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NGOS AND CITIZEN EDUCATION IN JAPAN

A Research Note

ABSTRACT

The impact of NGOs is expanding, both in domestic and international politics. It is a rare regime that can completely ignore the petitions of well-organized non-governmental organizations. Just as the issues which motivate NGOs are very diverse, the tactics and goals of these organizations can vary among them as well. Some NGOs focus directly on influencing government officials to adopt policies favorable to the groups' causes. Others support private efforts to accomplish humanitarian or religious goals. In this paper, I explore yet another thrust of NGOs; their work to educate the public. Although citizen education by some NGOs may be an inadvertent side-effect of their primary activities, other groups emphasize this method to raise both financial and indirect political support. Some go so far as to provide materials for use by students and adults, but the objective is to raise consciousness and to urge participation in the organization's goals.