

# **“The Family Expectations for University Degrees in America and Japan”**

## **Research Questions:**

- 1. What are the expectations from parent’s in how a university degree enhances the student’s lives?**
- 2. What cultural aspects help students decide what their majors should be?**
- 3. What is similar or different in the American and Japanese cultures that fuel these motivations for higher learning?**
- 4. Survey question: Are the motivations for higher learning purely economic or simply a life enhancement, or possibly a combination of both?**

## **Research Background:**

**In order to answer those questions, the following topics will be addressed in this presentation:**

- a. Intentions of motivations of University students and parents**
- b. Attitudes and behavior of parents towards University students**
- c. Parent expectations of their children’s University degrees**
- d. Roles of Japanese and American parents with university students**
- e. Parental responses and/or interactions regarding University students’ stress levels**

**A. Intentions of motivations of University students and parents (Vishtak, O. V.,2004)**

## **Japanese University Students:**

- Freshman students consider parents to be chief source of information.**

- Results of effectiveness of students' learning are based on their personal needs and inclinations that were formed earlier.
- 70% parental motivation determines college students' success in their learning activity.
- 30% psychologists are contributed to their success.
- Investigating motivational characteristics serves as the fundamental basis for the success of education.

**B. Attitudes and Behavior of Parents towards University Students (Davis, K. D., Winsler, A., & Middleton, M. 2006)**

American University Students:

- Provision of external awards, (praise, money, gifts...) undermine essential motivation or promotes performance.
- Frequency of rewards through Elementary/ Middle/ and High school shapes the mentality of students of motivation to learn and get good grades to show to family.
- 75% of college students who received awards tend to have high cumulative gpa of 3.75-4.0. The other 23% said too much rewards lead to their lack of enthusiasm and motivation for college.

**C. Parent Expectations for Children's' University Degrees (Zhan, M., & Sherraden, M., 2011)**

American students and parents:

- 39% of mothers expected their children to graduate from college.
- 11% expected further education after graduation.
- Only financial assets are positively related to parents' expectations.
- Married parents have higher expectations than unmarried parents and single parents.

- Parents with female children have higher expectations for them to graduate.
- Parents in general, liabilities such as secured and unsecured debt effect children's education.
  - Secured debt has resulted in college education.
- Education of parents is the best investment for their own well-being and the well-being and future education of their children.
- Paying special attentions to different types of assets and liabilities, the study findings indicate that, both financial and nonfinancial assets are positively related to children's college completion.

**D. Roles of Japanese and American Parents with University Students (Oishi, S., & Sullivan, H. W., 2005)**

American Students:

- American college students reported having higher levels of life-satisfaction and self-esteem than Japanese college students.
- American students resulted in fulfilled parental expectations to greater degree than those of Japanese students.
- Differences in well-being and differences between cultures were well documented.
- Parents boosting child's self-esteem was a strong predictor for life satisfaction for American students.
- For Japanese students, relationship harmony was the strong predictor.
- For Both Japanese and American parents, engaging positive emotions resulted in positive emotions within American and Japanese students.
- Lower levels of well being were reported in Japanese students due to their lower level of fulfillment of parental expectations.

- Students don't feel satisfied with their life or with themselves because they feel they haven't attained parent's standards.
- American students had higher fulfillment of parental expectations than Japanese students which lead to higher life satisfaction.
- The more specific and harsh expectations from Japanese parents is more difficult for Japanese students to fulfill.

**E. Parental responses/interactions regarding students' stress levels (f) (Yuh Huey Jau; Fukuda, Hiromi, 2002)**

Japanese University Students:

- Students being over benefited linked to indebtedness and under benefited students related to feelings of burden.
- Students receiving less support= become less mentally/ physically healthy. (depression, anxiety, health risking behavior)
- Japanese parents providing social support resulted in positive effects of health to Japanese students. High level of support protects students from stress induced pathology.
- However, students receiving too much support may imply poor problem solving (not allowing students to do things on their own), but may help cope with stressful situations and again, protect health.