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## The Japanese returnee experience: factors that affect reentry

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### Abstract

Although the number of Japanese children raised overseas has been increasing and many steps have been taken to ease reentry for them, the consequences of these efforts are not clear. Japanese parents who sojourn abroad with their children are still left to a trial and error approach when it comes to their children's education and socialization. This study examined what factors predict the various social and psychological outcomes of the "returnee experience." Based on previous work, 27 dependent variables were employed to assess the types of social and psychological consequences experienced by returnees; they were reduced to nine factors by factor analysis. Also, 31 variables that previous literature suggested influenced these experiences were measured; factor analysis reduced them to 10 factors. A backward multiple regression was then conducted on each of the nine dependent factors. Results showed that communication with parents, recency of return and special provisions were key to capturing positive outcomes. © 2002 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

*Keywords:* Reentry; Returnees (*kikokushijo*); TCK; Global nomad; Culture shock; Adjustment

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## 1. Introduction

The number of children raised outside their passport countries has increased significantly over the past 30 years. In Japan alone, the number of children being educated abroad has increased over eleven-fold compared to 1975 (Ministry of Education, 1999). While some returnees report difficulty readjusting to Japan, others find the transition easy (Fujiwara et al., 1985).

Previous studies have examined what variables account for these differences, but they were limited because many changes have occurred since they were conducted. For example, the number of Japanese schools overseas has increased from 26 in 1971 to 85 in 1990; supplementary schools from 22 in 1971 to 146 in 1990. The amount of information available to parents has also increased substantially (Kaigaishijo Kyouikushi Hensan Iinkai, 1991). Perhaps the most influential factor was the implementation of special quotas for returnees by many prestigious universities in the mid-1980s. Returnees were no longer “victims” with Japanese language handicaps, but “elites” who gained relatively easy entry into prestigious universities and subsequently into prestigious companies (Goodman, 1990).

Since these changes have occurred, there has not been a reexamination of the factors that predict Japanese returnees’ readjustment to Japan. Moreover, prior studies have focused on school age returnees even though evidence has suggested that the returnee experience is not short-lived. The current study examined which factors can predict the various social and psychological outcomes returnees experience across the age spectrum.

### 1.1. Research on reentry issues of Japanese returnees

#### 1.1.1. Social and psychological outcomes of the returnee experience

Kidder (1992) reported that many returnees *felt different* from their peers after returning to Japan. Many felt that they were “Physically Marked” because their fashion, hair, make-up, ways of talking and walking were different. “Behavioral Signs” such as eye contact, facial expressions and gestures often “gave them away” as returnees. “Interpersonal Styles” were also different, with returnees indicating that they had problems with Japanese “Manners of Speaking,” especially with *keigo* (honorifics). Kidder claimed that in response to being “different,” some returnees chose to hide the fact that they were returnees while others adopted “chameleon-like techniques to blend in with the occasion and change colors according to context” (p. 390).

Minoura (1988) reported that the two most commonly cited causes of problems among returnees and their peers came from *differences* in their interpersonal styles, specifically in their patterns of self-assertion (*jibun no dashikata*) and the relationship between the individual and the group (*kojin to shuudan no kankei*). Returnees, especially the ones who lived in Western cultures, had a tendency to be direct and assert their opinions freely. Their Japanese peers felt that this was crass and inconsiderate.

In response to being different, many returnees conformed. In fact, Takeuchi, Imahori and Matsumoto, 2001 study of returnees' criticism style found that they were even more indirect than their Japanese counterparts, overcompensating for differences in communication styles. Ebuchi (1988) reported that unless they conformed to the group, elementary school returnees became objects of bullying. Furthermore, some junior high school students reported that when external pressures to conform were very strong, they adapted on the surface while internally maintaining their individuality. For some returnees, this discrepancy has led to a conflict between their internal and external self. Thus, many studies have reported identity issues as being central to the returnee experience (Kanno, 2000; Onoda, 1988).

Other returnees, however, return to Japan with ease. Fujiwara et al.'s (1985) study revealed three types of returnees. The first group tried hard to adjust to Japan and was conscious of the differences between Japan and their host country. Although they were not necessarily completely satisfied with their current situation, they tried hard to fit in. The second group consisted of children who adjusted back to life in Japan without any particular effort. The third group consisted of those who experienced adjustment problems. They felt like strangers in their own land and were very conscious that they were returnees.

#### *1.1.2. Duration of reentry issues*

Kobayashi et al. (1978, 1983) surveyed 650 Japanese children, and found that most (90.5%) adjusted back to Japanese school life within a year. To investigate whether deeper issues emerged after the initial phase of adjustment, Minoura (1988) conducted a 10-year longitudinal study of 75 returnees' psychosocial aspects of adjustment, and reported that for many returnees who had lived abroad for an extended time, the first year in Japan consisted of adjustment on the surface level. Between the second and third years, they started to realize that behavioral differences were rooted in deeper cultural differences such as values or ways of thinking. Tsukamoto's (1990) study of 303 mothers of returnees also showed that although returnees adjusted to their physical/biological environment fairly rapidly, usually within 18 months, their social adjustment in terms of self-concept tended to take much longer. White (1988) noted "we have seen that it is the workplace that most adamantly resists the returnees' reentry" (p. 111). These results concurred with Bock's (1977) assertion that there are at least three levels in people's adaptation to a new situation: (1) physical/environmental adaptation, (2) social adaptation (human relationships), and (3) internal (self) adaptation.

#### *1.1.3. Experiential and demographic characteristics*

A number of studies have examined what factors predict readjustment to Japan for Japanese returnees. Takahagi et al. (1982), for instance, showed that length of sojourn significantly affected various factors such as what parents took into consideration while abroad and upon return to Japan, children's lifestyles while abroad and upon return to Japan, and the children's impression of their experience

returning to Japan. Gender differences also emerged, with girls scoring lower on the culture shock scale than boys (see also Gerner & Perry, 2000).

Other studies have found additional factors that affect the “returnee experience.” Minoura (1991) reported that children who sojourned and returned between the ages of 9 and 14–15 and stayed there for 4 or more years were more likely to experience adjustment problems. Fichtner (1988) found that those who had lived in Asian cultures had a higher ease of social re-entry than those who had lived in Western cultures. Tamura and Inamura (1987) highlighted the importance of the family’s role, especially the mother’s, in shaping the child’s experience while abroad and upon return to Japan, suggesting that children with mothers who had problems adjusting to the host culture often experienced problems with reentry. They also pointed out that overly constrictive school environments made reentry more difficult.

Most studies have only looked at the negative consequences of the “returnee experience” on children in the elementary, junior and senior high schools. Furthermore, these studies were conducted in the 1970s and 1980s, precluding those who returned after the institution of special quotas for returnees at prestigious universities. The present study addressed these issues by: (1) targeting a wider age range of returnees (12–71), (2) examining a wider range of social and psychological outcomes (not only negative ones), and (3) collecting data over 10 years after the institution of special quotas for returnees at prestigious universities.

#### *1.1.4. Overview of the present study*

To examine the various facets of the returnee experience, we began by asking the following question.

RQ1: What are the social and psychological outcomes of the “returnee experience”?

Previous studies revealed that “feeling different” was a key feature of being a returnee. Hypothesis 1, therefore, examined whether Feeling Different would emerge as a core of the “returnee experience.” Hypothesis 2 tested whether special provisions for returnees, including special quotas at prestigious universities, were likely to be associated with perceived advantages and/or stigma and identified as a salient outcome for returnees.

**Hypothesis 1.** Feeling different is a key factor in the returnee experience.

**Hypothesis 1a.** The *social consequences* of being different are rejection and acceptance by peers.

**Hypothesis 1b.** The *personal attitudes* regarding feeling different are either conforming to or not conforming to the mainstream culture.

**Hypothesis 1c.** The *psychological consequences* of being different are adjustment problems and positive or negative assessment of the returnee experience.

**Hypothesis 2.** The consequences of the special provisions for returnees are perceived advantages and/or stigma.

RQ2: Are there demographic and experiential characteristics that shape the experiences of returnees while abroad and immediately upon return to Japan?

Research question 2 examined whether particular demographic and experiential characteristics played a formative role in the returnees' experiences. We were especially interested in seeing whether the various provisions made for the returnees played a significant role.

RQ3: Do the factors identified in RQ2 predict the outcomes identified in RQ1?

Hypothesis 3 examined whether the various factors identified in previous studies were likely to be predictors of the social and psychological outcomes identified in this study. Hypothesis 4 tested whether the special provisions made for returnees were likely to predict the subsequent social and psychological consequences.

**Hypothesis 3.** Age (present, at time of departure and return), sex, length of sojourn, type of school attended upon return to Japan, place of sojourn, and relationship with parents will predict various outcomes of the returnee experience.

**Hypothesis 4.** Special provisions (schools attended abroad, while in Japan, special quota, etc.) will predict the subsequent returnee experience.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Participants

Returnees were individuals who spent at least 2 years abroad between the ages 5 and 18 due to their parents' occupation. 512 (male = 182; female = 315; 15 did not report) completed the questionnaire. Their ages ranged from 12 to 71 with the mean being 20.15 and the mode 17.

### 2.2. Instrument

A seven-page, 74-item questionnaire was employed. Thirty-five items were included as predictors while the remaining 39 measured social and psychological outcomes. The predictors were based on previously cited experiential and demographic variables that presumably defined the returnee experience, and were organized around the following categories: defining characteristics of the sojourning experience, communication with parents and others, and type of school entered immediately upon return to Japan (see Table 2 for the specific items). The dependent variables were also based on previous studies, and were organized around the following categories: effort to conform, relationships with peers, readjustment difficulties, feeling accepted, returnee advantage, satisfaction/dissatisfaction/impact of the returnee experience (see Table 1 for specific items). All but four items were on an ordinal (four-point) scale, which was chosen to counterbalance a possible Japanese tendency to avoid extreme responses and gravitate toward the mid-point

Table 1  
Social and psychological outcomes

Tentative name for factor poles	Items	Factor loading
DV Factor 1: Feeling Different Eigenvalue = 3.502	Presently feels that they are being treated differently or are being perceived differently because of being a returnee.	0.735
	Upon return to Japan, felt that they were treated differently or were being perceived differently because they were returnees.	0.688
	Presently, senses a difference in the way of thinking between themselves and other Japanese.	0.673
	Immediately upon return to Japan, sensed a difference in the way of thinking between themselves and other Japanese.	0.544
	Glad that they were born Japanese.	–0.533
	Had difficulty adjusting when they first returned to Japan.	0.311
DV Factor 2: Self-Reflection/ Expressiveness Eigenvalue = 2.338	Listed many things they liked about their overseas experience.	0.722
	Listed many things they enjoyed about being a returnee.	0.703
	Listed many things they didn't like about their overseas experience.	0.681
	Listed many things they didn't enjoy about being a returnee.	0.664
	Listed many activities they were involved in (outside of school and work) after returning to Japan.	0.446
DV Factor 3: Adjustment Difficulties Eigenvalue = 2.191	Had difficulty adjusting when they first returned to Japan.	0.678
	Felt that they were excluded from a group because of being a returnee.	0.619
	Experienced uncertainty, depression or psychosomatic symptoms immediately upon return to Japan.	0.585
	Enjoyed special privileges because of being a returnee.	–0.410
	Has felt short-changed due to being treated like a returnee.	0.401
	Immediately upon return to Japan, felt that there was someone who was willing to accept them as they were.	–0.392
	Immediately upon return to Japan, sensed a difference in the way of thinking between themselves and other Japanese.	0.335
	Upon return to Japan, felt that they were treated differently or perceived as being different because they were returnees.	0.307
DV Factor 4: Acceptance Eigenvalue = 1.498	Presently feels that there is someone who is willing to accept them as they are.	0.846
	Immediately upon return to Japan, felt that there was someone who was willing to accept them as they were.	0.701
	Is presently trying to conform to the people around them.	–0.446
DV Factor 5: Advantage Eigenvalue = 1.414	Presently feels that they are able to take advantage of their returnee experience outside of school or work.	0.768
	Presently feels that they are able to take advantage of their returnee experience at school or at work.	0.705
	Has enjoyed special privileges because of being a returnee.	0.408
	Listed many activities they were involved in (outside of school and work) after returning to Japan.	0.326
	Is content with present self.	0.323
DV Factor 6: Self-Affirmation	Would like to take their children with them if they were to be assigned to go overseas.	0.838

Table 1 (continued)

Tentative name for factor poles	Items	Factor loading
Eigenvalue = 1.297	Is happy to have lived abroad in their youth.	0.734
DV Factor 7: Negativity	Feels that they can live anywhere in the world.	–0.764
Eigenvalue = 1.170	Has felt short-changed due to being treated like a returnee.	0.381
	Is presently trying to conform to the people around them.	0.370
	Is content with present self.	–0.342
DV Factor 8: Group Conformity	Tried to conform to the people around them when they first returned to Japan.	0.622
Eigenvalue = 1.131	Presently feels excluded from a group because of being a returnee.	–0.581
	Has felt excluded from a group because of being a returnee.	–0.435
	Has felt short-changed due to being treated like a returnee.	–0.311
DV Factor 9: Impact	Has felt that their worldview has changed since returning to Japan.	0.859
Eigenvalue = 1.059	Immediately upon return to Japan, sensed a difference in the way of thinking between themselves and other Japanese	0.338
	Presently, senses a difference in the way of thinking between themselves and other Japanese.	0.329

Note: The items have been transformed from their original question form into statements to ease interpretation.

(Chen, Lee, & Stevenson, 1995; Iwawaki & Cowen, 1964; Zax & Takahashi, 1967). The scale was anchored 1: no (*iie*), 2: a little (*sukoshi*), 3: quite a bit (*kanari*), 4: very (*hijooni*). The remaining items were open-ended questions with 10 blanks, which were coded by the number of blanks filled out by the respondents.

### 2.3. Procedure

Data were obtained from high school and university student returnees, and non-students. High school students were recruited from two high schools with a large number of returnees and 16 high schools with smaller numbers of returnees, all from urban and rural areas of Japan. After obtaining permission from the principals, packages containing the questionnaires were sent to the schools in November 1997. The packets contained: (1) a cover letter that introduced the purpose of the study and ensured confidentiality, (2) the questionnaire, (3) a self-addressed stamped envelope, and (4) a small white envelope. Subjects were instructed to complete the questionnaires at their leisure and return them in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope. They were also instructed to write their name and address on the small white envelope and to send it back to us with the questionnaire. Upon receipt, a small token of appreciation (a 500 yen telephone card) was placed in the small white envelope and sent to the respondents. One hundred and fifteen students from the high schools with fewer returnees, and 100 from high schools with a large

Table 2  
 Experiential and demographic characteristics of returnees

Tentative name for factor poles	Items	Factor loading
IV Factor 1: Japanese School Eigenvalue = 4.912	While abroad, spoke Japanese at school.	0.895
	While abroad, attended a Japanese school the longest.	0.855
	While abroad, spoke English at school.	-0.652
	While abroad, did not attend a Japanese school.	-0.568
	While abroad, did not attend a local school.	0.558
	While abroad, did not attend a hoshuu-kou (supplementary school).	0.472
	While abroad, spent the largest amount of time in a country other than the USA.	0.450
	While abroad, spoke Japanese in the community.	0.416
	While abroad, spoke English in the community.	-0.325
IV Factor 2: International School Eigenvalue = 2.823	While abroad, was brought up to be familiar with the local culture.	-0.334
	While abroad, attended an international school the longest.	0.842
	While abroad did not attend an international school.	-0.808
	While abroad, spent the largest amount of time in a country other than the USA.	0.610
	While abroad, did not attend a local school.	0.608
	While abroad, spoke English in the community.	-0.540
	While abroad, did not attend a Japanese school.	-0.407
IV Factor 3: Extensive Stay Eigenvalue = 2.299	While abroad, did not attend a hoshuu-kou (supplementary school).	0.405
	Lived overseas for a long time.	0.816
	Was older when they first went abroad.	-0.783
IV Factor 4: Communication with Parents Eigenvalue = 2.091	Lived in many different countries.	0.712
	While abroad, spoke to your parents about many things.	0.752
	While abroad, consulted parents when they had problems.	0.709
	Before returning to Japan, received an explanation from their parents regarding the move.	0.606
IV Factor 5: Special Provisions Eigenvalue = 1.979	Prior to leaving Japan, received an explanation from their parents regarding the move.	0.562
	Immediately upon return to Japan, was enrolled in a class with many returnees.	0.867
	Was, at some point, enrolled in a class with many returnees.	0.811
IV Factor 6: Recency of Return Eigenvalue = 1.621	Immediately upon return to Japan, was not enrolled in a class with special provisions for returnees.	-0.673
	Returned to Japan a long time ago.	-0.781
	Is older.	-0.712
IV Factor 7: Older Sojourning Experience Eigenvalue = 1.373	While abroad, returned to Japan frequently for short visits.	0.652
	Was older when they last returned to Japan.	0.809
	Is older.	0.557
	While abroad, was brought up to be familiar with the local culture.	-0.489
	Was older when they first went abroad.	0.312



Table 2 (continued)

Tentative name for factor poles	Items	Factor loading
IV Factor 8: International Community Eigenvalue = 1.215	Prior to graduating from high school, did not live apart from their parents for more than one year.	0.609
	While abroad, spoke English at school.	0.487
	While abroad, spoke English in the community.	0.406
	Immediately upon return to Japan, was not enrolled in a class with special provisions for returnees.	0.305
	While abroad, was brought up to be familiar with the local culture.	−0.302
IV Factor 9: Limited Resources Eigenvalue = 1.164	While abroad, did not attend a juku.	0.711
	While abroad, consulted people other than their parents when they had problems.	−0.551
	Returned to Japan a long time ago.	0.308
IV Factor 10: Bilingual Male Eigenvalue = 1.014	Is a woman.	−0.739
	While abroad, spoke Japanese in the community.	−0.532

Note: The items have been transformed from their original question form into statements to ease interpretation.

number of returnees, returned the questionnaires between November 1997 and March 1998, resulting in an approximately equal balance of both types of schools.

The university student sample came from seven universities, where packets were provided to the students directly from teachers. A university with a very large returnee population as well as those with fewer was selected. Non-student data were obtained from one cram school and three service organizations (i.e., Shijo tsuushin, Aloe no Kai, SIETAR Japan), selected because of their access to returnees who are no longer students. The newsletter “Shijo tsuushin” has approximately 400 subscribers, including many “older” returnees. “ALOE no Kai” is a group of mothers of returnees.

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. *What are the social and psychological outcomes of the “returnee experience”?* (RQ1)

We conducted a principal components factor analysis (FA) on all of the variables measuring social and psychological outcomes, excluding items with open-ended responses and those where responses were conditional on affirmative responses to a previous item. Squared multiple correlations were used as communality estimates. To minimize sampling and response biases, prior to the FA we standardized all of an individual’s 74 ratings to his or her own mean and standard deviation; then, we

standardized all of the items to the group's mean and standard deviation on that item. This double standardization eliminated individual and group differences in the data set, while leaving interrelationships among the variables intact (van de Vijver & Leung, 1997). Nine factors were extracted using eigenvalues  $> 1.00$  as the criterion for extraction, and cumulatively they accounted for 57.78% of the total variance. This criterion was selected because the scree plot did not reveal a clear break between meaningful and non-meaningful factors. Normal Varimax rotation was performed, and items with factor loadings  $> 0.30$  were considered loading on each factor (see Table 1). Interpretation of the items loading on each of the nine factors suggested the following names: Feeling Different (DV1), Self-Reflection/Expressiveness (DV2), Adjustment Difficulties (DV3), Acceptance (DV4), Advantage (DV5), Self-Affirmation (DV6), Negativity (DV7), Group Conformity (DV8), and Impact (DV9). Factor scores were then computed for each of these factors.

Hypothesis 1 stated that "feeling different" is a key factor in the returnee experience. The results of the FA supported this hypothesis, as the factor "feeling different" emerged as the first component in the analysis (eigenvalue = 3.502).

Hypothesis 1a suggested that the *social consequences* of being different are rejection or acceptance by peers. This hypothesis was supported by the existence of Factor 4 (Acceptance).

Hypothesis 1b suggested that possible *personal attitudes* of the returnees regarding feeling different are to conform or not to conform to the mainstream culture. Factor 8 (Group Conformity) supported this hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1c suggested that the *psychological consequences* of the returnee experience are adjustment problems and positive or negative assessment of the returnee experience. The psychological consequences that emerged from the FA included: Self-Reflection/Expressiveness (DV2), Adjustment Difficulties (DV3), Self-Affirmation (DV6), Negativity (DV7), and Impact (DV9). These factors were especially interesting in that they not only showed that returnees differed in their assessment of their experience (positive or negative), but that the relative impact of the experience also varied from individual to individual. For some it did not induce self-reflection nor did it have significant impact on their lives.

Hypothesis 2 examined whether the special provisions for the returnees created perceived advantages and/or stigma. DV5 (Advantage) showed that perceived advantage was a clear factor in defining the returnee experience.

In supporting Hypotheses 1 and 2, this study thus identified nine social and psychological outcomes of the returnee experience.

### 3.2. Are there demographic and experiential characteristics that shape the experiences of returnees while abroad and immediately upon return to Japan? (RQ2)

We conducted a principal components FA on the predictor items. Prior to this, all predictor items that involved three nominal categories as response alternatives were contrast coded into two variables. One item was dropped from the analysis (Which language did you speak at home?) because an overwhelming number of participants chose only one response (Japanese). The analysis also excluded open-ended

responses and those items whose responses were conditional on affirmative responses to a previous item. Ten factors were extracted, using eigenvalues  $> 1.00$  as the criterion for extraction, and cumulatively they accounted for 66.1% of the total variance. Items with factor loadings  $> 0.30$  were considered loading on each factor (see Table 2). Interpretation of the items loading on each of the ten factors suggested the following factor names: Japanese School (IV1), International School (IV2), Extensive Stay (IV3), Communication with Parents (IV4), Special Provisions (IV5), Recency of Return (IV6), Older Sojourning Experience (IV7), International Community (IV8), Limited Resources (IV9) and Bilingual Male (IV10). Factor scores were then computed for each of the ten factors.

The first two factors that emerged, Japanese School and International School, highlighted the importance of the type of school attended while abroad. Extensive Stay (IV3) coincided with Minoura's (1988) and Takahagi et al.'s (1982) results that length of sojourn affects the returnee experience. Communication with Parents (IV4) indicated the degree to which parents talked to their children about many things, including the overseas assignment and return to Japan. Special Provisions (IV5) indicated that various provisions created for the returnees were defining features of the returnee experience. The emergence of Recency of Return (IV6) supported anecdotal evidence that recent returnees were different from those in the past (JOES, 1993 May). Older Sojourning Experience (IV7) supported Minoura's (1988) finding that age of sojourn was a significant factor.

Due to low eigenvalues and difficulty in interpretability, the last three factors should be viewed with care. The items loading on IV8 indicated that this factor included returnees who spoke English at school and in the community. Although not indicated in Table 2, the data also indicated that these returnees did not primarily attend a local school. With 98.4% of our respondents who lived in the United States having attended a local school, this suggested that these returnees lived in international communities in a country other than the United States. Limited Resources was so named because of the lack of *jukus* (private cram schools), unavailability of people to consult when faced with problems, compounded by the fact that these were individuals who returned many years ago when few resources were available to returnees. Although IV10 (Bilingual Male) indirectly supported Takahagi et al.'s (1982) and Gerner and Perry's (2000) contention that gender significantly affects the returnee experience, we found it interesting and perhaps puzzling that this was coupled with not speaking Japanese in the community. With 91.4% of our sample having spoken Japanese at home meant that this factor included those that were at least bilingual.

### 3.3. *Do the factors identified in RQ2 predict the outcomes identified in RQ1? (RQ3)*

To examine RQ3, a backward multiple regression was computed on each of the nine dependent variables identified earlier, using the 10 IVs as initial predictors. All nine DVs were significantly predicted (see Table 3).

Hypothesis 3 stated that age, sex, length of sojourn, type of school attended upon return to Japan, place of sojourn and relationship with parents will predict the social

Table 3  
Results of multiple regression analyses

Factor	Predictor variables	$B^a$	SEB	$t$	Significance	
DV Factor 1: Feeling Different $R = 0.381, R^2 = 0.145,$ $F(8,503) = 10.686,$ $p < 0.001$	IV1 Japanese School	-0.198	0.041	-4.792	0.000	
	IV2 International School	0.093	0.041	2.259	0.024	
	IV4 Communication with Parents	-0.164	0.041	-3.975	0.000	
	IV6 Recency of Return	-0.075	0.041	-1.825	0.069	
	IV7 Older Sojourning Experience	-0.078	0.041	-1.902	0.058	
	IV8 International Community	-0.198	0.041	-4.802	0.000	
	IV9 Limited Resources	-0.107	0.041	-2.584	0.010	
	IV10 Bilingual Male	-0.092	0.041	-2.223	0.027	
	DV Factor 2: Self-Reflection/Expressiveness $R = 0.294, R^2 = 0.087,$ $F(6,505) = 7.971,$ $p < 0.001$	IV3 Extensive Stay	-0.095	0.043	-2.233	0.026
		IV6 Recency of Return	-0.124	0.043	-2.914	0.004
IV7 Older Sojourning Experience		-0.075	0.043	-1.751	0.081	
IV8 International Community		-0.082	0.043	-1.925	0.055	
IV9 Limited Resources		-0.135	0.043	-3.174	0.002	
IV10 Bilingual Male		-0.178	0.043	-4.183	0.000	
DV Factor 3: Adjustment Difficulties $R = 0.412, R^2 = 0.169,$ $F(5,506) = 20.638$ $p < 0.001$	IV4 Communication with Parents	-0.139	0.041	-3.429	0.001	
	IV5 Special Provisions	-0.205	0.041	-5.067	0.000	
	IV6 Recency of Return	-0.235	0.041	-5.792	0.000	
	IV7 Older Sojourning Experience	-0.192	0.041	-4.749	0.000	
	IV10 Bilingual Male	-0.126	0.041	-3.108	0.002	
DV Factor 4: Acceptance $R = 0.261, R^2 = 0.068,$ $F(6,505) = 6.164,$ $p < 0.001$	IV1 Japanese School	-0.104	0.043	-2.430	0.015	
	IV2 International School	-0.093	0.043	-2.158	0.031	
	IV4 Communication with Parents	0.119	0.043	2.780	0.006	
	IV5 Special Provisions	0.089	0.043	2.076	0.038	
	IV9 Limited Resources	-0.141	0.043	-3.286	0.001	
	IV10 Bilingual Male	-0.081	0.043	-1.894	0.059	
DV Factor 5: Advantage	IV1 Japanese School	-0.316	0.040	-7.904	0.000	
	IV2 International School	-0.131	0.040	-3.277	0.001	

$R = 0.440$ , $R^2 = 0.194$ , $F(7,504) = 17.300$ , $p < 0.001$	IV5 Special Provisions	-0.097	0.040	-2.422	0.016
	IV6 Recency of Return	-0.202	0.040	-5.062	0.000
	IV7 Older Sojourning Experience	-0.095	0.040	-2.369	0.018
	IV8 International Community	-0.101	0.040	-2.518	0.012
	IV9 Limited Resources	-0.084	0.040	-2.107	0.036
DV Factor 6: Self-Affirmation $R = 0.132$ , $R^2 = 0.017$ , $F(2,509) = 4.521$ , $p < 0.01$	IV4 Communication with Parents	0.100	0.044	2.276	0.023
	IV10 Bilingual Male	-0.086	0.044	-1.965	0.050
DV Factor 7: Negativity $R = 0.183$ , $R^2 = 0.033$ , $F(3,508) = 5.866$ , $p < 0.01$	IV2 International School	-0.081	0.044	-1.849	0.065
	IV3 Extensive Stay	-0.119	0.044	-2.738	0.006
	IV10 Bilingual Male	-0.113	0.044	-2.585	0.010
DV Factor 8: Group Conformity $R = 0.122$ , $R^2 = 0.015$ , $F(2,509) = 3.815$ , $p < 0.05$	IV7 Older Sojourning Experience	-0.074	0.044	-1.681	0.093
	IV9 Limited Resources	-0.096	0.044	-2.192	0.029
DV Factor 9: Impact $R = 0.343$ , $R^2 = 0.117$ , $F(4, 507) = 16.857$ , $p < 0.001$	IV3 Extensive Stay	-0.185	0.042	-4.428	0.000
	IV6 Recency of Return	0.077	0.042	1.862	0.063
	IV8 International Community	-0.213	0.042	-5.103	0.000
	IV9 Limited Resources	-0.179	0.042	-4.280	0.000

<sup>a</sup> Beta scores were not listed because they were identical to the *B* scores as we used factor scores (with orthogonal rotation) for the independent as well as dependent variables.

and psychological outcomes identified in this study. All of these variables did, in fact, do that. For example, Older Sojourning Experience (IV7) predicted feeling less different, less self-reflection, less adjustment difficulties, less advantages and less of a tendency toward conforming to their peers. Sex (IV10—Bilingual Male), served as a predictor for seven out of the nine social and psychological outcomes. Bilingual males were less likely to feel different, spend time on self-reflection, experience adjustment difficulties, feel accepted, be self-affirming and be negative. Length of sojourn (IV3—Extensive Stay), predicted that those who spent more time abroad, went at an early age and lived in many countries, were less likely to spend time on self-reflection, were less likely to be negative, and were less likely to be impacted by the returnee experience. The type of school attended upon return to Japan (IV5—Special Provisions), and those who attended schools with special provisions for returnees were less likely to experience adjustment difficulties, were more likely to feel accepted, and were more likely to enjoy the advantages of being a returnee. Place of sojourn (IV8—International Community), showed that those who lived in international communities were less likely to feel different, spend time on self-reflection, enjoy advantages of being a returnee, and be impacted by the returnee experience. Relationship with parents (IV4—Communication with Parents), predicted that those who communicated more with their parents were less likely to feel different and experience adjustment difficulties, and were more likely to feel accepted and score high on self-affirmation. Cumulatively, these findings provided strong support for Hypothesis 3.

Hypothesis 4 predicted that special provisions were likely to affect the returnee experience. Special provisions created for returnees included domestic as well as international changes, thus IVs 5 (Special Provision), 9 (Limited Resources), 1 (Japanese School) and 2 (International School) were examined. Furthermore, with many more facilities and special provisions currently available compared to 30 years ago, IV6 (Recency of Return) was also examined. As indicated above, IV5 (Special Provisions) served as a predictor for three of the nine outcomes. Those who had less access to special provisions (IV9: Limited Resources) were less likely to feel different, spend time on self-reflection, feel accepted, feel at an advantage, conform to the group and feel impacted by the returnee experience. Those who attended a Japanese School (IV1) were less likely to feel different, feel accepted, and feel that they were at an advantage. In contrast, those who attended International Schools (IV2) were more likely to feel different, and less likely to feel accepted, feel that they were at an advantage, and express negativity. Recency of Return (IV6) predicted feeling less different, less self-reflection, less adjustment difficulties, less advantages, but being impacted more by the experience. Thus, Hypothesis 4 was confirmed.

#### 4. Discussion

This study reassesses the returnee experience in light of the various changes that occurred during the past 30 years. Results of the multiple regression analyses indicate that those who returned recently are less likely to feel different, spend time

on self-reflection, experience adjustment difficulties, feel at an advantage, and are more likely to be impacted by the returnee experience. These findings are logical consequences of the fact that returnees are much less of an anomaly compared to before, and may reflect an increasing openness in Japanese society, and/or that recent returnees are better prepared for reentry. Another interpretation is that recent returnees are more Japanese and less foreign compared to those who returned earlier. A further interpretation is that recent returnees are more flexible than those in the past. These results confirm speculation that returning to Japan has become easier for recent returnees. What is a little puzzling is that recency of return also predicts a higher score on impact. In other words, the experience affects returnees' lives significantly even though they may not feel different or experience adjustment difficulties upon return to Japan.

The implementation of special provisions for returnees differentiates recent returnees from those who returned earlier. Results indicate that those who enjoy special provisions are less likely to experience adjustment difficulties or to feel at an advantage, and are more likely to feel accepted by their peers. It is encouraging to note that those who attend schools with special provisions for returnees were less likely to experience adjustment difficulties. This may be because such schools often host many returnees, and returnees can thus share their experiences with others like themselves. Furthermore, the non-returnee students at such schools are more likely to be accepting of returnees. Being one of many returnees, however, most likely reduces the feeling that they are special and are at an advantage.

Another purpose of this study was to uncover various demographic and experiential variables that predict subsequent social and psychological outcomes for returnees. Three outcomes that are of special interest to parents of returnees are: adjustment difficulties, acceptance and self-affirmation. It is interesting to note that a lower score on *adjustment difficulties* is predicted by communication with parents, special provisions, recency of return, older sojourning experience and bilingual male. This is encouraging news for parents of recent returnees, especially those who have taken the time to communicate with their children and have chosen to place their children in schools with special provisions for returnees.

It is equally interesting that a higher score on *acceptance* is predicted by not attending a Japanese school, not attending an international school, communicating with parents, special provisions, not having limited resources, and not being a bilingual male. Thus, communicating with parents and enjoying special provisions not only predicts lower scores on adjustment problems but also predicts a higher score on acceptance. Not attending a Japanese school and not attending an international school basically means that these returnees attended local schools. Attending a local school is synonymous to living in the United States; thus it can be inferred that living in the US predicts a higher score on acceptance. This finding makes sense because those who lived in the US would fit the stereotypical image of a returnee who is someone who grew up in the US and is bilingual in English and Japanese.

Communication with Parents is especially worthy of note, as it predicts a lower score on feeling different, adjustment difficulties and a higher score on acceptance

and self-affirmation. These results show that respondents who communicate with their parents prior to, during and after their return to Japan are more likely to feel accepted upon return to Japan and are more likely to be satisfied with the returnee experience.

The current study was not conducted without limitations. First, the study relied on self-reports, which are not only subjective but are also likely to change over time; this may be a particular concern for those who returned quite some time prior to their participation in the study, because their data may be influenced by (re)construction of their memories over time. Another limitation may be sampling error. Because it is nearly impossible to locate returnees once they have graduated from college, the older returnee sample was obtained mainly through “Shijo Tsuushin,” subscribers of which tend to be individuals who are still interested in the returnee issue long after their return to Japan. Finally, across all analyses, the regression coefficients were small in absolute standards; considering the sample size, however, we feel they were quite reasonable.

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