

The Life Stories of *Hafu* in Japan: Family, School, Work, and the Street

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Mixed-race people in Japan (so-called *hafu*, *konketsuji*, or *kokusaiji*) have received much attention in Japanese media. However, sociological studies in Japan have not deeply examined the reality of discrimination toward *hafu* and stereotypes about them. Although historically, studies on mixed-race people in Japan have been conducted from the angle of education, social movements, and representation in the media, these studies have not adequately focused on their life stories via interview data analysis.

In this paper, I investigate various aspects of their daily lives. I used interview data from 12 people's life stories that I recorded during my fieldwork on *hafu* communities and due to my personal connections.

Using the theory of "institutions" developed by Raewyn Connell (1987), I analyze the participants' experiences via four social institutions: (1) family, (2) school, (3) work, and (4) the street. I show that these institutions have been constructed through the intersectional functions of elements such as race, gender, ethnicity, and religion.

Hafu have suffered from racial/ethnic prejudice at the hands of their family members as well as non-relatives. At school, they have been teased and bullied by classmates. Furthermore, in school, *hafu* are pressured to assimilate and acquire "Japaneseness." In terms of work, *hafu* have experienced discrimination when job hunting due to prejudice toward their names in phone interviews or their appearance in face-to-face interviews. Moreover, their supervisors, colleagues, and customers have racially discriminated against them. Sometimes, their appearance is directly tied to a customer's complaint. In the street, they face racial profiling by police. For example, the police use the "stop-and-search" method, mainly targeting black or brown males who start to experience this phenomenon at a young age and continue to encounter it throughout adulthood.

In this paper, I reveal part of the construction of social institutions in Japan. However, I have not adequately used Connell's theory. In addition to the prior research I used for this study, I focus on the interrelations among the "regime" structures of the abovementioned social institutions and other social structures such as governments, legal systems, historical context, and globalization by using Connell's theory.