

# **Nakamura International Course**

**Class of 2016**

**Thesis Projects**

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## **Introduction**

The Nakamura International Course students, class of 2016, have studied abroad for 12 months in English speaking countries during their 2nd year of high school and completed a thesis project. The students first chose a topic and conducted research about their topic at libraries or on the internet. Then, while the students were studying abroad, they conducted more research in local libraries and carried out face to face interviews with at least 4 people about their research topic to learn more about their topics in their host country. The students have studied their research and interviews and have written a thesis paper and given a thesis presentation about what they have learned from these experiences. Enclosed are the thesis essays written by each student.

### **Nakamura International Course Class of 2016**

Sae Okai

Saki Hattori

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**Sae Okai – Portland, Oregon**



# Comparing the Japanese Meal to the American Meal

Sae Okai

February 16, 2016

Nakamura High School

Nakamura International Course Thesis Paper

## Introduction

What thoughts do you have when you think about the American meal? Don't you think it is unhealthier than the Japanese meal? Do you not really have any bad thoughts about both meals when you think about the meals in America and Japan? I researched about the stereotypes of meals in America and Japan. People say Americans are unhealthier than Japanese, it is sometimes true, but it's not completely right.



## Background

The reason why I chose this topic is that I have been interested in this topic since I was a small child. I heard that American meals are unhealthier than Japanese meals are, but recently, for the first time I experienced everyday American meals. I was in the U.S. for almost a year studying abroad during my second year of high school. I felt American meals included more fat than Japanese meals do. Also, I felt like there was so much meat, cereals which are like snacks (which means they are not made for health), and fruit. In my home in Japan, I eat salads, lots of vegetables, especially when steamed, rice, tofu, natto, and a bit of meat or fish. Before I went to the U.S. I did believe the stereotypes of American meals, so I wasn't shocked about the U.S. meals very much, but it took time to get used to them.



In 2013, the average American man's height was 177.6cm, and weight was 88.3kg. For women, the average height was 163.2cm, and weight was 74.7kg. In Japan, the average man's height and weight was 170.7cm and 64kg, and for women was 158cm and 53kg ("Japan and America in numbers"). This tells you that Americans are literally bigger than Japanese. You might wonder why, because in the US, 23 percent of people don't eat breakfast ("American office life in numbers"), and since 31,000,000 children eat lunch that their schools provide ("America is an obese country"). People who consider the lunch might not be health professionals, so they don't know what they should give to kids and what is good for them. They give them "fast food" which is a type of food with lower prices and larger amounts. For example, fast food can include pizza, hotdogs, and hamburgers.

Speaking of these foods, they are usually considered junk food, and stereotypes of American food. We Japanese people may think that Americans always eat these foods, intake more fat than Japanese do, and eat what they want instead of eating to be healthy. On the other hand, the stereotypes of the Japanese meal are healthy. For instance, they include vegetables, rice, miso soup, fish, and sushi.

Additionally, there are other non-stereotypical diets such as the gluten free and vegan diets. Before I went to the U.S., I didn't know what they are about. A person following a gluten free diet cannot eat any gluten, which is found in wheat foods such as

bread. A person following a vegan diet doesn't eat any animals or anything made from animals, such as cheese. According to my interviews, people who are gluten free do eat rice a lot because rice doesn't include gluten, and they think rice is healthier than bread. They eat cottage cheese, yogurt, or similar foods for breakfast, and for vegans, they eat vegetables, nuts and fruit. Vegan people also eat rice because rice isn't made from any animals. Thus, this can show how rice is popular for all because it is healthy and it includes nothing bad.

### **Main Arguments**



First of all, I'm going to tell you about dinner in the U.S. and in Japan. Both countries think dinner is the biggest meal in a day so they eat a lot. Usually in Japan, people eat rice and some dishes as the other meals, and each dinner of each day looks kind of similar. The reason why these look similar is it is the "washoku meal". In the typical "washoku meal", the side dishes are cooked vegetables, tofu and fish or meat. The meal is made with consideration of what nutrition is necessary for a meal. However, the meal in Japan is changing. The stereotypes of the Japanese meal used to be correct in the past. People don't eat vegetables and fish as much these days because

these became more expensive, and agriculture is becoming less popular and people working in agriculture are decreasing. In the U.S., they eat so many different types of meals for dinner. The reason why they eat so many different types of meals is that there are a lot of nationalities in the U.S. From researching, what they eat for dinner depends on what religion or nationality they are. For instance, they have Indian curry, Mexican tacos, and a lot of Asian restaurants and fast food places. Also, there are few or no side dishes for dinner. They usually cook one big main dish. I suppose the reason why they do this is because making only one big dish is easier than making many side dishes. As a conclusion, more side dishes that include vegetables can make people healthier, and Japanese people consider more health through eating or preparing side dishes than American people generally.

Second of all, besides Vegans, they don't eat many vegetables during each meal in the U.S. Their kids often don't like them, and people think they don't make them feel full. However, they eat fruit instead of eating vegetables so that children can intake vitamins or what they need easily because it tastes good. Fruit has good nutrition, such as fiber, and vitamins. It sounds like it may not matter to not have vegetables; however, fruit contains a lot of sugar, while vegetables do not. Japanese, although vegetables are becoming more expensive, still eat a lot in a day. They think vegetables also make them feel full, like meat or fish. Fruit is more expensive than vegetables in Japan, but vegetables are more expensive than fruit in the U.S. This could be one of the reasons why they intake different types of produce.



Candy Warehouse



Third of all, I'm going to talk to you about snacks that high school teenagers (people I observed who are around 17) like and often eat. Some teenagers eat gold fish, potato chips, pretzels, and gummies. I didn't see them eating chocolates as often as I expected. People in Japan became to intake more sugar than in the past because so many sweets stores have arrived in Japan. In addition, although not a main reason, Japanese people are curious about food, especially food from foreign countries, therefore they eat many types of sweets and intake more fat. They like to have gummy candies like Kazyu gummy, chocolates like Kinokonoyama, cookies like Country Maum, and salty snacks like Jagarico, and Kakinotane which are potato sticks and rice crackers. They are easy to eat, they don't make our hands dirty, and they are not big so we can bring them anywhere. Salty snacks usually have fewer calories than sweet snacks like chocolates. For instance, in Kakinotane, one pack has less than 50 calories, Pure Gummy has 170 calories, and two Country Maum cookies have 100 calories. People in the U.S. like to eat Skittles which are a kind of candy, Goldfish which are crackers, Swedish Fish which are gummies, pretzels, dry fruit, and other candies. A pack of Goldfish has 170 calories, Skittles has 220 calories, and Swedish Fish has more

than 800 calories. It seems that American snacks contain more calories than Japanese snacks do. In my experience, it was true. American snacks use so much sugar and the snacks tasted really sugary. In addition, during high school class, American students are allowed to eat snacks or have a drink. I guess how often and what snacks they eat might change how healthy they are. Eating in class is not always good for health. However, Americans also eat dry fruit. Though dry fruit has a lot of sugar, it also has fiber too. So dry fruit can be good for health. It is not common to eat dry fruit in Japan because we don't eat fruit for snacks, especially because fruit is more expensive in Japan so we can't eat them as often as Americans do. There are a lot of choices of snacks in the U.S. including healthy snacks such as dry fruit. However, most of the snacks in the U.S. contain higher calories than the other ones such as when comparing the Swedish Fish to the Japanese Pure Gummy.



Fourth of all, I'm going to discuss about beverages in the U.S. and Japan. The size of the cups is much bigger than the Japanese ones. It is no exaggeration to say, the medium size for Americans is bigger than the large size for Japan. The large size in Japan is 20oz, and the medium size in the U.S. is 21oz. It was really shocking. Many of my friends in America drink carbonated drinks regularly. I asked one of my friends about what she usually drinks, and she answered that she drinks sweet drinks from Dutch

bros, which is a coffee chain like a Starbucks, almost everyday because they taste good and are easy to buy. I couldn't find any milk tea, green tea, juice such as grape juice, or apple juice which is popular in Japan. From my experience I found that there are more kinds of beverages in Japanese restaurants than in the U.S., and they are healthier than the typical U.S. restaurant beverage. However, the beverages at the store in the U.S. might be healthier than the beverages at the store in Japan because they don't have milk tea or something that includes a lot of sugar.

### **Conclusion**

People say Americans are unhealthier than Japanese; it's sometimes true, but it's not completely right. In general, Japanese people might be healthier but there are a large amount of people who care about healthy meals in America. There are a lot of people who don't like the typical American meal and vice versa. Recently, so many restaurants from foreign countries have arrived in Japan, and many Japanese people, especially young people, are deviating from the Japanese typical meal nowadays. They have started eating more fat and eating fewer vegetables and fish. Japan will lose their pride of health and I'm afraid that in the future there will be a lot of people who's bad health is hidden now but will develop obesity. In America, more people have started caring about health. Some people have started going to the gym, eating less fat, and eating more vegetables. I think the American diet will become more like Japan's. Stereotypes of both countries meals will change even more someday.

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**Saki Hattori – Vancouver, Canada**



# The Biggest Event in Canada

Saki Hattori

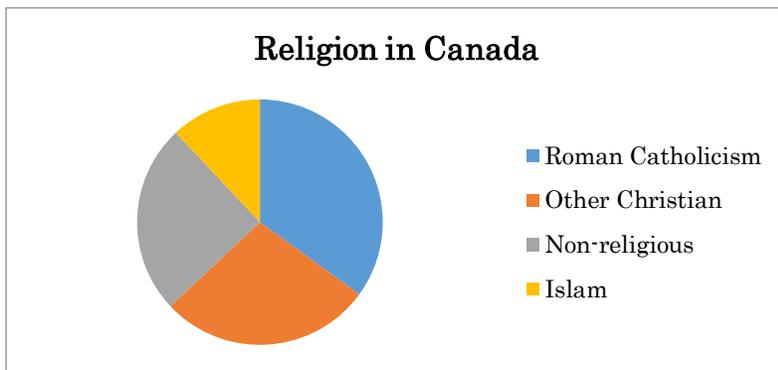
February 16, 2016

Nakamura High School

Nakamura International Course  
Thesis Paper Project

## Introduction

Thanksgiving Day is the biggest Canadian event that most of people celebrate no matter what their religions are. As you can see in the data, 38.7% of people in Canada are Roman Catholic, and 28.5% of people are other Christian (“2011 National Household Survey”). Also, Islam is the second largest religion in Canada, practiced by 3.2% of the population (“2011 National Household Survey”). They have several religions on their own, but on Thanksgiving Day, everyone celebrates together.



(“2011 National Household Survey”)

## Background

The reason why I am interested in this topic is because each country has different holidays, and it is very interesting to find the differences between my country and other countries' holidays, and to get to know about their countries. I think it is good for everyone to experience a new country's holiday that they have never experienced in their own country or that their own countries do not have, and find something new from them. My country, Japan, does not have Thanksgiving Day so it was a rare experience that I could spend my first Thanksgiving Day with my host family in Canada, and I will tell about my experience. Also, I have interviewed some people who are both young and old and would like to compare the differences

in their opinions about Thanksgiving Day.



Refugees fleeing the civil war in the United States brought the custom of an annual Thanksgiving festival to Canada (“Thanksgiving Day in Canada”). Thanksgiving Day has been officially celebrated as an annual holiday in Canada since 6 November, 1879, when Parliament declared a national day of Thanksgiving (“Thanks Giving Day”, Canadian Encyclopedia). The history of Thanksgiving Day in Canada goes back to an English explorer, Martin Frobisher who had been trying to find a northern passage to the Orient. He did not succeed, but he established a settlement in North America. In the year 1578, he held a formal ceremony, in what is now called Newfoundland, to give thanks for surviving the long journey. This is considered the first Canadian Thanksgiving. The American who remained faithful to the government in England moved to Canada, and spread the Thanksgiving celebration to other parts of the country (Marlatt).

Thanksgiving Day is really popular in Canada. It is an official holiday so schools are off, and all work is off as well. Towns are decorated for Thanksgiving Day. For instance, when Thanksgiving Day is near, towns are decorated with many fliers of Thanksgiving with festive pictures on them. Japan does not have Thanksgiving Day because we are generally not Catholic so that was my first time

to celebrate Thanksgiving Day in Canada, and I really enjoyed it.

For Thanksgiving in Canada, they usually eat turkey, stuffing, potatoes, and pumpkin pie. Those foods are basic foods on Thanksgiving Day.



Stuffing is made from bread. In the stuffing making process, they put the bread pieces and some vegetables inside the turkey, and bake it. It is really tasty. Turkey is baked like the picture above. Turkey has a big bone called a wish bone which is in a V shape. Two people hold that bone together, one side for each, and wish whatever they want. As soon as they decide on a wish, they pull the bone in a different direction from each other to crack it. The person who gets the bigger piece when they crack it will have their wish come true. I played this game, and I got bigger the piece. I will not tell anyone what my wish was, but I hope my wish comes true one day. I found that game to be really interesting because that game can help make

people have fun. It does not matter if they are old or young, all people can have fun with that game. Also, it was really nice to get to know about their traditional game of Thanksgiving because I had never heard about or seen that game before. After dinner, they have a special desert that they do not eat on a normal day. The cakes which they eat on Thanksgiving Day are usually homemade.

I interviewed four people to get opinions about Thanksgiving. I interviewed two young girls, one teacher, and one senior lady. That way, I could see the differences of thinking between the youth and senior people. My questions were “What do you do on Thanksgiving Day?”, “What do you eat on that day?”, and “What is your opinion of Thanksgiving Day?”, which is asking about whether they think that people should celebrate this holiday or not. I heard a lot of interesting opinions through the interviews.

## **Main Arguments**

There are a lot of Catholic people in Canada, but there are many people who are not Catholic as well. It is because many immigrants come to Canada from Asia or other places, and they already have a religion or their own beliefs. Therefore, some of them are Catholic, but most of them still keep practicing their religion even though they migrated to Canada where the primal religion is Catholicism. Although their religion or original country does not have Thanksgiving Day, they celebrate this holiday as Canadian citizens.

As you know, Thanksgiving Day is related to Catholicism because it originally means thanks to God for keeping all the crops growing well, but it does not matter whether they are Catholic or not to celebrate it. I think in Canada, every traditional event is related to the Christian religion and church. In Japan, most people are Buddhist even though we do not care much about our religions. For example, we are not Catholic, but we celebrate Halloween, Christmas, Easter and other Catholic holidays although we might not celebrate it in the traditional way of their original countries. I have been wondering why this happens since I have had

religion class in Canada. I went to a Catholic school, and I often had mass at school. Also, my host family was Christian so I have been to church with them sometimes. I found that the Christian religion is a very strong religion and blessed. Therefore, when people who are Catholic celebrate holidays, every event has some strong opinion or thought. On Easter, Christian people have a long mass. It is over two hours. Also, I had a long mass at the school as well. I found that they celebrate each event in different ways as Japanese people do.

Through the interviews, I found that Thanksgiving Day in Canada sounds like New Year's Day in Japan, but some points are far from New Year's Day. On that day, the families meet each other and have dinner and lunch together. I heard it is really fun and comfortable because everyone spends time with their family. This part of the holiday is similar to New Year's Day in Japan.



The different point is that in Canada, they have a long weekend around Thanksgiving Day. I thought this is interesting because Canada has many events, for instance Family Day, Easter, Halloween, Christmas and so on, and for each event, Canadian people have long holidays. In Japan, we usually do not have a long weekend for every holiday. We just have celebrations on the one holiday day so this is a difference between Canada and Japan. Also, in Japan, we usually spend New Year time with families, but on Thanksgiving Day, they spend their time with their friends as well.

Canadian opinions about Thanksgiving Day are mostly positive, such as they can relax with their family and they can eat a lot of delicious food. Those reasons are all true from my experience. I found that they treat the time that they spend with their families really importantly. However, there is only one negative aspect, as one of my interviewees said, “even though all the foods are really good, we get fat because of the food”. I laughed very hard when I heard this reason because I found it is the truth.

Young people mostly think that Thanksgiving Day is really fun with time to relax, a lot of tasty foods to eat, and no school. However, senior people think that they have to pray for God to thank him. I think they found that Thanksgiving Day is really fun as well like younger people, but they would like to practice their religious beliefs and traditions. Young people seem to just say that Thanksgiving Day is a fun holiday, but senior people seem to say that even though they enjoy this holiday, they also never forget what Thanksgiving means in terms of religion. There are differences between the young and senior people in their opinions and experiences.

## **Conclusion**

As I have mentioned above, Thanksgiving Day is celebrated by most Canadian citizens no matter what their nationalities are. All the events in every single country are beautiful and traditional, and people should celebrate every event that is very important for them with their families or friends. Spending time with your loved ones can make you really comfortable and happy.

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**Mai Miyamoto – Vancouver, Canada**



# Canadian Traditional Symbols

5E Mai Miyamoto

February 16, 2016

Nakamura Junior and Senior Girl's High School

Nakamura International Course Thesis Paper/Project

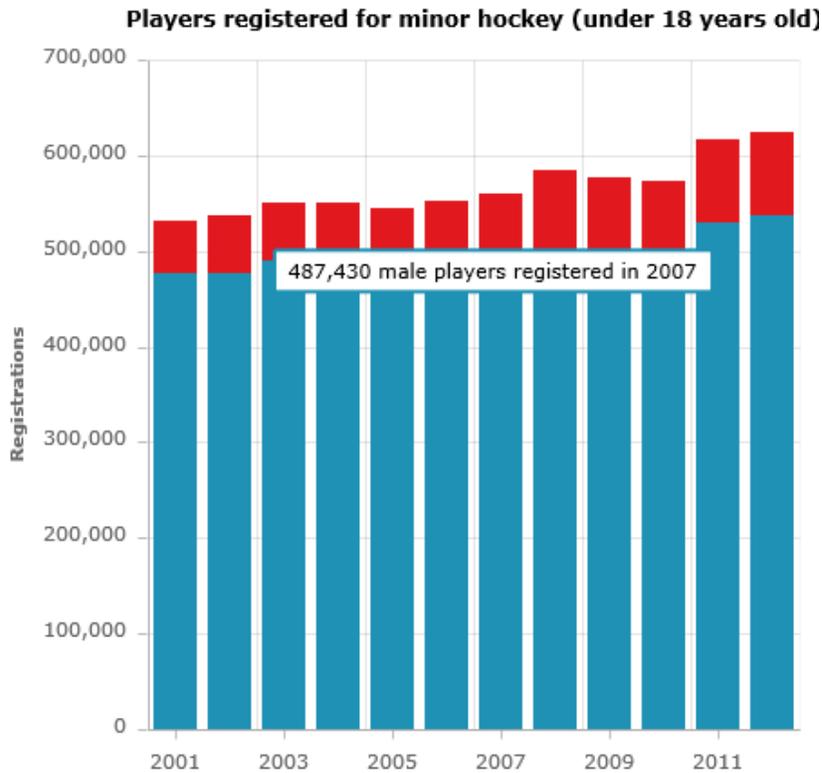
## **I . Introduction**

I have noticed that ice hockey is loved by many people around the world. Of course, mostly it is popular in Canada. I still remember when I saw some people from different countries such as my friends and teachers enjoying it and watching it a few times. I have studied abroad in Canada during my 2<sup>nd</sup> year of high school and have seen many people playing hockey on the road. They just used sticks and a small ball. I had a lot of opportunities to see Canadian people playing hockey and I sometimes participated in their hockey games. Through my observations, interviews, and research, I found that hockey is known as one of the Canadian symbols and there are many suitable conditions for hockey in Canada. Also there is a profound history about hockey and Canadians.

## **II Background research**

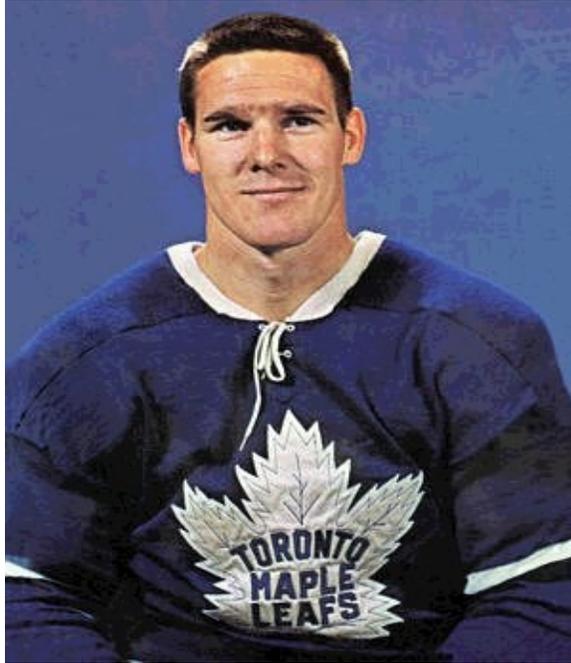
Hockey was a very interesting sport for me, so I enjoyed interviewing people and finding out some information which I did not know. I definitely had heard that hockey is one of the most popular and famous sports in Canada and played by many Canadians, and the facts show it as well. In, 2012, 86,897 girls under 18 years old and 537,251 boys under 18 years old registered for hockey, and 12,239,000 of Canadians 15 years old and older play hockey (“Canada’s Game”). Also the cost of hockey sticks imported to Canada in 2011 was \$2.74 million, mostly from China (“Canada’s Game”). In fact, the cost of ice skates imported into Canada in 2011 was \$51 million, and 64 per cent was from China (“Canada’s Game”). In this way, a lot of

money is spent on skates and hockey sticks in Canada.



(from “Canada’s Game”)

Hockey has its roots in Lacrosse, a game devised by Canada’s aboriginal population. The game is derived from field hockey that was played in Europe and brought over with the settler’s lacrosse. Some people point out that the rules for hockey are very closely aligned with those of Lacrosse. People who I interviewed knew more hockey players than I expected. They often go watch the leagues of hockey because it is very fun and they can watch some popular and famous players playing the game.



Tim Horton is known as one of the popular players in Canada. He has been called the strongest man to ever play in the National Hockey League (NHL) which is the best hockey league in Canada. He was a tough, reliable, defenseman who helped the Toronto Maple Leafs win four Stanley Cups in the 1960's. He played in 1,446 regular season games, scoring 115 goals and 403 assists for a total of 518 points ("Tim Hortons Biographies"). Also, the donut chain Tim Horton's with the Leafs still bears his name. Sadly, Tim did not live to witness the chain's great success. He was traveling back to Buffalo from a game at Maple Leaf Gardens when he was killed in an automobile accident on February 21, 1974. The Buffalo Sabres retired his Number 2 sweater as a tribute to his memory. At the time of Tim's death, there were 40 Tim Horton's restaurants. Tim Horton's is now the most popular and famous donut coffee shop in Canada.

In addition, what is a representative sport in Japan? Japanese people may

say that soccer and baseball in Japan are known by many people in the world. For example, Canadian people who I interviewed knew that Nadeshiko Japan has contributed to the Japanese sports fame. They won the World Cup in 2011. It was the glory of Japan and many people knew that Japan is strong in soccer, so soccer is known to everyone as one of the symbols of Japanese sports.



On the other hand, what is the feature of Japanese sports? As we know, sports are mostly always influenced by victory or defeat. Japanese sports are especially a kind of a struggle for victory. For example, I was very surprised as I was playing soccer in P.E. Most of my classmates asked me for help to score because I had experienced soccer for 5 years and people seemed to think that I can play soccer better than them. Actually, Canadian people pursued the scores and wanted

to win the game as well. However, I thought some Chinese people were not interested in victory or defeat. As I have explained, Japanese and Canadian tend to participate in sports actively with the goal towards victory.



In

this way, Japanese tend to be conscious of victory and each of them strive to play much harder than each other but also as team mates. But I learned that Japanese people are also somewhat cautious. It may depend on the Japanese sport and how to win the game. On the other hand, Canadians tend to play actively and mostly are not careful of anything. But there is a similar goal that both countries are conscious of victory and defeat. Simultaneously, it is important and essential for us to play and get to know sports because sports connect people from all over the world, such as in the Olympics.

### **III My interviews**

In order to learn more about hockey in Canada while studying abroad, I interviewed my host family, friends and teachers. My friends were not only

Canadian. My Korean and Chinese friends also knew and understood how to play hockey as it is valuable in Canada. The following were my interview questions:

1. What kinds of Canadian sports do you know?
2. Why do you think hockey is popular in Canada?
3. Do you play hockey? Why?
4. How do you feel while playing hockey?
5. When do you play hockey?
6. Who do you play hockey with?
7. Where do you play hockey?
8. How do you play hockey?
9. How often do you play hockey?
10. How long is the game?
11. What hockey equipment do you know?
12. Do you know how much the equipment is?
13. Who do you think are the most famous and popular players in Canada?
14. Do you know some history of hockey?
15. Do you have any final comments that could be useful for my research?

#### **IV Main Arguments**

I discovered that hockey is representative of popular sports in Canada. First, there are surely many expressions of hockey such as T-shirts and various goods with a hockey player's or hockey team's name. I also have once seen a clothing shop in

which there was a poster of hockey players wearing the store's clothes. I was surprised to learn that this was for improving sales and making a nice atmosphere in the shop. In addition, I have seen T-shirts, gloves and other clothing in almost every mall in Vancouver. When I went to Vancouver for summer school, I saw Canadians were wearing T-shirts which expressed hockey in Vancouver.

Also I am interested in the fact that hockey is being played by women. I heard a little about it from my teacher who is an English and International Support Teacher. I am interested in that women also play hockey such as in big leagues like the Olympics. Today they play on the NHL, but before women joined, hockey was played by the mostly men. In this way, women have contributed to Canada through hockey. It was really interesting for me.

Women have played hockey since a long time ago. It was unbelievable for me to get to know about this because I had thought that hockey was played by only men. I looked up one story in a book called *She Shoots, She Scores* by Laura Robinson. Actually, women have played hockey since the game began on the frozen lakes and ponds more than a century ago in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. After women playing hockey became familiar to many Canadian people, women began playing organized hockey in places such as Kingston, Ottawa, Regina, Victoria, and Quebec City in Canada.

Third, during my interview questions, people often mentioned popular players such as Wayne Gretzky and Tim Horton. Both played in many factories. In fact, they had a big influence on hockey in Canada. All Canadians tend to know both

of them. It is no exaggeration to say that they brought the good points of hockey to Canada and affected Canadians.

Finally, I discovered why hockey is popular in Canada. All of the people who answered my questions were very interested in hockey. My host family was very interested in hockey and often watched hockey games on TV and also went to the stadium to watch hockey games during long breaks such as winter vacation. The best reason for hockey's popularity is that Canada has long winters and cold temperatures every year, and lots of ice rinks close by and there is so much space in Canada. 2,486 hockey arenas are used to play hockey ("Canada's Game"). My teacher said that she has played on a pond which was frozen. Canadian people often play hockey at the end of the weekend and during breaks. Hockey has evolved and adapted to the temperatures and winter in Canada. They think about playing hockey as one of the fun cold weather activities and amusements.

#### **IV Conclusion**

In my conclusion, Canadians had to think about how to enjoy themselves in the cold weather. In Canada, hockey is known as one of the Canadian symbols. I think that it is used as an expression of Canadian culture, with many Canadian hockey goods everywhere. There are a lot of reasons that hockey is very popular and through my interviews and research while studying abroad, I definitely could learn many interesting facts and perspectives about hockey. They just need to prepare some sticks and a small ball which called a puck because there was already snow

and ice on the ground due of the weather in Canada. They could discover their joyful game. Also I could learn about some of the different and same aspects of Japanese and Canadian sports. I learned that sports are connected with everybody and every place in the world through this project. Throughout Canadian history connecting to today, all Canadians love hockey and it is played by many Canadian people. All of the information was interesting for me to learn and get to know.

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Ruka Yoshida – Auckland, New Zealand



# **Charities of New Zealand**

Ruka Yoshida

February 16, 2016

Nakamura High School

Nakamura International Course Thesis Paper

## **Introduction**

Have you tried to volunteer in your country? Recently, some high school students experience volunteering. For instance, they volunteer to talk to old people and help at kindergartens. Actually, I did volunteer work in New Zealand before when I studied abroad there for 11 months. My school was a regular school and nursing school at the same time, so sometimes I went to the nursing school to help old people. When I was in Japan, I had never been to a nursing home. I went in New Zealand for the first time and I had to talk in English so it was quite hard for me. I want to write down what is different between my country to New Zealand about charities and what New Zealanders think about their country's charities.

## **Background**

I want to work at a charity organisation, for example JICA. Do you know that organisation? The formal name is Japan International Cooperation Agency. When I was a primary school student, my home room teacher invited staff of JICA to my school and heard their story. I admired them. One day, when I became a junior high school student, my primary school's home room teacher became a staff member of JICA. I was so surprised and I envied her. After this, I decided that I want to be a staff member of an international charity. So my mother helps me try to know about a lot of charity work. For example, my mother and I went to Sri Lanka because JICA is doing some charity work there. It was so much fun. I always want to

absorb a lot of information about that.

Therefore, I chose this topic. I am interested in New Zealanders' opinions about charity work.

First, I researched about this topic and interviewed people in New Zealand. My teacher informed me about some New Zealand charity websites, it was very useful to me because New Zealanders wrote about charity on their blogs. Also, I asked questions to some people while studying abroad in New Zealand about their country's charity and their thinking.

My younger sister in my host family joined a charity. I saw her hand bill about charity work in New Zealand. Since my host sister needed help doing this work, I helped her instead of my host parents. It was Christmas charity work. She had a lot of toys but she did not need all of them, so we chose some toys in our house, and sent them to children in need in developing countries. Sometimes I could not understand about it so I asked her home room teacher and I got some more information from the other hand bills she gave to me.

New Zealand has a lot of opportunities to volunteer at Christmas. Mainly I was interested in the Christmas box and Christmas dinner charities.

### Christmas BOX

If you have many toys that you do not use anymore, you can give these to children of developing countries. You need to prepare a special box, and put toys in it. Also, you can separate the toys for boys or girls. This charity work is done in both New Zealand and Australia.

# CHRISTMAS BOX



## Christmas Dinner

Some organisations give food to people in need such as the homeless and provides a chance to eat dinner together at Christmas. The Christmas dinner is provided for free.

Toys for Tots was designed by the U.S. Marines. Each year it partners with businesses to provide drop boxes for unwrapped toys. These toys are then taken to a warehouse and sorted according to age and gender. Toys for Tots works closely with many churches, social welfare agencies and community groups to make sure the toys get into the hands of needy kids. Their website also makes it easy to locate drop boxes for donations, as well as for low-income families to request a toy. Angel Tree is organized by the Salvation Army. There are two different Angel Trees: One is dedicated to helping low-income families with Christmas toys, and the other is dedicated to supplying a Christmas toy for a child who has one or both parents incarcerated. Angel Tree allows low-income families to sign up from September through October, and in November, individuals, churches and community groups pick up the tags with the child's request and buy the presents. Operation Santa Claus is a national organization often organized at the local level. It accepts presents, clothing, food and money, which they then distribute to the charities with which they partner.

("Where can you find free Christmas toys")

Many companies give toys to children of poor. So every year, they gather a lot of toys.

This story above is about a charity in the U.S. In my opinion this is a very good charity. Of late, the number of low income families has increased. I think that children should experience some fun, especially during Christmas. This charity work encourages this experience for children.

## **Types of Charities in New Zealand**

Now, the number of charities in New Zealand is 27,360. Their income is \$16,656 million ("Charities by Sector").

## Charities by sector



**27,360**  
 — Charities —  
 are working in all sectors

- Accommodation / housing : 484charities, 1.8%
- Arts / culture / heritage: 2,456 charities, 9.0%
- Care / protection of animals: 246 charities, 0.9%
- Community development: 2,040 charities, 7.5%
- Economic development: 151 charities, 0.6 %
- Education / training / research: 5,870 charities, 21.5%
- Emergency / disaster relief: 692 charities, 2.5%
- Employment: 44 charities, 0.2%
- Environment / conservation: 750 charities, 2.7%
- Fund-raising: 997 charities, 3.6%
- Health: 1,908 charities, 7.0%
- International activities: 78 charities, 0.3%
- Marae on reservation land: 263 charities, 1.0%
- Other: 1920 charities, 7.0%
- People with disabilities: 883 charties, 3.2%
- Promotion of volunteering: 78 charities, 0.3%
- Religious activities: 4,791 charities, 17.5%
- Social services: 1,918 charities, 7.0%
- Sport / recreation: 1,793 charities, 6.6%

## My interviews

I interviewed 7 people: my social studies teacher, ESOL teacher, Korean friend, New Zealander friend, host parents and my older host sister. My social study teacher is a New Zealander, but my ESOL teacher is from the U.S.A. My host mother from India and host father is

from English. So I could obtain many differences in thinking about charities.

I had 15 questions about my topic:

1. What do you know about charity work, how do you know about it?
2. What kind of charity work do you know?
3. Do you want to join charity work, and why?
4. If you joined or will join charity work, when did you or will you join it?
5. Have you ever donated any money to charity organizations?
6. Where did you give money to?
7. What charity work is the most popular in New Zealand?
8. What does charity work mean to you?
9. Do you think charity work is important, and why?
10. What is the most important thing in doing charity work?
11. What can we do for example when big earthquake occurs for charity?
12. What can you do to save many people?
13. Why do people do charity work abroad?
14. What makes you happy, when you give something to someone?
15. Can you tell me your opinion about charity work abroad?

## **Main Arguments**

My topic is a really big one. I think you may know about charities. In New Zealand, high school students have to go and do some work of virtue. However, I think Japanese students do not do that; this is a difference between New Zealand and Japan. Also, some New Zealander parents join charities with their children. For example, they join a Christmas charity. Children choose their toys and send them to developing countries' children. Those toys will become the new children's toys. New Zealand's charity work is prosperous at Christmas.

All people who live in New Zealand said they want to join a charity when they retire or graduate. They are feeling very busy while working or in school, and they do not want to be too tired so they want to wait before joining. Some students answered differently; one thought that people must take part in volunteer anytime. I think it is important but I do not understand her thinking. Since volunteer work is philanthropy, people do not have to do it if they do not want to. Yet, I was confused when I heard that opinion because I often feel that I must help someone. In my view, if a big earth quake occurs in some country, we should donate money, and if some children in developing countries need help, we should give something to them. However, if I want to help all people who need help all the time, I have to admit that I won't make any money if I work very hard. I think we cannot help everyone all over the world. If so, why do we do some charity work? To relieve tension? For self-satisfaction? I am not sure of the answer to this but I know I want to help some people. And my teacher said that I have to have an unchanging

belief. When I heard that, my question disappeared because I could know that this question does not need to have one answer. Or rather, that answer will be different for everyone; I have my own response, and you have another one.

Everyone who does charity truly wants to help a lot of people. I am not an exception. Once in a while, some people may plot to try to make money from them, but those are rare. Almost all people do not think such a thing. If there are two people and a big disaster occurs, one of the them has a lot of money, and donates while the other person goes and does charity work in their place. Which do you think has contributed? I am sure that I can get a lot of answers about this question, because both people have helped. People who are rich can donate a lot of money and after the disaster, people who live in the area can buy a lot of things they need. Also, people who go and do charity work there can also help a lot of people who have been to the disaster. So both people are doing charity work and they are both helpful. It is a different form of assistance.

## **Conclusion**

After I wrote this essay, I could understand little be about why people help people. I experienced the Great East Japan earthquake. It brought really big and terrible damages to Japan. We were affected by the damage; for instance, a Tsunami hit the coast of Japan. Then, a lot of people all of the world donated money and some people even came to Japan and helped distribute something to eat and drink, and so on. I did not live in the hardest hit location, yet this

fact really impressed us. I discovered the importance of support then. I think that Japanese people are going to try to help other people if some country has big earthquake. Then it will be our turn to help.

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