected to finally see their daughter, however, they were only informed that Megumi Yokota was deceased. Yet it is still not clear if she was dead at the time even though it has been more than 18 years since the day.

When the North Korean government brought the remains of Megumi Yokota and Kaoru Matsuki (who was also kidnapped) to Japanese government, surprisingly, different DNA was detected as a result of the test (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2020). Yet the North Korean government keeps telling that information was provided enough and the remains for 2 people have been returned clearly (2020). The controversy about the truth of people's remains is still going on between Japan and the DPRK.

As Blomquist and Wertz (2015, p1) noted, "Japan's current priorities regarding North Korea center around the issue of North Korea's past abductions of Japanese citizens, and concerns over North Korea's nuclear and missile programs." Beside the unclear abduction issues, Japan is afraid of the DPRK developing nuclear weapons and its experiments.

2. Literature Review

Introduction

In this chapter, three aspects surrounding the DPRK are discussed. First, it is about foreign investment in the DPRK. It helps to understand what advantages North Korea has and at what point foreign countries have ever been attracted and approached to the DPRK. Following that, the past gains of South Korea through the Kaesong industrial complex, which is inter-Korean manufacturing zone, are introduced. Then, analysis of public opinions comes next. The opinion polls are for revealing how people in Japan regard the DPRK and what issues they care the most in general. In the end of the chapter, it will be discussed what is missed and need to do research more for filling the gap between the research question and literature reviews.

Foreign investments in DPRK

This literature review reveals some perspectives about foreign direct investments in North Korea. Mainly, in this literature review, we will discuss the approach with investment by China, South Korea and its benefits so that we can find the realistic way to apply to Japan. Additionally, it will be argued how the DPRK also has developed themselves to be interactive with foreign countries while they maintain their steadfast regime. The key issue is to clarify how each country made profits by investing the DPRK over the political hardship.

A business-oriented approach to the DPRK would bring improvements to economic and diplomatic issues all over the world (Shepard, 2010). Shepard shows how foreign countries approached the DPRK in the way of investment and what profits each country gained. Shepard argued not only what industry they invested in but also what was the hardship for them when they tried to manage investment in the DPRK. Kim, Mossuwi and Mirshab (2007, p. 52) argued that there are rich natural resources in the DPRK unlike South Korea. They also

added that there are at least 40 different natural resources that can be highly valuable in export markets in Pyongyang, capital of the DPRK.

However, even when foreign investors have found potential investment opportunities, some of them were forced to give up because of political interruption (Shepard, 2010). North Korea makes efforts to utilize numerous potential benefits of expanded economic cooperation with South Korea and other countries (Shepard, 2010). As Kim, Mossuwi and Mirshab (2007, p. 52) observed, North Korea has introduced a host of new laws addressing foreign investment, relations with capital firms, new zones of free trade, and double taxation so that they could maximize foreign investors's use of abundant labor force. After Kim Jong Un came to be the Supreme Leader in 2011, their political theme has changed to focusing on economy from the military first policy which was led by his father. Isozaki (2019, p24) argued that Kim Jong Un emphasizes in his recent speeches and meetings that DPRK has to develop multilateral trade so they can follow global issues.

North Korea is not unknown treasure island anymore

Shepard (2010) cited an article (Global Times, 2009) and noted, Chinese investment was growing, and Beijing approved the construction of a 73,000-square-kilometer joint development zone at Tumen River Delta (p.2). Furthermore, according to Korea business news (as cited in Shepard, 2010), Chinese companies, which are privately owned, were upgrading infrastructure and facilities in the \$6 trillion North Korean mining sector at the time (p.2). When mentioning the economic relations between South Korea and DPRK, the one we can not miss to describe is the entity of Kaesong industrial complex (KIC). According to the research of Headquarters International Crisis Group(2019), this inter-Korean manufacturing zone was operated from December 2004 to February 2016. It was shuttered by Geun Hye

Park ,who was the president in South Korea from 2013 to 2017, because of the developing nuclear issue with the DPRK. From 2009 to 2014, the KIC annually made \$1.79 billion, and they had \$965 million and \$828 million worth of goods respectively from the North exporting and importing (Kelly, 2018).

We can look at the profitability for South Korea as a result of low labor costs. In a study of International Crisis Group(2019), lower wages would find workers' lower productivity in general. However it was not the case in the Kaesong Industrial Complex since they speak the same language and that might boost productivity (p. 11). According to South Korean managers interviewed by Crisis Group, most South Korean managers evaluate the North Korean workers well as they are disciplined, hard-working and quick learners.

Since Moon-Jaein became leader of South Korea in 2017, Korean Peninsula started to face each other for considering coexistence more realistically than past decades. Isozaki (2019) argued that Moon Jae-In, current president of South Korea, assumes that it is better to reunify with the DPRK though, the Korean peninsula should keep both North and South of regimes (p13). Regarding reunification, the most thing people concern is that South Korea is capitalism while the DPRK has been socialism. Isozaki pointed out that it is difficult to integrate two regimes into either of their systems even if the 38th parallel north has gone and people can go across each territory. Therefore, the ideal unification is assumed to keep both country's heads in the Korean peninsula. There is a lot of controversy surrounding the way of reunification of Korean peninsula though, these changes on the peninsula might attract people who would invest there.

As it is mentioned in a study of Tourism in North Korea, Isozaki(2019, p14), he cited information from website of Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Japan, and found that China, India and Russia became DPRK's main trade destinations in 2017 and made significant profits \$4.99 billions , \$9million and \$8million, respectively. It shows China gained a big amount of profits more than others. Even if Japan is behind those countries in starting to penetrate markets in DPRK, it might help to raise their economy and stabilize tensions with DPRK.

However, Kim Yo Jong, who is the younger sister of North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un, blew up the inter-Korean liaison office on 16th June 2020. It was a joint liaison office of North Korea and South Korea located in North Korea's Kaesong Industrial Region to facilitate communication between the North and the South as it was mentioned in another paragraph. According to BBC News (2020), North Korea had followed through on a threat to demolish the office due to Seoul's inability to prevent defectors from flying anti-regime propaganda over the border and some other conflicts in Korean peninsula.

This sort of case could happen again. It interrupts the improvement of relations between North and South significantly even though they had made a lot of efforts for it. If Japan finally could make normalization with the DPRK someday, still the relationship has to be maintained carefully.

Public opinion toward DPRK in Japan

Abduction, nuclear weapons, dictatorship, concentration camp, human rights and North Korean defectors are all serious issues surrounding Korea that affect relations with not only Japan but also other countries. Revealing how people in Japan regard DPRK and what issue

they care the most in general are essential for bringing further steps for solutions. What issue is the most serious for Japanese?

The Cabinet office of Japan conducted a survey about diplomacy, through an opinion poll of 3,000 people with Japanese nationality over 18 years old and eventually managed to collect 1,804 which is 60.1% of overall. In their report (2016), there is a question to reveal what issues related to the DPRK are the most interesting for Japanese. 81.2% of the people answered "abduction". Following that, the "nuclear issue" (72.1%), the "missile issues" (71.5%), and the "political system in DPRK" (42.1%) came to the result. About abduction, Japanese are discussing Megumi Yokota in general, yet there are still some Japanese kidnapped beside Megumi Yokota. As the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan reported, Japanese government found 17 people kidnapped by North Korea in the past (2020). The DPRK has been developing the missile, and Japan and South Korea are afraid of it for many decades while the DPRK is programming development of nuclear weapons. In October 2020, North Korea's missile was shown as one of the world's largest intercontinental ballistic missiles which is called ICBMs, according to BBC news(2020). It is introduced as capable of striking long-range targets, including potentially the US mainland(2020). There are still some people who are interested in North Korean defectors and the relationship between North and South Korea respectively 34.6% and 23.4%.

The percentage of those who answered "nuclear issues" and "political system" as the most interesting topic is high in big cities like Tokyo and Osaka. By gender, the rate of those who are concerned about the "abduction" and "missile issue" was high amongst women, and men are more interested in "nuclear issue" and "political system".

It revealed that a crucial reason people loathe and hesitate to reach DPRK are past abduction and development of weapons. Since 2008, abduction issues have been the most topic people care about as the proportion of answers was 88.1%, 86.7% and 83% respectively in 2008, 2009 and 2010. Moreover, there is still no agreement or solutions about past abduction issues between Japan and DPRK even while Japanese government keeps investigating past accidents. The DPRK, which has experimented with missiles and nuclear weapons for many decades, has also brought tensions to neighbors, not only Japan, and made them have a concrete negative impression.

The Genron NPO, which is a non-profit and independent think tank based in Japan, conducted an opinion poll called "The Japan-South Korea joint public opinion poll in 2019" with East Asia Institute. In their report (2019), there is a survey result regarding North Korea's nuclear issue. It was revealed that 47.4% of the Japanese, almost half of the results, assume that the denuclearization would not be realized in real life as they answered "difficult in the end" or "never thought it would happen in the first place". Yet, 31.4% of Japanese believe that it will happen (chosen either of the denuclearization "will be realized in a short time" and "will eventually be realized but take a long time").

In the report of the Cabinet office of Japan(2016), there is another survey about fields that Japan should focus on and enhance their economy in order to promote its economic relations with foreign countries. More than half of the people, which is 58.8%, answered "securing energy and mineral resources" is the most important work for Japan. Supporting overseas expansion of Japanese companies for infrastructure development such as electricity, railways, water, and roads in foreign countries is also considered well as 44.8% of people are following it. Ensuring food is 40.5%, and promotion of trade and investment liberalization, which is

included to utilize FTA(Free Trade Agreement), EPA(Economic Partnership Agreement), BIT(Bilateral Investment Treaty) and WTO(World Trade Organization), is 39.4%.

It makes clear that many of Japanese are considering that securing sources are important, and this field, natural resources, could be supported well by the DPRK if they normalize its relations with North Korea successfully .

The Research Gap

Through literature reviews two key research gaps come out. One is that it is not clear what industry in the DPRK Japan would have spaces to help. Another is what opinion Japanese young people have toward North Korea. Two research gaps details are introduced below.

1) From this literature review, it was revealed that the DPRK has definitive potentials of economy so some countries have already approached them. China, Russia and South Korea have reached the DPRK as neighbors though, one important developed neighbor is not tried yet : Japan. It is not clear yet how Japan can perform in the business panorama with North Korea. By utilizing the geopolitical benefits of the DPRK, Japan would also be able to gain profits from them. In order to prove this possibility, analyzing the existing business cases between the DPRK and developed countries is important to find the ways for Japan to penetrate new markets of the DPRK. Notably, it should be clarified what industry is the most possible for Japan to do business with the DPRK when we consider other countries' strengths and weaknesses. Although there are a significant number of industries which have to be improved in the DPRK, China and other countries would manage all of them if Japan does not try to consider normalization and find a new market there as soon as possible. Therefore it is necessary to specify the characteristics of Japanese business and their technology so they can

prove themselves available to help and bring profits to each other. Even though they are in such a difficult situation, accumulating possibilities would help to revise relations between DPRK and Japan.

2) In the survey by The Genron NPO , it was revealed that still some Japanese see potentials of denuclearization in DPRK, however, it is not clear which generations are supporting these positive results. Especially, current young generation's perspective will be important for Japanese society after decades as the shrinking population and aged society in Japan are going on and they will be main conductors in Japanese economy. According to Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications's data (2016), it is predicted that the population will decrease to 86 million approximately in 2060 while there are currently over 100 million in Japan. Those social and economic issues are known as the most serious trend in Japan. Amid COVID-19, The Japanese economy was damaged, much like other countries' economies. In order to mitigate those damaging situations, younger generations' power is very important, and it needs to be observed how young people perceive one of the big political issues, relations with DPRK, currently.

3. Methods

Introduction

In this chapter, the process for filling research questions is described in order. First, as the strategy plan, what data should be collected and what sorts of samples are required for that are introduced based on the research question, then it is clarified why all samples fit this research. Second, how to collect data follows. All samples have to be Japanese in both surveys and interviews. Later, each question given to samples and the reasons why those questions are provided are mentioned. Both samples of survey and interviews are voluntary response sampling. Following that, it moves on to the methodology section and describes what methods will be applied to analyze each different type of data.

Research question “What are the future prospects for Japanese-North Korean relations?”

In order to observe the possibilities if Japan would have business relations with DPRK, it is necessary to reveal the research question; What are the future prospects for Japanese-North Korean relations? Sub-research questions are following the Methodology section.

RQ1: Are younger Japanese interested in stabilization with the DPRK?

In this research, it needs to clarify if Japanese are willing to agree to having relations with the DPRK even though the DPRK has political issues like abduction and nuclear weapons.

There are, these days in Japan, a few news articles describing economic benefits of DPRK, however, it would be highly assumed that Japanese are not willing to support stabilization regardless of its benefits. In that case, it has to be figured out how much Japanese young

generation generally are interested in DPRK and what exactly they want the DPRK to improve for moving on to the next step.

RQ2: If Japan does pursue stronger relations with NK, then cooperation in which industries or business areas might deliver the best returns?

To add RQ1, it has to reveal what field of business or industries are potential in the DPRK in order to find a realistic approach for Japan.

However, it also needs to be observed what Japanese experts think. What doubts they have about the current relationship between Japan and North Korea. If both young people and experts' views are close or similar, it makes sense that economic potentials in DPRK might be able to promote Japan to normalization with the DPRK in the future.

Methodology

Two sorts of surveys were conducted between June 1st and September 15th 2020, Survey (A) and Survey (B), respectively. Survey (A) is for revealing thoughts toward DPRK by young generations, and it includes two questions and collected 35 and 19 responses respectively.

Survey (B) is targeting students for clarifying how generation Z of Japanese consider the DPRK.

Regarding qualitative research, we use grounded theory, which was developed by Barney G. Glaser and Anselm Leonard Strauss. Grounded theory sets out to discover or construct theory from data, systematically obtained and analysed using comparative analysis (Tie, Birks & Francis, 2019). The attribute of this theory is the process which

creates data with codes after observing the situations and analyzing interviews. In this research topic case, it is going to analyze and observe with secondary data and collect data by doing interviews and surveys.

Survey (A) is conducted by using social media polls, and survey (B) addresses with online questionnaires. Interviews to two academia are conducted online while the interview with the journalist from Forbes takes place in person at her office.

Survey (A) is applied to quantitative research, and survey (B) is applied to both quantitative and qualitative research. By results of survey (A), it is going to include only quantitative research for detecting the tendency and thoughts of Japanese young people by counting how many people are interested in DPRK and its economic potential.

In survey (B), the results are going to be categorized in order to see how many and what types of opinions Japanese students have toward the DPRK. In this survey there are two sections to let students describe their own opinion. For analyzing those thoughts, it is also planned to categorize and find new aspects.

Interviews to both academics and journalists are analyzed by qualitative research. By comparing to the results of survey (A) and (B)

Sample: Surveys

Two types of surveys were conducted in this research, which are called Survey (A) and Survey (B) respectively.

Survey(A) is targeting generation Z and millennials in Japan, but foreigners are not included in this research. In general, anyone born between 1977 and 1995 is considered a Millennial, and Generation Z refers to the generation that was born between 1996-2010(Jason Dorsey. 2020). It includes two questions ; One has 35 respondents and another has 18 respondents.

In order to gather fresh opinions toward DPRK by Japanese, the young generation's thoughts are inevitable as they are going to take over and be leaders of this society in the near future. They generate trends, and their actions create the economy. Moreover, young people's opinions are getting important and powerful these days since social media, where people can raise their voice, has expanded to. It is growing dramatically day by day and affecting the economy and politics as well. It is not surprising anymore that people can deliver their thoughts and values to millions of the people through social networking service. Generation Z is called "Digital native", therefore most of them have tools to be able to reach any global news and issues in a second. It is expected that they could realize and recognize global issues more than other generations.

Survey(B) focuses on gathering results by only students. Students should be both men and women in the ages between 20 and 25. There are 38 respondents from bachelor and master Japanese students. The total number of universities of those participants are 16, where located not only in Tokyo but also Kansai province like Osaka and Hyogo, beside four foreign universities. The important point in this survey is that it must include some results by students from prestigious universities in Japan like Keio University, Waseda University as much as it could. According to Business Insider Japan article (2017), there were three members, who studied at Keio university, in the Cabinet office in 2012, 2014 and 2015.

According to Japanese website “Minna No Daigaku Joho”(2020), Keio University has 139 politicians in its alumni, meaning students from good schools would have more power to improve domestic issues as working in the political community. Keio University, for instance, was established in 1858 by Yukichi Fukuzawa as a small school of Western learning and has a history as Japan’s very first private institution of higher learning according to its website. Participants, students, are from not only Keio University but also Waseda university, Sophia University, Ritsumeikan University and so on. These universities are prestigious and have a long education history as all of them were established before 1945. Moreover, four Japanese students studying foreign universities participated in this survey, those who study at Leeds University, Capilano University, Southampton Solent University and American University of Paris.

Questions:Surveys

Survey(A) is conducted by social media polls while Survey (B) requires online questionnaires with 6 questions.

Survey(A)

1. Would you like to visit North Korea?
2. Are you interested in business with North Korea

The first question is to reveal how much antipathy Japanese young people have for the DPRK. There might be some people who still would like to know more about the DPRK even if its information is limited. The second question is to reveal if participants are willing to think about business with the DPRK. It is assumed that young people are hardly interested in or

noticed DPRK domestic growth or economy though, this question would give them an opportunity to think about it for the first time.

Survey(B)

1. Are you interested in traveling to North Korea ? If so, please describe the reason.

2. Are you interested in business in North Korea?

3. These years, some investors, like Jim Rogers, admire North Korea's economic potential. It might promote Japanese economy though, what is your opinion about the relationship between Japan and DPRK. Choose the closest statement to your opinion and describe why.

a: Japan can normalize the border if all issues with nuclear weapons, kidnapping and others are solved. Japan needs new market for its further better economic growth.

b: I can not forgive DPRK due to their past crimes. I do not care about how potential DPRK is.

c: If economy in Japan keeps deteriorating, we can consider normalization after we solve political issues.

d:None of them

4. Describe as much as possible about the factors that made them feel antipathy towards North Korea.

In Survey(B), the first two questions are the same as what Survey (A) has, and it is required to describe reasons for someone choosing “Yes, I would like to visit to North Korea” so we can understand what aspect of North Korea is attracting Japanese students. Third question, it is about clarifying students’s opinions about normalization. The important point in the question is whether they would consider improving relations with DPRK if it is revealed that there are some benefits in DPRK actually. There are a few information about North Korea’s potential in Japan though, not many people seem to be aware of it. To add it, it helps to understand what is their priority toward relations with North Korea, and how many people are not willing to normalize regardless of any benefits for Japan. The last question is to reveal what exactly is the reason that makes Japanese young people feel negative toward DPRK. Kidnapping, programming nuclear weapons development, dictatorship etc are familiar aspects of NK’s image though, this question would clarify what issues DPRK should work on at first if they want to stabilize the situation with Japan.

Sample: Interview

There are two types of samples which are Japanese academics in the field related to DPRK study and a journalist at Forbes JAPAN. As an academia sample, Sachio Nakato, a professor at Ritsumeikan University in Japan is selected. His major is international relations and international politics and economy. He published 5 scholarly books in the past. Another academia, T.M (the academia would keep the name only with initials in this research), is teaching at several universities in Japan. At Ritsumeikan University, there is an institution “Ritsumeikan Center for Korean Study”, and Nakato belong as a member. Two academics studying North Korean affairs, their perspective would not only fill the gap between reality and students' opinions but also clarify how much potential the DPRK has. In addition, there is another sample which is a journalist. Akari Toku is working at Forbes JAPAN. In the media,

she writes articles about social issues, gender issues, political issues and so on. Journalists are always looking at new trends and events so they can share the most updated information. A journalist with a global media organisation would bring a different perspective from academics.

Questions: Interview

In order to scale the possibility of the business with DPRK, we have to detect what improvements Japanese experts expect from both Japanese and DPRK governments, and how many of them are going to agree with stabilization and business relationship with DPRK.

The sample questions are here ;

1. What do you think is DPRK's advantage when it comes to business ? Why?
2. Which issues should be solved for stabilization between Japan and DPRK?
3. What approach does the Japanese government need to take for further development with DPRK?

First question is set for revealing advantage in DPRK by considering opinions from experts. Second and third questions are for presenting some solutions for developing stabilization. From the perspective of experts, it needs to detect what interrupts actually the relations between two countries and what sort of approach is needed exactly.

4. Findings

In this Chapter, each results of Survey (A), (B) and interviews are introduced in order. Survey (A) has two questions which are included in (B) as well. Following those two questions, it moves on to analysis of Survey (B). Then interview results come next, and all professionals' opinions are compared to literature reviews. In the end, it is going to be compared to students' opinions too and find the gap between them.

Findings from Survey (A) and (B)

First question is “Would you like to visit North Korea?”, this question is in both Survey (A) and (B). 38 people who answered it through Survey(B) were required to describe the reasons as well.

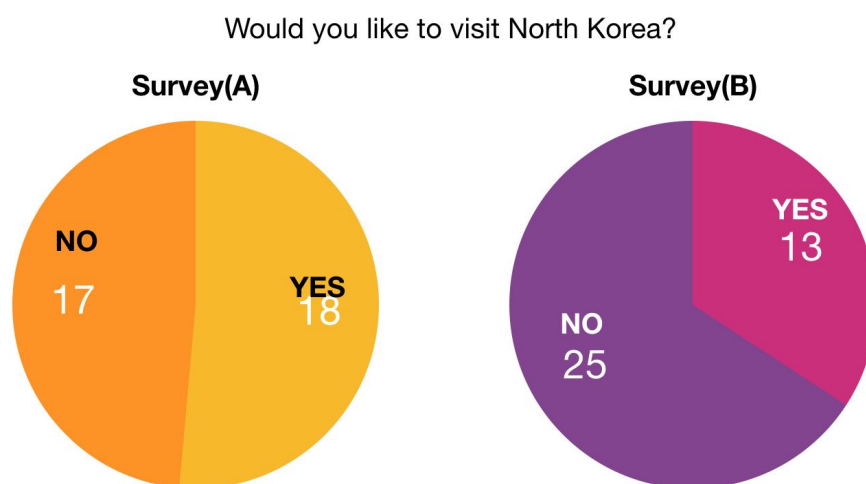


Figure 1. Pie chart of results of survey (A) and (B)/question No.1

In this question, 31 people out of 73 people answered yes in total, meaning 42% of participants are interested in North Korea inside. 18 people out of 35 answered “yes” in

Survey (A). At Survey (B), there are 13 people out of 38, who are interested in. They were required to provide the reason for their choice, and they can be separated into four categories of reasons, which are “ Because of curiosity of its entity”, “Because of doing research or learning in class”, “Because there is not a lot of information about the DPRK” and “ Because of the famous Netflix series about North Korea”.

Are you interested in visiting the DPRK?(Yes:13)

Reasons	Curiosity	Doing research about /Learned in the class	Have doubts due to less information	Influenced by “Crash Landing on You”
Number of students	6	3	2	2

Figure 2. Chart of Survey (B)/question No.1

The biggest reason was because of curiosity, and 6 students followed it. “I want to feel the city and unique atmosphere under the communist system in North Korea.” and another student also noted that he/she is interested in what is going on North Korea’s capital, Pyongyang. The rest of the answers are about mystery and curiosity as well.

The second most collected reason was related to their research or study and three people gave this answer. Two of them actually have been to DPRK in the past and answered “ I would like to see a new part of DPRK or new changes since I visited last time” and “My research theme in Doctor degree is North Korea, therefore actually I had opportunities to visit there three times.”. Another student described that “ I have never been DPRK, but my friend did. Through hearing his experience and learning in the class, I am attracted to go and see North Korea.”.

The third most collected reason was followed by two people, and it is relevant to the amount of information about DPRK. “Despite being our neighbor, there is little information about DPRK in Japan. It made me interested in what is going on there. Moreover, I found a travel magazine featuring sightseeing in North Korea. Since I read that, I am significantly curious.”. In addition, there are “I think there is a bias in the coverage of North Korea. I don't think that all the information I can know in Japan is all, so I wanted to see the truth with my own eyes.

Lastly, the fourth reason comes from two students, showing the result that K-drama “Crash Landing on You” influenced them very much. It is about a South Korean woman’s journey from chaebol(a large family-owned business conglomerate) who had a paragliding accident and landed in North Korea, then falls in love with a North Korean army officer according to IMDb(n.d.). In this web site, the series is evaluated 8.7 out of 10. This series pictured North Korean citizens, villagers and their life sophisticatedly. Both of them answered that they were impressed by this series, and one of them added that “To be honest, I used not to have a very good impression about North Korea due to its dictatorship, abduction issues, missile issues, etc., whereas I got interested in learning about North Korea after watching Crash Landing on You”. “It's too extreme and optimistic to think that way, but I'm completely curious about the potential of the economy in DPRK once they open their border.”, another student argued.

Are you interested in business in DPRK?

Another question, Survey (A) which is conducted by a social media poll, has 18 responses to the question if they would like to know more about business in North Korea.

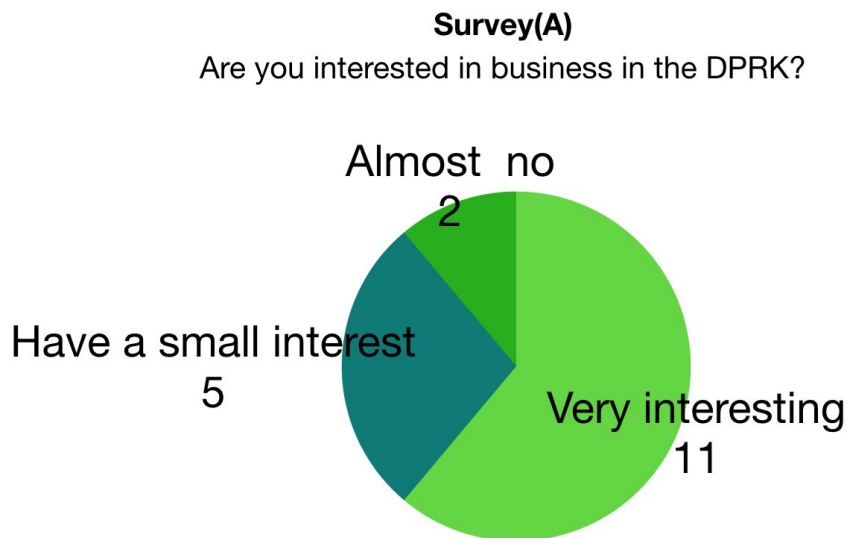


Figure 3. Pie Chart of survey (A)/question No.2

Three options are ready in advance, one is “ Very interesting”, second is “ I have a small interest”, finally “ Almost no”. In this question, people were not informed of any benefits of North Korea’s business aspect though, 10 out of 16 people choosed “ Very interesting. About the rest of the people, 4 people answered “ I have a small interest” and 2 people voted for “ Almost none”. There are only 16 results about this question though, the majority of the people are inquisitive about business in North Korea.

Regarding Survey (B), there is the same question with survey (A) about revealing student's thought about North Korea’s business, yet students were informed of its benefits in advance.

These years, some investors as like Jim Rogers admires North Korea's economic potential. It might promote Japanese economy though, what is your opinion about the relationship between Japan and the DPRK. Choose the closest statement to your opinion and describe why.

a: Japan can normalize the border if all issues with nuclear weapons, kidnapping and others are solved. Japan needs new market for its further better economic growth.	b: I can not forgive the DPRK due to their past crimes. I do not care about how potential DPRK is.	c:If economy in Japan keeps deteriorating, we can consider of normalization after we solve political issues.	d:None of them
18	6	3	11

Figure 4. Chart of survey (B)/ question No.3

Regarding the first option, it is for revealing that political issues are the crucial reason that they are not willing to improve relations with North Korea. This option was the most answer chosen as 47.4 % of students followed it. There are 4 categories of views about this option, more than half of the reasons were benefits from DPRK for Japan. “I see that domestic demand in Japan is limited, therefore I agree with having a business relationship with DPRK to improve this situation. In order to make it, North Korea should solve political concerns for us so finally we can normalize the borders. These steps are crucial conditions for having business relationships”, according to a student from Keio University. Another student from Atomi university which is located in Tokyo mentioned “I often see the information that DPRK has plenty of natural resources in it. It seems too difficult to normalize with the DPRK as soon as possible, however, I believe Japan has a lot of business opportunities there.”. A student studying in American university of Paris expects North Korea as second Singapore. As those results showed, some rates of Japanese students recognize North Korea’s economic potentials.

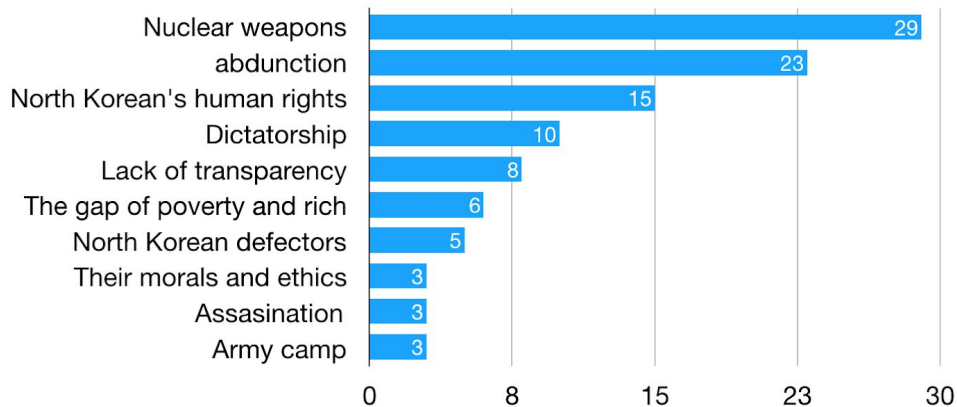
Following that, the second option is for revealing if normalization with the DPRK is almost impossible for Japanese young people regardless of its economic benefits. Nevertheless, only 6 people supported this opinion. “There have been too many political issues between Japan and DPRK since several decades ago. Moreover, I am afraid of the DPRK if they bomb Japan as they did to South Korea. It seems it is highly possible to be betrayed even after we normalize with North Korea.” Two of them have this sort of concern. Rest of the reasons are about scarcity and doubts due to abductions, nuclear weapons and so on. Strong and negative impressions for many decades are imprinted in Japanese people.

The third option is important for this research. It is implying that Japan should utilize DPRK because of its economic potential. It would show how many young Japanese people are seeing the benefits. Nevertheless, only 3 people out of 38 chose this option. “I believe that it is too risky to normalize right now. I can not find a crucial necessity to open the economy into DPRK due to the past kidnapping issues and its dictatorship. However, it could be possible if both countries solve all political issues and DPRK shows their government system and opens its economy to foreign countries.” If someone is not willing to stabilize with North Korea at all though, he/she would finally consider it if the North Korean government would share their information in public and show economic potential.

The rate of those who have an opinion not belonging to any options is almost 30%(28.9%). “I do not consider the DPRK’s economic potential as the first step of normalizing borders, meaning that I do not link the political issues and economic improvements on normalizations between both countries.”, a student studying law at Keio University described. Another student from Waseda University noted “Due to the lack of information about DPRK, I hardly learned about their economic potential. I guess we cannot gain much information about them

unless its dictatorship is over. Even if they give up dictatorship, we should conduct carefully for normalization with DPRK. Improving relations only for the reason with economic potential would repeat the negative history.” These two students pointed that economic benefits should not be considered as one of the ways to fix political issues. Many investors and research showed labor force in DPRK is one of its advantages, yet it could cause similar situations such as Japan's colonial era in North Korea from 1910 to 1945 as a student from Waseda pointed out. Most opinions are related to concern about safety. There is an interesting opinion about it. “ If we approach the DPRK for their economic potential, it might be considered that Japan admits that DPRK is dominant. I worry about if DPRK would do something threatening to the world for that reason. We should solve political issues as soon as possible, but as like victims, their family and people having many doubts toward DPRK, it must be difficult to accept them, therefore we should try to normalize step by step.” From this comment, it is clear that Japan should be dominant toward DPRK.

What gives negative impression to young people



In the last question in Survey (B), there is a question about revealing what makes students feel resistance towards the DPRK. Students can answer as much as they have in their mind. The worst feature for them was the DPRK programming nuclear weapon development, abductions

of Japanese, freedom or human rights and dictatorship by the Kim family in order. While 29 students raised nuclear weapons as the most negative aspect, abduction got 23. It revealed that the first priority for Japanese young people is safety, and it might be related to past war experience and the atomic bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima in WW2. Although the abduction issue is not the first reason for Japanese students in total, still almost half of participants consider it as the big issue. Both nuclear weapons and abduction issues are the most reasons to interrupt peace between two countries. Following these two, human rights issue and Kim-dynasty come next, yet these two aspects are more related to anxiety which Japanese have to the DPRK. In short, it could be said that the Japanese have the biggest fears of losing peace, and next, anxiety about domestic issues.

Findings from Interviews

Do you agree with normalization with the DPRK?

In analysis of interviews, three participants, Sachio Nakato, T. M and Akari Toku, were required to answer three questions. The first question is “ Do you agree with normalization with DPRK? Why?” Three of them agreed with normalization. Sachio Nakato, who is a professor at Ritsumeikan University in Japan, said that it would bring economic profits to both Japan and North Korea. On 17th September 2002, Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and Chairman Kim Jong-Il of the DPRK National Defense Commission met and had talks in Pyongyang. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, both leaders confirmed the shared recognition that establishing a fruitful political, economic and cultural relationship between Japan and the DPRK through the settlement of the unfortunate past between them. Nakato pointed to Japanese government that they should follow what is written in this declaration exactly. Especially, as the second point in the declaration describes (2002), Japan should make amends to the DPRK properly for the historical facts that Japan caused

tremendous damage and suffering to the people of Korea through its colonial rule in the past. Following that, in the same section, it is also mentioned that both sides discussed providing economic co-operation after the normalization by the Japanese side to the DPRK side including granting aids, long-term loans with low interest rates and humanitarian assistance through international organizations. As Nakato observes in a declaration in 2002, there may be advantages to having business relationships for each other once Japan makes amends for past colonial rules. Akari Toku, a journalist at Forbes JAPAN, had not known about the entire contents of the Japan-DPRK Pyongyang Declaration and used to have doubts if it is really possible to improve relations by promoting economic potentials though. She eventually agreed with normalization after discussing about part of the Japan-DPRK Pyongyang Declaration.

T.M has the same opinion as Nakato, then he added that it could have not only economic advantages for both of them but also solve “Zainichi Korean” issues in Japan. Koreans who came over to Japan during its colonial rule are usually referred to as Zainichi and their descendants, and in June 2017, there were 484,627 registered foreigners in Japan with South or North Korean nationality, according to Jang Hawon from Peking University (2019). Even though no one mentions Zainichi in survey (B), it is still an important issue between Japan and North Korea as Zainichi people have demanded fair treatment in Japanese society for many decades.

What should each government try for further improvements?

Nakato insisted that all issues surrounding the two countries are not solved yet due to Japanese government. He said “what Japan has to do is to admit and try to end the controversy of all past issues. Japanese government keeps sticking to the idea that the nuclear

weapons issues and abduction have to be solved at first, however, making amends to North Korea about colonial rule must be done at first. Past issues with China and South Korea are dealt with though, they have not done well with North Korea only by bringing and excusing abductions and nuclear weapons, Nakato argued.

To the DPRK, Nakato believes that the North Korean government has actually given all the facts for the abduction issues, yet he would say they should keep trying patiently and try to take another reasonable approach for the abduction issue because North Korean side only informed to Japan that “ they are dead,” Japan has requested all the details of the abducted Japanese. What North Korea has tried and done makes sense for Nakato, personally, nevertheless Japan does not admit and keep asking them for more information about abductions. He added that it is kind of a mystery why Japan keeps asking for more information and never moves on.

T.M has an opinion that Japanese government should follow the Japan–North Korea Pyongyang Declaration, and would promote the DPRK to bring the declaration to discussion with Japan to make sure again what is described in it.

Both of them believe that the North Korean government is properly approaching and trying to solve the problems with Japan, however Japan seems not to try hard or admit their past crime after the declaration in 2002.

On the other hand, Toku has another opinion from two academias. Toku pointed to both governments that they have to arrange the meeting for peace again as Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and Chairman Kim Jong-Il of the DPRK National Defense Commission

did in 2002 because it has no meeting arranged since Koizumi did last time in 2004. She supports the Japanese government to pressure the DPRK a little bit more so the North Korean government will stop launching missiles and program nuclear weapons development. In short, she meant the Japanese government needs to balance how much pressure they put on the DPRK so both of countries start to discuss all issues and make stabilization eventually.

To the North Korean government, she described that they must try to set a meeting with Japan for the rest of the people whose family was kidnapped. The father of Magumi Yota, who was kidnapped in 1977, her father Shigeru Yokota passed away before he eventually saw his daughter. Toku believes North Korea's first obligation is to let the rest of the family be able to contact their family.

For both academias and the journalist, the first priority to solve is abduction while students are concerned about nuclear weapons development the most. According to two academics, they promote normalization so Japan can obtain benefits from them and keep peace over solving political issues.

What industry in the DPRK has potential?

Two academics believe tourism business and natural resources are absolutely an exciting part of North Korea. As the potential is argued in literature review, academias expect some benefits from the DPRK. Therefore, it can still be said that the DPRK would be a good partner for Japan in economic panorama. T.M added that skiing business is especially prospective as North Korea has a big resort which is called Masikryong ski resort located in Kangwon Province. Even though Japan closes the border to DPRK, Japanese can travel in special conditions. According to Isozaki, there were more than 300 people visiting the DPRK from

Japan in 2018 (p.30). As students show interest toward visiting DPRK, it would be an exciting industry.

Nakato also sees that developing infrastructure provinces out of Pyongyang would have many spaces for Japan to help and explore the market. At this point, it is revealed that North Korea still has many gaps to develop infrastructure, it is not clear how Japan can penetrate the market while China already started investing in the DPRK many years ago and keeps helping them as it is discussed in the literature review.

Akari Toku, she has some doubts about natural resources in DPRK. Even if there are plenty of magnesium, coal and so on, the amount of resources and its national ability to handle them seem not enough as a great advantage compared to Russia, the Middle East and Asia. Indeed, as Toku pointed, the DPRK is not ranked in the top of 10 countries having natural resources the most, in the data of Investopedia(Anthony, 2019). As it is described in the literature review that DPRK would have some benefits in its natural resources, more research to reveal how much benefit there would be for Japan would be needed for further discussion.

On the other hand , she has high expectations of their movie and drama industry. There are currently almost no special contents in DPRK though, South Korea would influence them if Korean Peninsula got reunified. This industry in South Korea is growing, therefore it might generate something new for the industry when they stabilize their relations and work together. She is interested in this industry because of the big boom of “Crash landing on you “ in Japan. As she describes, the South Korean entertainment industry is inspiring Japanese industry while they are supported by all over the world. Toku believes that Japanese film industry and music industry need to learn from South Korea and improve, and indeed, Japanese industries

are trying to follow South Korea, these days. Moreover, North Korea has its own art culture like dance, music and so on, she added. All arts in North Korea are one of the symbol cultures of North Korea, then they can keep utilizing and developing them even after stabilization.

5. Conclusions, Limitations, and Recommendations

In the final chapter, conclusions of this research are noted. Through literature reviews and analysis of the data, many tendencies were revealed while some of the research questions needed more research. About them, in the paragraph of limitation, it is discussed what is not clear in this research. It is described what samples are needed for the next time and what has to be revealed more. In the end, recommendations part, expected research for further improvements are introduced.

Conclusion

From the research, it can be concluded that young people are interested in the DPRK not only its entity but also business aspects, however, they are mostly not willing to agree with normalization only for the reason of North Korea's economic potential without solving political issues with them. It could be said that it is a good idea to do normalization for both two countries in the point of economy though, its possibility is not so high as several serious political issues are laid on Japan and North Korea. Basically, there are three critical issues which they must solve before moving on to normalization, which are the nuclear issue, the abduction and transparency of government for Japanese side, and making amends of colonial rules for the DPRK side according to the results from two surveys and interviews.

The DPRK's economic benefits that would impact Japan do not seem to promote stabilization enough. It could be said both countries should make steps in order by starting with sharing right information and promoting trips to each country more. As academies also support

normalization and describe North Korea's potential, current university students have the right point about the relation with the DPRK. Many of them believe that business with North Korea is actually an interesting idea as academics described in interviews. On the contrary, academics described that North Korea has done enough actions for solving abduction issues, however, it seems almost no young people agree with that. Another survey for requiring opinions about what academics believe about the abduction issues might be a good opportunity to understand the crucial point of abduction issues.

Limitation

This research has only results from millennials and generation Z. In order to see the difference in opinions between young people and adults who are over 30 years old, it needs more research into how each generation considers the issues with the DPRK and normalization with them. The samples in this research are reliable, yet more numbers of results should have been collected. This research could be extended to another field for revealing Japanese opinions towards the DPRK by categorizing each generation. Moreover, it could argue ideas if Japan really will have the capacity to conduct business in North Korea, if so, which field in the DPRK Japan should try.

Regarding the approach by Japan to the DPRK, it is still not clear how exactly Japan could join to help develop infrastructure while China has already addressed. It needs to figure out how much China has dedicated and invested to the DPRK so far and where is the space for Japan. As it was described in the literature review, China seems to have a big share and gained greater amounts of profits than other countries which are associated with the DPRK. Even if Japan found a way to penetrate the market in the DPRK after they eventually make

normalization, it would be suspected if Japanese governments have enough capital to invest in . In that case, the normalization should happen as soon as possible. Additionally, the strength of Japanese business, which is compatible with Chinese and South Korea, should be clarified. Japan has been known as a country having great companies with technology like Panasonic, Softbank, Fujitsu and so on.

In the end, for not repeating the sad history, both countries have to be careful when they talk about utilizing the labor force of the DPRK. In colonial rule of Japan, the DPRK was forced to work like slaves. One of the advantages of the DPRK is increasing population and educated labores though, Japan would need careful approach to the DPRK someday they work together.

Recommendation: How can everyone encourage young people for peace with the DPRK?

North Korea's government is an issue for all the world. Considering peace in Asia would bring great growth and positive impact. Arguments of normalization between Japan and the DPRK have been going on since several decades ago, yet nothing has happened due to political reasons so far. Japanese say "North Korea is our far neighbor", meaning geographically it is close and literally a neighbor, however, it is very far mentally due to the pile of political issues.

Considering the Japanese politics in the future, the new prime minister, Yoshihide Suga, in Japan's plan and actions would be important to observe the relations with the DPRK. Regarding last prime minister, Shinzo Abe, he has done almost nothing for improving relation with the DPRK nor abduction issues. According to Diamond online, which is Japanese

economy news media, it is argued that he had never shown his motivation for the discussion with the DPRK since the 2018 North Korea–United States Singapore Summit(Kamikubo, 2020) which boosted positive energy on Korean peninsula. When the father of Megumi Yokota passed away in 2020, Abe commented that he would never give up to solve abduction issues(Kamikubo, 2020)). Yet nothing special happened while he had worked as the prime minister for 7 years and 8 months.

Yoshihide Suga, the new prime minister in Japan, is paying close attention to former Vice President Joe Biden's policy toward North Korea, according to Japanese new media, Jiji.com (2020). In the article, it is described that Suga has announced that he will meet with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un without any preconditions

Yet nothing else as like meeting dates or seasons are described. At the first telephone conversation with Mr. Biden on the 12th, Suga requested Biden understanding and cooperation on the abduction issue between Japan and the DPRK. Biden did not make any specific mention of the cooperation regarding the general response to North Korea (Jiji.com. 2020). The reason to look at Biden's policy carefully is that the US has troops in South Korea and has supported them after Korean war, which is called United States Forces Korea (USFK). It means they have their own armies in the land faced into North Korea, and that is why the US tries to be good partners with Japan. It could be said that the US has been paying close attention to the development of relations between Japan and the DPRK.

Setting back the topic to abduction, Shigeo Iizuka, his younger sister name is Yaeko Taguchi and kidnapped in the past. He pointed out to Suga that he seems not to have exact solutions or plans for abduction issues, according to NHK news (2021). Iizuka added to the Japanese

government that “ The important thing is talking about when exactly you are going to make it happen. I would like Prime Minister Suga to take the leadership in formulating a policy, advance the situation and schedule all steps clearly. I want to see your responsible attitude. Don't rely on other countries nor wait.” (2021). As nothing special has happened for abduction issues and everything left vague, not only families of abducted people and Japanese citizens are distressed. Suga came to the chair of the prime minister in September 2020, therefore we have to watch what Japanese government will do for these issues while they have to handle domestic policy for COVID-19.

The most important and basic problem between Japan and the DPRK seems “ Less information about the DPRK”. As some students pointed out in the survey, Japan has only news of North Korea about its regime, nuclear weapons, missiles, and abductions. For further improvement, what people would try is to find more news about the DPRK not only Japanese media but also foreign media. For sure, Japanese media also should try to add more news which is another aspect of politics. Yet that might be a limitation due to Japanese government’s restrictions. About this point, it needs more research into how Japanese media is controlled by the government.

However, there is something available for better research. At first, it should be revealed what media sites young people believe reliable when they are finding news about the DPRK. Additionally, in the survey, a question “ What kind of news about the DPRK would you like to get?” could be a reliable one as it helps to find what exactly young people want to know. In the end, in the survey, students should be allowed to describe the reasons for the chosen answer so we can analyze the background of their reasoning and find new tendencies. From

those surveys, it might be able to provide solutions for encouraging young people and Japanese media.

Additionally, an important controversy is to reveal if it is really a good idea to invest in the DPRK, where its regime is engaging in human rights violations as like concentration camps. As foreign investment in the DPRK is described in literature review, China and South Korea invested in the DPRK and are expecting a lot of profits though, still it has doubts if helping the DPRK is ethical behavior or not. And Japanese young people should be aware of the ethics of Japan's foreign policy. When Japanese talk about ethics surrounding North Korean issues, they tend to focus on abduction or missiles issues because it is affecting the society in Japan. North Korean defectors and concentration camps issues should be more learned so Japanese can think about Japan's proper approach to the DPRK. This field needs more research as people could understand the situation in North Korea these years.

Arguments surrounding the DPRK are already conducted in some research, yet a focus on improving the relationship should be argued more for peace in the future. Discussion about business aspects are important though, yet revealing the Japanese mindset towards the DPRK in this area might be more necessary for promoting normalization and peace between the two countries. Lack of information about the DPRK might be the first thing that should be improved for a better relationship between Japan and North Korea. The expected sorts of news could be not only about business, but also culture, lifestyle, old history and so on. Indeed, "Crash landing on You", the South Korean series featuring North Korea and South Korea, influenced many Japanese to be interested in North Korea and brought a positive impression.

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