

Realizing a society ridden of gender stereotypes

2618
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~why can't boys cry? What does it mean to be girly?~

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BACKGROUND

From a young age, we are told that pink is for girls, blue is for boys. As young adults, we find ourselves bombarded by the media constantly using phrases to label men as strong and aggressive, and women as pure and dainty. Gender stereotypes, while omnipresent in so many aspects of our lives today, disintegrate the way of society from a political, economic, and cultural standpoint. Feeling the need to take a step back and explore the root of such problems, we conducted the Prism Project starting in April. We invite you today to explore our ideas for an inclusive future.

RESEARCH

In March, we participated in the G7/G20 youth Japan summit. Centered on the theme of "gender issues", we split into different groups focused on specific topics such as: SDGs, media, and women empowerment, discussing different countermeasures the Japanese government could take to tackle the issues in our society today. In November, we participated in an event called ジェンダーで考える、優しい社会. We listened to panel discussions by guest speakers on 3 different discussion topics:

1. Women and identity
2. Gender based violence.
3. Gender stereotypes.



GENDER STEREOTYPES

UN human rights define gender stereotypes as "a generalized view or preconception about attributes or characteristics, or the roles that are or ought to be possessed by, or performed by women and men"

(source: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/women/wrgs/pages/genderstereotypes.aspx>)

THREE VARIABLES

POLITICS:

The strikingly low percentage of women in the Japanese parliament portrays the stereotype: women shouldn't take part in politics.

CULTURE:

The media often features women taking on household chores such as cooking, washing the dishes and laundries, bolstering the belief that women should stay at home while men work.

ECONOMY:

Lack of women in management positions in Japanese companies, portraying the stereotype that men take on leadership roles.

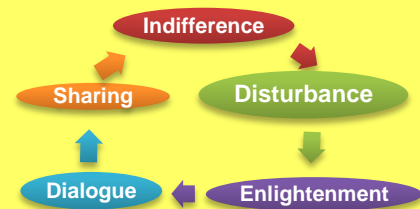
ACTION

After months of prior research, we took to the streets of Tokyo to converse with pedestrians about their take on gender stereotypes. By having everyday people write down their experiences on post-it notes to stick to the opinion board, we created a platform for others (and ourselves) to become aware of issues we could have never thought of in the first place. Moreover, we also had another poster with panels of different data and commercials so that people could guess the hidden stereotypes in each.



OUTPUT

We wanted a way to somehow share what we learned throughout our project. So, we reached out to the UN WOMEN Japan liaison office and presented our project to their employees over Skype. We also took the opportunity at the annual SGH day at our school to voice our opinions in front of the entire student body.



CONCLUSION

Eliminating gender stereotypes is not something easy to do, and will of course take time. But we believe that turning one spark of disturbance within yourself into dialogue, questioning the unquestionable, is the first step in making a change. While just listening to this presentation might not change your perspectives or values, we hope this will serve as that spark within yourself for an inclusive society we all desire.

Just as Mahatma Gandhi once quoted: "Be the change you want to see in the world"