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MOTHERS' STRATEGIES FOR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION:

JAPANESE SOJOURN FAMILIES IN HAWAI'I

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ABSTRACT

This study of educational strategies of Japanese sojourn families in Hawai'i reveals the various actions, tactics, and thoughts of mothers toward their children's success in the classroom in Hawai'i as well as upon their return to Japan. Through a qualitative research based on the interviews, this study finds that Japanese mothers may carefully choose the time of sojourning and the school to which their children will go, provide extensive tutoring and/or send them to extra curricular activities, and take advantage of the networks they have built among friends, other mothers, and teachers. Mothers devote themselves to their children's education out of a sense of responsibility as parents and/or a belief that education is an investment. Finally, this study suggests that various organizations should assist children and parents by providing information and services to help them cope with problems faced before, during and upon completion of their sojourn.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

"We applied for green cards last year. This was for our children, in case they aren't able to manage their lives in Japan. With green cards, our children can live here." Mrs. Fujimura[1] shared this story with me during an interview in October of 2002 for a research project I conducted on the educational issues that Japanese sojourn students confront in Hawai'i. At the time of the interview, she and her family had lived in Hawai'i for eight years. One day, Mr. Fujimura happened to find that his high school age son did not know how to read two common Chinese letters (*kanji)* that meant "uniform." He was very disappointed and thought that his son might not be able to cope in Japan. This incident motivated the parents to apply for the green cards. A year later, after they had obtained their green cards, Mr. Fujimura was sent back to his office in Japan. Mrs. Fujimura and her children decided to remain in Hawai'i, and even after six months she was still not yet sure when she would return to Japan with her children.

Of particular interest to me in these stories was the parents' decision to provide an alternative for their children to stay in the United States, rather than to focus on the children's ability to maintain and/or obtain Japanese language reading proficiency. Is obtaining green cards a tactic to provide for her children's future? What other strategies were used that would help enable Mrs. Fujimura to choose to stay overseas for the sake of the children, away from her husband? I became more interested in the life of Japanese sojourn families and their strategies for their children's education.

[1] "Fujimura" is a pseudonym.

Statement of the Problem

In 2003, there were 619,269 Japanese nationals residing overseas for business or study, or as an accompanied family member for more than three months (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2004). There were also a record 52,462 Japanese students in grades 1-9 studying abroad in 2003 (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology, MEXT, 2004a). Because they must accompany their parents, those children are thrust into a society where the language and customs are significantly different than in Japan. Many of these children find it difficult adjusting to a new school environment especially during the first few years. In the case of Japanese children living in the United States, those who attend local schools often experience a dual life; they use English at school and Japanese at home. Most learn the American curriculum at school on weekdays yet still study the Japanese curriculum at supplementary Japanese school on Saturday (Kobayashi, 1981; Minami, 2002; Sato, 2001).

Many researchers have studied these Japanese children's life abroad and discussed their adjustment to the culture of host countries (Harkins, 2001; Minoura, 2003), the influences of living in a different culture (Horoiwa, 1987; Kanno, 2000; Minami, 2000; Nishi 1993), and their learning of English (Kubota, 1988). However, despite the abundance of publications concerning the lives of students, the actions and strategies of the parents in relation to educational issues have been far less studied, even though their influence upon children's education is significant. In this thesis, I focus on the sojourn parents' concerns and strategies for their children's education. These parents may provide supplementary education to their children for learning English and for maintaining proficiency in the Japanese curriculum. They often carefully choose where to live and

which schools their children attend. Based on the parents' job requirements, the family may be forced to return to Japan at any given time. However, sometimes the mother and children may decide to return prior to the father leaving or to remain abroad after the father's return.

The focus of this investigation will be on the mothers for the following reasons. First, it is usually mothers who handle their children's daily matters in modern Japanese families. I will review the literature on Japanese motherhood in chapter two. Mothers in sojourn families are rarely employed due to visa restrictions; it is typically a result of the father's job transfer that a family must move abroad. Therefore, mothers will usually have far more time to concentrate on their children than fathers. Furthermore, studies have shown that the mother's attitude toward the host society has a great influence upon their children (Tsukamoto, 1987; Ueda, 1996). That is, those mothers who are more accustomed to the host society tend to have children who are better adjusted to the new school environment.

Significance of the Study

In this study, I explore the concerns of Japanese mothers toward their children's education. Since parents have a strong influence on their children's lives, educators should be aware of the concerns, attitudes, and wishes of the parents.

In addition, I explain how these parental concerns are related to the Japanese social and cultural context. I hope this study will help foster an understanding of Japanese mothers' beliefs among educators whose social and cultural backgrounds differ.

Furthermore, I provide practical suggestions to support Japanese sojourn families in order to help their children adjust. Supporting mothers is often cited as paramount to improving their children's adjustment; however, there is little research that makes concrete proposals toward this end. Chapter six provides practical recommendations to educators, schools, and agencies that work with and assist Japanese migrant students.

Definition of *Kaigaishijo*

Japanese students overseas are generally called *kaigaishijo*, overseas (*kaigai*) children (*shijo*). For statistical purposes, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs defines "*kaigaishijo*" as the children of *zairyû hôjin*, Japanese nationals who stay abroad longer than three months, and during the nine years of compulsory education (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2003).

Official statistics do not count high school students studying abroad as *kaigaishijo*. However, as we will see in the next chapter, these students are considered *kikokushijo* (returnee students) when they apply for the special allocation of entrance examination for colleges[2]. Thus, high school students can also be regarded as *kaigaishijo.* In addition, official statistics include the pre-high school aged children of Japanese nationals who have permanent resident status in the host country as *kaigaishijo* if the children are Japanese citizens. However, their children's educational concerns and situations can be very different from that of sojourners if they do not plan to re-enter the Japanese school system. For the purposes of this study, *kaigaishijo* is defined as children grade 1 to 12,

[2] Certain schools have been setting aside a special quota for returning students upon the entrance screening. This special allocation system is reviewed in chapter two.

studying abroad, accompanied by parents of Japanese nationals, who plan to return to Japan in the near future.

Chapter two will review the literature pertaining to the life of *kaigaishijo* and parents' concerns and issues relating to the social and educational systems in the United States and Japan. It will also review the literature concerning Japanese motherhood as a conceptual framework of this study. Chapter three will describe the strategy for data collection, management, and analysis. Chapter four will present the six case studies, while chapter five will analyze mothers' concerns and strategies within and between cases. Chapter six will summarize this study and make recommendations to help Japanese migrant children adjust to school in the United States and prepare for returning to their home country.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This chapter will first describe the historical and social background of *kaigaishijo* as well as *kikokushijo*. It will then review the literature concerning *kaigaishijo* and the life of their parents overseas. After a description of the characteristics of Japanese motherhood, the research questions will be stated.

Kaigaishijo

Since the beginning of the Japanese economic boom in the 1960s, a trend has evolved in Japanese society wherein many Japanese workers have been sent to offices and factories overseas. As the number of Japanese workers overseas increase, so does the number of dependent children accompanying their parents (Figure 1). As a result,

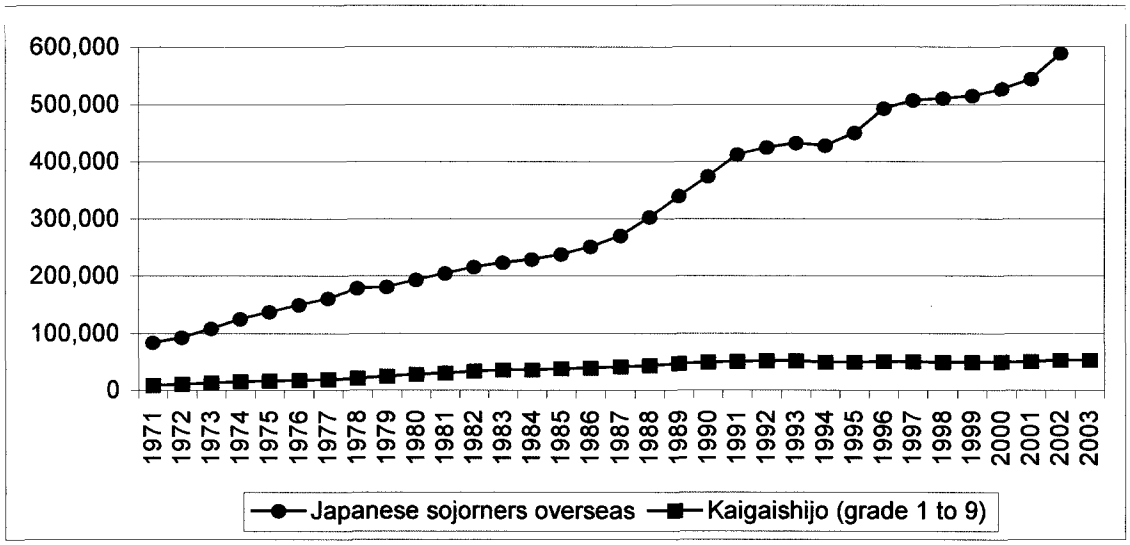

Figure 1. The Number of Japanese Sojourners Overseas and Accompanied Children (grade 1 to 9)
Source: MEXT (2004a)

educational facilities for Japanese children have been built all over the world, spurred by the demand from companies and parents located in the host country.

Schools Attended by *Kaigaishijo*

Official statistics divide the educational institutions attended by *kaigaishijo* into three categories; *nihonjin gakkô* (full time Japanese schools), *hoshûkô* (supplementary Japanese schools or Saturday Japanese schools), and *genchikô* (local schools). *Nihonjin gakkô* follow, in principal, the Japanese school curriculum. However, because of regional and social differences, they often adjust it to match the conditions of local society. Many schools teach English or the local language from the first grade and adjust the contents of social studies and science as they relate to local society. They also encourage students to have more interaction with local students and people in the community. Of the *hoshûkô,*

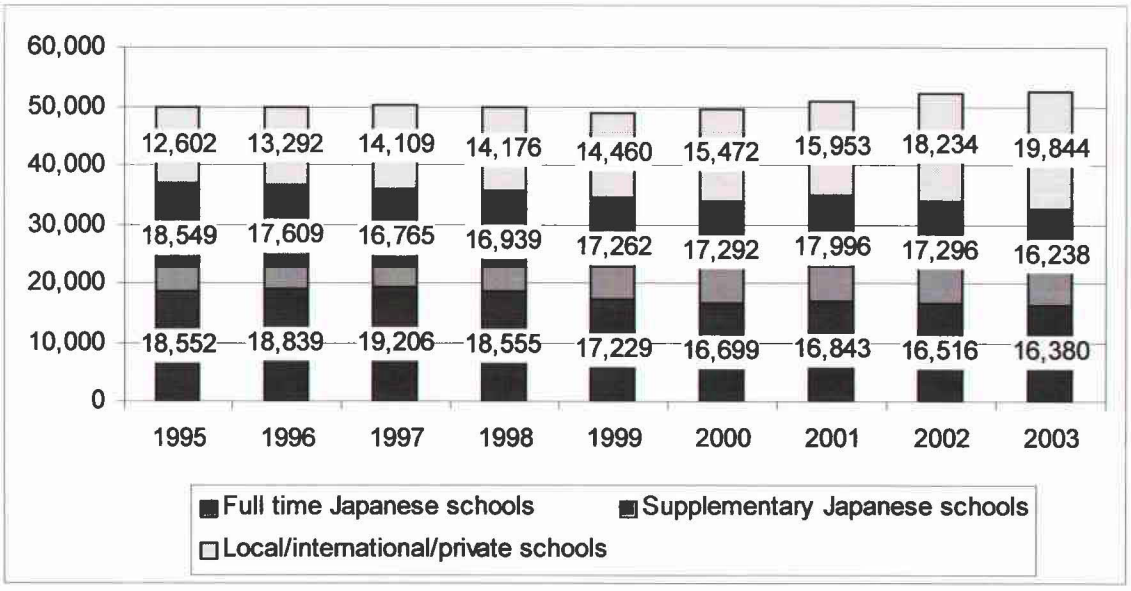

Figure 2. The Number of *Kaigaishijo* (grade 1 to 9) and the Educational Facilities They Attend
Source: Adapted from MEXT (2004b)

most meet once a week, generally on Saturdays. The purpose of these schools is to teach students Japanese as a primary subject, in addition to teaching secondary subjects including math, science, and social studies in preparation for re-entering the Japanese school system. All children who study at *hoshûkô* also attend local schools during the week. This educational dual life often becomes a heavy burden for children endeavoring to stay afloat in the local school while maintaining proficiency in the Japanese curriculum (Sato, 1997).

There are regional tendencies with regard to the distribution of Japanese students (Table 1). About 31 % of *kaigaishijo* in grade one to nine attended *nihonnjin gakkô* in 2003, and those who live in many Asian and Central South American countries tend to go to these full time Japanese schools. For example, in Singapore, Japanese sojourn families typically live exclusively within Japanese communities and *kaigaishijo* are likely to return to Japan with little knowledge of the culture and language of the host country (Ebuchi, 1997). In contrast, parents in English speaking countries prefer to send their

Table 1. Types of Educational Facilities Attended by Japanese Children Overseas (grade 1 to 9), by Region (as of 2003)

Area	Full time Japanese schools only		Supplementary Japanese schools & Local schools		Local schools only		Total (100 %)
North America	502	3%	11,908	57%	8,438	40%	20,848
Asia	11,579	72%	655	4%	3,950	24%	16,184
Europe	3,155	30%	2,877	27%	4,532	43%	10,564
Oceania	194	8%	535	21%	1,795	71%	2,524
Central South America	618	49%	119	9%	536	42%	1,273
Africa	121	21%	88	15%	364	64%	573
Middle East	211	43%	56	11%	229	46%	496

Source: Adapted from MEXT (2004b)

children to local schools. This tendency is seen even in regions that have full time Japanese schools such as New York (Okada, 1993). In areas of the world where a western language is not the first language, such as cities in Africa, Japanese children tend to go to international schools (Goodman, 1990).

Many *hoshûkô* today have classes which include students ranging from kindergarten to high school. The high school classes seen in these *hoshûkô* are more prominent in larger cities in the United States and reflect the parents' high demand for secondary level classes. It is also notable that several private educational organizations in Japan started building private schools overseas for Japanese children in the 1980s, after the first such school, Rikkyo Eikoku Gakuin opened in West Sussex, England. These private schools were built as a response to parents' desire to have full time Japanese high schools overseas (Sato, 1997). In 2004, there were fourteen such schools located in major cities in the United States and Europe, as well as in Australia and Singapore (MEXT, 2004a).

Hoshûkô were originally built to provide supplemental education for Japanese children overseas. However, changes in students' backgrounds and the appearance of alternative educational institutions have forced *hoshûkô* to change its curriculum and original nature. Sato (1997) argues that the *hoshûkô* was originally a center for Japanese sojourn families to provide an opportunity to maintain a taste of their home country while abroad. However, due to the increase of other Japanese educational facilities such as private schools and *juku* (cram schools), parents do not rely as heavily on *hoshûkô* for their children's supplementary education. In contrast, the Japanese who stay longer or have permanent residence status in host countries expect *hoshûkô* to play a role as a

provider of their own heritage. In order to respond to the various expectations of parents, Sato discusses the need for Japanese supplementary schools to shift their model from teaching Japanese educational curriculum to supporting children in building their identity.

Kikokushijo

Once *kaigaishijo* go back to Japan, they are called *kikokushijo*, or returnee students. Under the image that returnee students are handicapped with special care needs, a special class for returned students has been incorporated into several schools attached to universities since 1965. In addition, in 1983 the Ministry of Education designated eleven regions throughout the country to study and help returnee children's adjustment to life in Japan. As "internationalization" (*kokusaika*) became popular in the late 1980's,

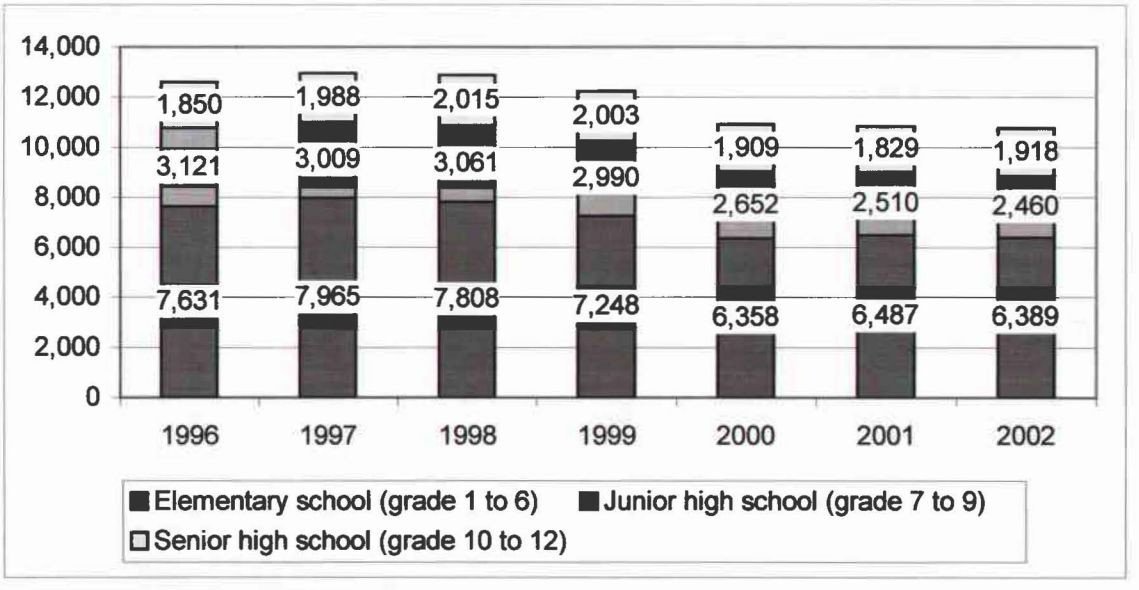

Figure 3. School Levels to Which *Kikokushijo* Return
Source: Adapted from MEXT 2004b

kikokushijo came to be seen as a "valuable resource for the Japanese future" (Sato, 1997, pp.51-77). Today, many schools accept returnee students and offer special remedial education for them.

Special Quota (*tokubetsu waku*) for *Kikokushijo*

University or high school age returnees may be interested in taking a special entrance examination to enter high school and colleges. Certain high schools and departments in universities have been setting aside a special quota for returning students. Even younger returnees may take an examination to enter private elementary or junior high schools as well as those schools attached to national universities. In either case, those who meet certain criteria such as the length of stay abroad and the time since returning from abroad may be accepted through a special entrance examination including subject matter tests, essays, and/or through an interview process (*Kaigaishijo kyoiku shinko zaidan* [Foundation for Overseas Children's Education], 2004).

Parenthood of *Kaigaishijo*

Despite the small number of studies, some scholars have been concerned about the life of *kaigaishijo*'s parents. Problems faced by these parents may include those that mothers face in a different social and cultural environments (Vogel, 1986), the gap in the perception between parents and teachers in the host country (Nishida, 1999; Yokota-Adachi & Geva, 1999), and the extent of acculturation to the host country society (Minoura 2003; Tsukamoto, 1987; Ueda, 1996).

Based on the results of her study with a focus group, Vogel (1986) claims that Japanese wives of scholars and university students consider language problems to be their largest barrier. They are less likely fluent in speaking English and thus reluctant to communicate with agencies and institutions such as health services or schools. In addition, this hesitation comes from the cross-cultural difference in communication styles and social context. They are reluctant to complain or question and are not accustomed to choosing options but rather welcome someone who can recommend suitable options for them. Furthermore, the lack of support from female relatives and lesser knowledge in English make many Japanese women more dependent on their husbands. Some women enjoy their husband's cooperation with domestic chores and spending more time together, while others may become frustrated at having to be dependent on their husbands. In Japan, they were fairly autonomous with regard to the household and community, whereas in a host country they may not have the confidence to accomplish the tasks they could in Japan.

Japanese parents also think language proficiency is the largest obstacle for their children. Yokota-Adachi & Geva (1999) reveal the difference in beliefs between Japanese parents and Canadian teachers. In a sample case concerning reading and spelling problems of students in a Canadian school, Japanese parents tended to treat this dilemma as a deficiency of English ability rather than academic failure or intellectual difficulty. However, Canadian teachers claimed the need to further investigate the cause of reading and spelling problems from an expert point of view. In addition, Japanese parents were concerned that their children should have the opportunity to learn fundamental knowledge in all school subjects as in Japan where all schools follow the

same curriculum. Whereas Canadian teachers believe that the child needs to develop intellectually, physically, emotionally and socially, these same teachers believe that Asian immigrant parents care only about the academic aspect. Thus, Canadian instructors focused more on the fully rounded development of the student, while mastery of the fundamentals and learning English skills were the major concerns for Japanese parents.

The degree of the mother's acculturation to the host country is very important and can have an extreme influence on their children's life and prospects for success in a new environment. Tsukamoto (1987) argues that mothers who have participated in activities in the host society and who had a positive attitude toward their sojourn life before leaving Japan, are more likely to send their children to local schools, and appreciate the experience of sojourning after coming back to Japan. In addition, there is a co-relationship between the mother and children with respect to adaptation to the home culture when they return to Japan. If the mother has good experiences with adaptation to the Japanese culture, the children will typically have an easier time. Likewise, if the mother has problems, the children will also most likely encounter difficulties.

Minoura (2003) discusses the degree of acculturation for mothers of *kaigaishijo*. Those mothers who have a favorable and positive attitude of the sojourn life, higher academic background and higher English proficiency are more likely to acculturate to American life. In addition, Minoura describes the process of acculturation as a whole family. There are two turning points; the first comes after three to four years abroad, and the second comes after seven to eight years. Around the late third year to fourth year when children become relatively fluent in English, those mothers who have learned English try to make more American friends, while those who gave up learning English

remain within the Japanese community. Around the seventh to eighth year when the host country, psychologically, becomes home to many children in sojourn families, some families start considering obtaining green cards in order to provide more options for their children's future.

In sum, mothers in sojourn families also experience hardships because of low proficiency in English and limited knowledge about the school system in the host country. They consider learning English to be necessary for their children to do well at local schools. Those children whose mothers are involved in social activities in the host country are likely to have more interaction with the local community. The next section will briefly discuss modern motherhood in Japan.

Japanese Motherhood

The intense and deep involvement of many Japanese mothers in their children's educational success has received considerable attention (Allison, 1996; Dickensheets, 1996; Hirao, 2001; Murakami, 2000; Simons, 1987; Thorsten, 1996; White, 1984, 1987b, 2002). These mothers have been labeled *kyoiku mama* (education mother). Some of these mothers will even send their infants to *juku* to prepare them for entrance examinations to prestigious kindergartens.

Vogel (1967) shows that mothers are involved deeply in their children's education. A mother naturally wants her child to get into the best possible school; she assesses the child's ability and carefully chooses the most appropriate entrance examination for her child. She also helps the child with homework because they feel that "the child needs guidance and that her assistance makes it possible for the child to learn more adequately

and rapidly" (p.57). In addition, Vogel notes that a mother's hope for the child's success is not only for the child's sake, but also for the sake of the mother. She will be praised or criticized according to her child's performance by the teacher during parents' meetings. Special schools were opened as early as 1960 to prepare infants for examinations to enter prestigious kindergartens such as Keio Kindergarten in Tokyo. These schools are known as "escalator schools" as students can move up from kindergarten to college within the same school organizations by taking only nominal examinations.

Lebra (1984) categorizes *kyoiku mama* into two types: *average-seeking mother* and *elitist mother*. *Average-seeking mother* is concerned about her child staying up with the rest of the class. She often sends her child to local academic oriented high schools. After graduating, the child may go to an average college in Tokyo. In contrast, *elitist mothers* carefully choose the school her child will attend. Some elitist parents send their children to a junior or high school that is known as an "escalator school" to a prestigious university. Other ambitious mothers, more common among local elitist mothers, aim at an academic high school, local or private, that is well known for its number of graduates proceeding to top universities such as Tokyo University. One of the reasons mothers become enthusiastic about their children's education is that the mother's social status is determined by their children's performance. That is, the rank order among mothers is determined by how well their children do at school. The mother whose child is at the top of the class feels pride and a sense of accomplishment and would be asked for advice by other mothers. Lebra states that the *kyoiku mama* "is convinced that her educational concern is entirely to benefit the child or to help him do whatever he wants to do with his life. Only to an outsider does she appear more self-centered than child-centered"(p.214).

The child's growth and achievement becomes her life goal (*ikigai*) and she devotes her life to help the child to be successful in the future.

Hirao (2001) reveals the concerns of the *kyoiku mama* today. They believe that sooner or later, children need to go through intense academic competition. In addition, they think that the younger the children are, the more effective the preparation is and that the extent of the mother's involvement in children's education is highly related to their children's success. Furthermore, the recent educational reform by the Ministry of Education cut the number of school days and hours, and thus the contents of the curriculum. Mothers feel extra schooling is necessary for their children to maintain a good academic record. Therefore, many mothers start sending their children to *juku* from a very early age and early educational programs (*sôkikyôiku*) have become even more popular in Japan.

White (2002) reveals that the responsibility of caring for children rests with the family, especially the mother. Schools and policy makers are not providing enough support for mothers to take care of children. The absence of the father due to strenuous work schedules increases the responsibility of mothers. A primary responsibility of the mother is to provide an appropriate learning environment for children, beginning as early as *taikyô* (learning in the womb). In cases where the mother is too busy to provide this environment, she may pay to have her child attend *juku*, have tutors, or enlist other educational assistance. In short, mothers especially in the middle class believe that nurture, instead of nature is paramount in child rearing. They believe that a "good child is made, not born" (p.134), and that it is better to have fewer children, thus allowing the mother to better invest more for each child.

Kashiwagi (1999) claims that there have been dramatic changes to Japanese motherhood as a result of social and population changes. When a woman lived 60 years and had four to five children, her life ended with the youngest child's marriage. That is, she fulfilled the life of woman as a mother. Today, however, a woman in Japan typically lives more than 80 years and only has one or two children. This allows her to have her own life as an individual for 30 years or so after finishing her work as a mother. As a result, she can pursue her own life goals in addition to caring for her husband and child. This, however, causes anxiety among many young housewives because they feel a dilemma between pursuing their own interests and taking care of the baby. Kashiwagi also shows that women with higher academic qualifications feel the mother-child bond less than those who have lesser academic credentials. Furthermore, today's couples carefully plan the timing of having a child or even whether they will have a child or not, taking into account their own life events. They consider children as "made", not as "bestowed", and also as the belongings of the parents (p.175). These parents choose toys, clothes, and schools for the children but even more so for themselves. That is, a parent will not always buy the toy or garment that the child wants, but will get what the parent thinks is best. As a result, considering the parents' priorities and desires is necessary among commercial and educational industries.

Research Questions

The present study, which is set in Hawai'i, will seek to answer the following questions:

1) What are Japanese mothers' concerns for their children's education in the host country?
2) What are their strategies to aid their children to overcome the problems they experience?
3) What are the underlying beliefs that influence their concerns about their children's education?

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Qualitative inquiry has been chosen for this research project. Qualitative researchers "*are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed,* that is, how they make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world" (Merriam, 2001, p.6). This scheme fits the purpose of this study to explore the background of the concerns and strategies of sojourn students' mothers in a social and cultural context. Case studies are used to report and analyze the data as it allows researchers to "gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved"(Merriam, 2001, p.19).

Method and Procedure

Purposeful sampling is used in order to "focus on selecting information-rich cases whose study will illuminate the questions under study"(Patton, 2002, p.230). I interviewed seven Japanese women living in Hawai'i whose husbands are also Japanese, have school age children, and have or had a plan to return to Japan in the future. I gained access to these mothers through snowball or chain sampling. While searching for participants, I was careful to include as much diversity as possible, such as length of stay and number of children. These cases included both families whose children did and did

not attend supplementary Japanese school, as well as those families in which the father is present in Hawai'i and those where the father lived separately in Japan.

A semi-structured interview was used because it allows the researcher to "respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of the respondent, and to new ideas on the topic" (Merriam, 2001, p.74). I conducted two interviews with each participant between September and December 2003 with the exception of one interviewee who returned to Japan before the second interview could be conducted. Later I withdrew her case from the study due to limited interview material and the short length of her stay in Hawai'i. The first interviews lasted 40 to 90 minutes and took place in a public setting: outside table of a coffee shop, a shopping mall, and in a picnic area of a condominium. I allowed the interviewee to determine the place of the interview in which they would feel comfortable. They usually named the places listed above. In the second interview, I asked questions derived through the constant comparative method from other interviewee's stories. I also clarified the meanings of various statements in the first interview in order to appropriately translate their Japanese meanings into English. The second interview lasted 20 to 40 minutes.

The interviews were documented by tape recorder after receiving permission from the interviewees and clearance from the Institutional Review Board. I took field notes during the interviews to indicate the physical setting, non-verbal communications, and insights of the researcher. Post-interview notes were also taken to reflect the verbal and nonverbal behavior of participants as well as the insights and thoughts of the researcher. All the recorded data were transcribed and the participants were encouraged to examine

the Japanese transcript prior to the second interview. Later I translated the interview data that I used as direct quotations into English.

Each parent's story exists as one case. Content analysis was employed to analyze the data to "identify core consistencies and meanings"(Patton, 2002, p.453). By coding the interview transcription, I developed patterns and themes inductively. In cross-case analysis, the constant comparative method was also used in order to "build abstractions across cases" (Merriam, 2001, p.195).

I also interviewed several people informally including college students who used to be *kaigaishjo* and *kikokushijo* and who studied abroad in high school student exchange programs as well as a Japanese man who did not bring his family on his sojourn. In addition, I have worked for the administration office of a supplementary Japanese school in Hawai'i since May 2004. The information obtained through these interviews and my experience at the supplementary school provided me with a keener insight and different perspectives with which to analyze the data.

The Community

Hawai'i has a large number of Americans of Japanese Ancestry. According to the Census 2000, 201,764 people or 16.7 percent of the population in Hawai'i were of Japanese heritage. In 2000, this group was second only to the Caucasians at 24.3 percent (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004). In addition, Hawai'i ranks third among all states, and Honolulu first among cities in the United States with respect to the number of Japanese permanent residents (Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2003). This large Japanese population has fostered easy access to information in Japanese through newspapers,

television, and magazines. There are at least two bookstores and a number of video rental shops that provide Japanese media products. The large number of ethnic Japanese in Hawai'i makes it very easy to continue ethnic and cultural traditions due to the availability of Japanese food, festivals, and other products.

Regional trends for workers in Hawai'i do not differ greatly from those of the United States as a whole. In 2001, 458 people or 43 percent of sojourners worked for commercial companies in Hawai'i. The second largest group includes students and instructors. This is the same for the United States as a whole. One interesting departure from the national statistics is the ratio of women to men in the field of academics. While the ratio of women to men nationwide in academics is nearly 50:50, the ratio in Hawai'i nears 70:30.

Table 2. Number of Japanese Sojourners by Occupation (as of 2000)

	Commercial companies				Press				Self employed			
	Sponsor		Family		Sponsor		Family		Sponsor		Family	
	male	female	male	female	male	female	male	female	male	female	male	female
United States	44,112	3,388	17,620	48,964	578	151	215	574	1,471	863	651	1,074
Hawai'i	401	57	163	473	1	0	0	0	43	7	12	41
	Academics				Government				Others			
	Sponsor		Family		Sponsor		Family		Sponsor		Family	
	male	female	male	female	male	female	male	female	male	female	male	female
United States	29,997	30,735	2,631	8024	1,425	303	549	1,354	1,341	1,824	806	1,053
Hawai'i	135	325	23	51	49	2	13	41	7	35	21	17
	Total											
	Sponsor		Family									
	male	female	male	female								
United States	78,924	37,264	22,472	61,043								
Hawai'i	636	426	242	623								

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2001

At the time of this research, there was one *hoshûkô* (supplementary Japanese school) in O'ahu and there were no full time Japanese educational institutions available for Japanese families. Although many Japanese students attended *hoshûkô* on Saturdays, due to the lack of full time Japanese schools, they were still forced to attend local schools on weekdays.

Limitations of the Study

The main body of data was collected through interviewing six Japanese mothers residing in Hawai'i. This data collection method implies the possibility that the data may not be representative of educational concerns of all Japanese sojourning families. The focus of this study is on the educational aspects of the lives of *kaigaishijo* from their mothers' experiences and beliefs, and not on the identity of *kaigaishijo* or language learning.

As a Japanese female researcher living in Hawai'i as a sojourner, I share a similar background and experience with the participants. My goal while interviewing was to learn about motherhood and sojourn experiences from the elder and more experienced participants (*senpai*). However, my situation is different from them in many aspects. My spouse is an American citizen and we do not have any children. One of my core beliefs is that the family should stay together. To a certain extent, this belief has motivated me to conduct this study to find why some Japanese families choose to live separately. I endeavored to avoid expressing my personal views and to not judge the participants' actions. However, it was entirely up to them to choose which experiences and thoughts they would share with me.

To protect confidentiality, and in keeping with the expectations of the Human Studies Committee, data that may not be relevant to this study have been omitted or disguised.

CHAPTER FOUR

CASE STUDIES

This chapter presents six case studies of mothers of Japanese sojourn students in Hawai'i. I will examine in-depth, the interviewees' actions, concerns, and beliefs related to their children's education. The informants in the case studies are: Mrs. Maeda, Mrs. Hasegawa, Mrs. Yamaguchi, Mrs. Kojima, Mrs. Miyamoto, and Mrs. Kidani. The first three cases are families who came to Hawai'i as a result of the husband's job transfer and who had resided here two to three years at the time of the first interview. Mrs. Maeda has two children, Shigeru and Masako, and knew from the beginning that they would only stay in Hawai'i for three years. In contrast, Mrs. Hasegawa and her three children, Susumu, Takashi, Kanako, did not know when Mr. Hasegawa would be transferred back to Japan. Mrs. Yamaguchi also did not know when her husband would get the order to return to Japan; however, she was planning to go back to Japan with her only son, Noboru, prior to her husband to facilitate her son successfully gaining entrance to a pre-determined high school.

The next two cases are families who had resided in Hawai'i more than six years: Mrs. Kojima for six years and two months and Mrs. Miyamoto for eight years at the time of the first interview. Both families came to Hawai'i due to the husband's business or study; however, after several years, the husbands returned to Japan while the wives and children remained in Hawai'i. Mrs. Kojima and her daughter Mieko remained in Hawai'i as permanent resident aliens after Mr. Kojima was sent back to his office in Tokyo following four years in Hawai'i. Mrs. Miyamoto and her two children, Akira and Eriko

also remained in Hawai'i after Mr. Miyamoto returned to Japan. Mrs. Miyamoto decided to pursue her own academic goals following her husband's completion of his four years of study to complete his degree program.

The last case also concerns a family where the mother and a child lived in Hawai'i while the husband remained in Japan. In the case of the Kidani family, however, the husband was never transferred to Hawai'i. Mrs. Kidani came to Hawai'i using a student visa, accompanied by her daughter, Sachiyo, while Mr. Kidani continued working in Tokyo.

In each case, the mother's background information is briefly stated, followed by three further sections: time spent before leaving Japan, time residing in Hawai'i, and preparing to return home. The experiences, reactions, and beliefs are stated in each section chronologically.

Case of Maeda Family

Mrs. Maeda used to be a teacher at an elementary school. She quit her job after marrying and followed her husband to a city in Southeast Asia where he was assigned to work for three years. She has been a full time housewife since then and has raised two children, Shigeru and Masako. Mr. Maeda seemed to be more concerned about his work and more likely to leave domestic matters to his wife. That he went to check into his new office soon after checking into the hotel on the day of their arrival to Hawai'i, leaving his wife and children in the hotel room, may symbolically reveal his priorities.

Before Leaving Japan

Mr. Maeda's second sojourn was to Hawai'i. However, Shigeru, twelve years old at the time, was opposed to going with his family. He begged his parents to leave him at his grandmother's house because he did not want to be separated from his friends. Mrs. Maeda persuaded him by telling him he had no other choice.

> I told him that we had no choice but to follow his father who was going to work abroad.... I think, I said to him that he should come with us. Of course, I also told him the various things he could do in a foreign country, but he was not satisfied with those kinds of reasons. He still insisted on remaining in order to stay with his friends. So I had to persuade him by telling him his only option was coming with us.

At the same time, she arranged for the children to study English during their last three months in Japan. She sent Shigeru to an English *juku* in their neighborhood once a week, while her six-year-old daughter Masako watched English videos after coming home from kindergarten. She asked Shigeru to watch them with his sister, but he refused to do so. On the day they departed Japan, Mrs. Maeda noticed tears in Shigeru's eyes.

In Hawai'i

After arriving in March, Shigeru began attending a local school. He had a difficult time understanding English because he only learned a few words and phrases while still in Japan. Mrs. Maeda arranged for a tutor to help him with his English proficiency once a week. However, after three months, the tutor quit due to personal reasons. Mrs. Maeda regretted not having done enough to help her son gain a better understanding of English.

> I feel sorry for my son. I think I was mistaken. He never said so, but he must have been under incredible stress during his first year. I guess he spent his days at school not knowing how to study English or how to study in English. ... He must

> have not understood even what his teacher was saying. I guess he had no idea what the homework was.

Mrs. Maeda wanted to help with his homework, but she could not as she did not know what it was; Shigeru did not know enough English to understand what the homework assignments were. She hesitated calling the school and asking about his homework though. She also did not know any parents whose children were in the same class as her son. Furthermore, she was just too busy getting used to her new life; she had to deal with shopping, driving, daily chores, and taking care of her younger child, Masako. She could not ask for her husband's help because he, too, was very busy in his new office.

Meanwhile, Shigeru's teacher called Mrs. Maeda to tell her to make her son do his homework, which was reading English books everyday. Mrs. Maeda finally determined what the homework was, and told her son to do it. However, Shigeru was not willing.

> It was very difficult to make Shigeru do his homework. I think it depends on the child's character. My son is not the kind of child who continues making an effort everyday. I told him to do his homework, ... but he did not respond. Rather, he wants to forget everything once he is at home. He did not show any interest. Maybe, he was still not happy to be brought here. I am not sure, but he probably still thinks, "Why am I here, why am I suffering, why was I brought here just because of my parent's job transfer?" But, I didn't have time to understand his feelings. I was very busy getting used to my new life. I felt sorry for him and didn't know what else to say, so I just told him to do his homework. However, he did not show any interest.... I was afraid that Shigeru would stop going to school because of the stress, so later I said more leniently, "You have to do your homework, right?"

While Shigeru was struggling with his life in middle school, Masako showed quick adjustment to kindergarten. It was also helpful for Masako that her teacher could speak a little Japanese. It only took Masako half a year to "graduate" from ESLL (English for Second Language Learner) class. Mrs. Maeda thought the English video which

Masako watched everyday before she left Japan helped her to learn English. It was also fortunate for Masako that she could begin with an easy curriculum when she entered elementary school.

However, one day, Masako came home and told her mother that she was warned by her teacher.

> I asked her why she was warned. She mentioned the letter she had brought home the day before. She was supposed to take it back to school that day. She asked me why I didn't give it to her in the morning. I apologized to her immediately. Then, I started calling her friend's house every time Masako brought a letter from school. I asked her friend's mother about the contents, and whether or not we had to return it... I knew some mothers whose children also went to the same school as Masako. I often saw them in the neighborhood when I walked with her to school. I recognized the same mothers whose children are in the Masako's class at *hoshûkô.*

Mrs. Maeda helped Masako with her homework because she brought back a list of books to read from school. Mrs. Maeda obtained easy books from the list for her and read them together. Masako enjoyed a good academic record both at local school and at *hoshûkô.*

After one year had passed, Shigeru came to enjoy school when he began to make new friends. He talked with friends on the phone and went out together. Around this time, he stopped studying the Japanese curriculum.

> Shigeru is a child who speaks plainly. When we first arrived, he didn't care about English. He didn't show any interest in learning it. He said he didn't need a tutor and didn't want to go to *juku.* After about one year, his English ability improved. He said, "Mom, I can speak English now. " I think he became more confident. He began studying English. Then, he said he didn't need to study the Japanese curriculum anymore. Shigeru could not handle studying both American and Japanese curricula.

Shigeru still went to *hoshûkô* on Saturdays, but his scores were terrible. He did not listen to his mothers' advice to study the Japanese curriculum just as he refused to study the American curriculum during his first year.

Preparing to Go Home

Meanwhile, Mr. Maeda's three-year-sojourn came close to the end. While Mrs. Maeda was not worried about Masako who was maintaining a good academic record both at local school and at *hoshûkô*, she was preparing for Shigeru's return. He would be the proper age to enter high school when he returned to Japan in six months. However, he was still not interested in studying the Japanese curriculum. Mrs. Maeda started searching for information on entrance examinations near their home in Japan. She was thinking about applying for the special examination for returnee children for a public high school near their house, and for a private high school. She was planning to go back to Japan with her son during the "examination season" in February or March, leaving her busy husband and her daughter in Hawai'i.

Case of Hasegawa Family

After graduating junior college, Mrs. Hasegawa worked for a travel company for four years until she got married. She had been a housewife since then and followed her husband to Hong Kong with their two sons and newly born daughter. Their oldest son, Susumu, went to a full time Japanese school in Hong Kong for four years. The younger son, Takashi went to the local kindergarten for one year. Mrs. Hasegawa had tried to involve her husband in their children's education. She told her children to ask their father about their math and science homework, as he was strong in those areas. She also showed her husband all the letters their children brought from school in order to include him in his children's education.

Before Leaving Japan

Mrs. Hasegawa was prepared for the news of her husband's second sojourn after they settled down in Tokyo for four years, as the cycle of transfers at Mr. Hasegawa's company was usually four years. Mrs. Hasegawa learned from experience that "company workers should be ready for the order (*kubi o aratte matteru*) after four years." After living in Tokyo for six years Mr. Hasegawa finally received the order to work in Hawai'i.

Upon hearing the news, the children did not like the idea of moving abroad:

> My children didn't want to move. They liked their school life and enjoyed it very much. They said, "Dad, again?" Around the time when they settled down in one place, they always hear the news of their father's job transfer. ... It's not easy to start life all over again and get used to a new place and new school. At this time, we were going to live abroad. They didn't know what to expect, living in a new place and going to a different school. They enjoyed their school so much that they didn't want to give it up to go with their father.

Mrs. Hasegawa asked her husband to go by himself without the family. She was concerned about her children's life and education especially for the oldest son, Susumu, who had just got into a "good" high school. She thought it was selfishness on the part of the parents to remove their children from their enjoyable school life. However, after two months, her husband decided that he would like to take his family. Mr. Hasegawa successfully convinced his thirteen-year-old son, Takashi, to agree to come to Hawai'i by offering the opportunity to play tennis, something he was very interested in. The daughter, Kanako, who was nine years old at that time, liked the idea of going to Hawai'i, with its good weather and image of paradise. Susumu did not want to move, but changed his mind after hearing his two siblings were willing to go.

Mr. Hasegawa arrived in Hawai'i five months before his family. He searched for a house to rent for his family, that was large enough for three children and within walking

distance to their schools. While Mr. Hasegawa was preparing for their new life in Hawai'i, Mrs. Hasegawa and her children also prepared for a new life by attending preparatory seminars for parents and children conducted by the Foundation for Overseas Children's Education (*kaigaishijo kyoiku zaidan*). Mrs. Hasegawa obtained useful information concerning immunization requirements, paperwork for school, and the school district system in the United States. Kanako learned how to write the English alphabet there, while the two boys learned about American school life, events at school and basic practical English phrases. Susumu also obtained information about the special entrance examination for universities for returnee students.

Mrs. Hasegawa made an effort to ensure her children could understand English. Susumu and Takashi had been studying English since the beginning of junior high school with a native English speaker. In an effort to help Kanako become accustomed to English sounds and phrases, Mrs. Hasegawa enrolled her into small group lessons with the same tutor.

In Hawai'i

Mrs. Hasegawa and her three children arrived in Hawai'i in April after the end of the Japanese school year in March. The children started school shortly after arriving. All the children had a hard time in the beginning, especially Kanako. She was in the fourth grade and cried at school almost everyday.

> At the first ESL (English) class, Kanako was given a list of 500 English words to memorize within a month. I was surprised, but I thought she should memorize them to help her English sentences. ... I told Kanako to memorize them in a month, or she would not be able to handle the life here. I let her try hard. At school, she could guess what her teacher said, but couldn't say what she wanted to

> say. She couldn't express her feelings and cried. The school called me many times and asked me to come because Kanako was crying. I went to the school, many times.

Mrs. Hasegawa found that Kanako was confused in ESLL class. Her teacher was originally from China and she sometimes used Chinese letters with Kanako so she would understand the meaning.

> I know Japanese *kanji* (Chinese letters) is different from Chinese letters because I lived in China. ... So, Kanako got confused. I talked with her teacher about the difference in meaning between Japanese *kanji* and Chinese letters by writing them. I asked her to stop using Chinese letters because writing and meaning could be different. ... I asked the teacher to let Kanako use a dictionary when she did not know the meaning of a word.

Mrs. Hasegawa was also concerned about the schoolwork of her children. She wrote letters to all her children's teachers explaining that her children could not understand English, but she could help with their homework. She asked the teachers to write down what homework was due or what papers needed to be handed in so she could help her children to complete what was necessary. However, Mrs. Hasegawa soon realized that it was overwhelming for her to help three children with their homework. She decided to go to the school to ask the teachers to reduce the amount of the homework. At the administration office, one of the staff asked her if she had already asked for a tutor for her children. She answered that she was still looking for one and asked for help. Then, Mrs. Hasegawa was introduced to a tutor through a connection of one of the teachers.

> When we went to the tutor, I asked him to help me. I have been helping my children, but it's beyond my capacity. Then, he said clearly that I couldn't help them. He said that I am a mother and I would not be able to help them even if I tried. He continued that I should ask somebody with professional skills to teach the children. It is better for the children, too.

After that, she took her three children to the tutor four days a week three hours each. She continued this even during summer vacation. When school started again in August, her children did not have much difficulty adjusting.

Mrs. Hasegawa often used letters to contact her children's teachers. One day when Takashi received an 'F' in science, she informed the teacher that she did not agree with the grade Takashi had received.

> I was surprised with the grade. Takashi turned in all the homework. He went to school everyday and was never late to school. He did not get high score on the tests, but was trying hard. There was no reason for him to get an 'F.' I returned the letter to the science teacher and wrote that I could not accept such a grade. Then, he wrote me back and said that English was a barrier for Takashi and that he would like to have a meeting with all the teachers of Takashi including a counselor. I accepted his offer and I went to the meeting with my husband. At the meeting, the science teacher said we should not be worried with the grade because it is just the matter of the number! We said we did not understand why Takashi received an 'F' in spite of getting 'A's on his experiments. The teacher said Takashi did not score well on the tests. We said that it's inevitable because English is his second language and that the teacher also knew it. Takashi is still doing what he should do even though he is not fluent in English. He refuses to give up. Finally, the teacher changed the grade into a 'B.' I realized that it is necessary to speak up at times.

Since then, Takashi has never brought home a warning letter. Mrs. Hasegawa was still concerned about the grades and wrote letters to ask for makeup lessons when her children missed a class. She believes that maintaining a good academic record is important because it is the first thing that another person sees when he/she wants to know what the child has done. She said, "even if the grade is bad, if there are teachers' comments that showed the child tried hard, it's OK. But teachers do not always give such comments. Because there are no comments, the effort the child shows goes unrewarded. It is regrettable, isn't it?"

Preparing to Go Home

After finishing his senior year at high school, Susumu went back to Japan to prepare for college entrance exams. He passed an examination for a prestigious university in Tokyo through the special allocation for returnee students. At the time of the interview, Mrs. Hasegawa said that he was studying the Japanese math curriculum to prepare for the new school year starting in April.

Mrs. Hasegawa hoped to stay here at least two more years so Takashi could finish high school. However, she knew that her family had to follow the company's order.

> After four years in the same location, salaried men have to be ready for the next transfer order. It is up to the company. We don't know when we will be told to go back to Japan. I would like to stay here until Takashi, who is sophomore, can graduate high school. ... It's a hassle to get into high school in Japan in the middle of its three-year-curriculum. My son wants to stay here as long as possible, and then to enter college in Japan when he goes back. But, it is the company that decides when we go home. We don't know when it's going to be.

Although she could not tell her children when they were to return to Japan, she tried to motivate them to study hard. She sent Kanako to *hoshûkô* every Saturday and told her that the curriculum at *hoshûkô* was the minimum necessary to survive at school in Japan. Kanako also subscribed to Japanese language educational products, allowing her to study different subjects at home, then mailing the work to a company for grading. After graduating the junior high school level at *hoshûkô,* Takashi did not study the Japanese curriculum. Mrs. Hasegawa told him to work hard at the local school and not to worry about the Japanese curriculum because it was impossible to do both high school curricula. She believed that a good academic record at the local school would help her children have a smooth transition back to school in Japan.

Case of Yamaguchi Family

After graduating university, Mrs. Yamaguchi worked at a company in Tokyo. She met her future husband there and got married. She quit her job to accompany her husband when he transferred to San Francisco and later gave birth to her son, Noboru. Mrs. Yamaguchi read Japanese picture books to Noboru even before he could speak. She had heard that learning the mother tongue before concentrating on a second language was the first step in raising a bilingual child. She talked to her baby in Japanese in order to prepare him for his life in Japan. She sent Noboru to preschool class in Japanese once a week. At the same time, Mrs. Yamaguchi participated in the "Mommy and Me" class with her son, where she moved his hands and legs with music when he was a baby, and later he participated in basic gymnastics.

Before Leaving Japan

After returning to Japan when Noboru was three years old, she sent him to English classes with native speakers once a week. It lasted until Noboru became seven years old and tired of attending and when Mrs. Yamaguchi saw no progress beyond the kindergarten level. Mr. Yamaguchi also said he expected that they would not be going abroad anymore and English would not be necessary.

However, Mr. Yamaguchi was ordered to work at the office in Hawai'i as a manager when Noboru turned eleven years old. At the time, Noboru could read some English words, but could not read English sentences. To prepare him, Mrs. Yamaguchi sent Noboru to English *juku* once a week.

In Hawai'i

Mr. Yamaguchi arrived in February, and Mrs. Yamaguchi and her son arrived in June. This timing allowed Noboru to prepare for the new school year by attending "Summer Fun", a program in which children participate in various activities during the summer break, and learning English from his tutor. Mrs. Yamaguchi decided to focus on building English proficiency for her son this time because he would surely have many problems in an American school without at least rudimentary English skills. She also thought this sojourn would not last for a long time thus she was not very worried about Noboru losing his Japanese skills. She asked a tutor to help Noboru four times a week as soon as they had settled in. When Noboru began school, he did not have any classmates who spoke Japanese. Mrs. Yamaguchi felt this situation was lucky for her son to learn English quickly. She prepared cards of English phrases that Noboru would need to use in the classroom, such as "May I go to the bathroom?" and "Would you repeat that one more time please?" She taught her son to place them on his desk and point to them when he needed to communicate.

Within six months after arriving, Noboru made friends and started enjoying school life much more. One Japanese mother advised Mrs. Yamaguchi to send her son to *hoshûkô* on Saturdays or a Japanese soccer team to "reduce stress". However, Noboru himself refused to join either of them because he learned from experience that some Japanese children were mean to other Japanese. Instead, Mrs. Yamaguchi found a piano instructor for Noboru, allowing him to continue one of his hobbies.

Mrs. Yamaguchi helped with Noboru's homework everyday. It took one hour for both to answer the math questions that his classmates only needed ten minutes to

complete. For essays, Noboru, his tutor, and mother worked together to complete them. Mrs. Yamaguchi talked to her son's homeroom teacher every day after school and asked him about Noboru and his homework. The teacher asked her to come into the classroom after all the students had left at the end of the day. Mrs. Yamaguchi said, "Here in the States, teachers welcome mothers' visiting and listen to them. But, if mothers never show up, teachers don't mind but no progress will be achieved."

It was Mr. Yamaguchi who encouraged his wife to send Noboru to private school before one year had passed in the public school. Mrs. Yamaguchi remembered that her good friend who had experienced sojourning, said that the care that private school provides is far better than the public school. Mr. Yamaguchi searched for an appropriate school and chose one for Noboru that had an intense ESL program. Noboru took the examination and was accepted. Since then, Noboru has received special training for writing for ESL students. Mrs. Yamaguchi appreciated the intense care her son received.

> I don't think (Japanese) children, especially those who arrive after 5th grade, can develop good writing skills through only listening to daily conversations. To obtain English proficiency, children need to learn how to express their ideas by listening and forced reading, to study basic grammar, and to write a lot of essays and have them corrected.

Mrs. Yamaguchi was not worried about Noboru maintaining Japanese proficiency because he liked, and continued reading Japanese books, especially historical novels. According to Mrs. Yamaguchi, Noboru became old enough to appreciate Japanese traditional culture and was interested in visiting temples and gardens in old cities such as Kyoto and Kamakura. After living in Hawai'i for three years and four months at the time of the interview, Mrs. Yamaguchi thought it would be good timing for Noboru to return to Japan.

> Actually, Noboru wants to go to college overseas, in the United States. Of course I think the school here will help Noboru prepare for a college education. But he became interested in seeing and learning about Japan, and later he will be able to come back if he wants.

Preparing to Go Home

During the summer holidays, Mrs. Yamaguchi took Noboru to several private high schools in Tokyo so he could get an idea of school life in a Japanese school. Noboru found some schools that were attractive to him. While researching entrance exams, Mrs. Yamaguchi found that many high schools provide the examination for returnees twice a year, in February or March and June or July. She also found that the examination in June or July was for students who graduated from local schools overseas. While many schools provide the opportunity for returnees in the 10th grade[3], only a few schools provide such a chance in the 11th grade.

> We have to go back to Japan sometime. ... If my husband does not go back this school year, we will miss out on very good timing. If we go back next year, Noboru will have fewer choices for high schools. Few Japanese High Schools admit students already in the 11th grade, and fewer still admit students in the 12th grade. If we stay here until Noboru becomes a high school senior, graduating here is the best choice. Then, he can choose whichever college to go to in Japan or America. But because my husband is a sojourner and must follow his orders, we need to anticipate the timing and make decisions earlier. While the child is young, we can go home whenever we are told. But the entrance examination for high school is the last chance to go back. If you miss this chance, the child has few schools from which to choose. So I anticipate the worst case and prepare as early as possible because we have to go back to Japan sometime.

[3] Japanese education after the World War II uses 6-3-3-4 system: six years for elementary school, three years for junior high school, three years for high school, and four years for colleges. That is, 10th to 12th grade belong to high school.

Mrs. Yamaguchi thought that Noboru would enjoy meeting other returnees if he entered a school that accepts many returnee students. Noboru was also excited to share the experiences of living abroad with such returnee students.

Case of Kojima Family

After graduating from a junior college, Mrs. Kojima worked for a media company until she got married. She had been a housewife since then and a full time mother of her daughter, Mieko. Since Mr. Kojima was sent to study in Europe for half a year at his company's expense, the Kojimas were expecting a sojourn in the near future. Mrs. Kojima sent her daughter to rhythmic class taught by an American instructor. She thought it would be a good experience for Mieko to know "there are people other than Japanese," and to play with other children before entering preschool. When Mieko turned two years old, Mrs. Kojima visited several kindergartens for her. The Kindergarten she chose for her daughter was not an "academic" kindergarten, but one where the children engaged in lively play. Among Mieko's classmates, there were several children who were born abroad during their parents' sojourn. Mrs. Kojima volunteered to help in the library. She had to make beautifully decorated lunches (*o-bentô*) for her daughter. Despite the heavy workload, Mrs. Kojima enjoyed her life as a kindergartner's mother.

Before Leaving Japan

One weekend, Mr. Kojima came home and told his wife that he would be transferred to Hawai'i in a couple of months. Mrs. Kojima was not happy at all, because they were ready to move into a new house they had just purchased. However, several

months after her husband left, Mrs. Kojima moved to Hawai'i with Mieko after arranging care for their new house.

In Hawai'i

Mieko was four years old when she arrived in Hawai'i in August. Mrs. Kojima visited several kindergartens for Mieko, however most of the kindergartens were already full. Mrs. Kojima managed to find one private Montessori pre-school that would accept her. Mieko enrolled there and seemed to have a good time.

The private kindergarten where Mieko went also had an elementary school. There were two classes for 1st grade, however, Mrs. Kojima had a hard time deciding which teacher would be good for Mieko even after talking with both of them. Both teachers' educational policy appeared "traditional" to Mrs. Kojima. She went to Mieko's kindergarten teacher to ask her opinion.

> I asked the teacher which 1st grade class I should choose for Mieko. Her answer sounded strange: She said she could not recommend one for her. Then she said Mieko was a child who had great potential. She didn't know any English when she entered the preschool, but she was already reading kindergarten level books by the end of preschool. By the time she finished kindergarten, she was reading books above the 1st grade level. The teacher said, "Mieko has potential. There are other good schools besides our school, so you should see other schools, too."

Mrs. Kojima visited several schools, and chose one school where each student received enough attention from teachers and where reading and having experiences were more important than memorizing. It was already April and the new applicants were already selected. However, the school gave Mieko a chance to test if she was as gifted as her kindergarten teacher said. Mieko did not have problems with reading the material for 1st graders and was accepted.

There was another reason why Mrs. Kojima wanted to change Mieko's school upon entering elementary school. She became tired of associating with other Japanese mothers.

> Every morning after dropping children at preschool, American mothers went home while Japanese mothers remained to chat for a while. Sometimes we went out for having tea together. At pick up time, the Japanese mothers got together to chat for about thirty minutes or so while their children played. I felt it was enough after doing that for two years. Then, I started looking at schools where other Japanese mothers may not choose. Of course, that was not the only reason. I also thought about Mieko's education and school environment, but I also had my own interests in mind.

The private elementary school Mrs. Kojima liked had a few Japanese children. She believed that both mothers and children should make more local friends rather than forming a Japanese community to enjoy the benefit of living abroad.

As a wife of a sojourn salaried man, Mrs. Kojima was worried about when her husband would be transferred again. She saw the hardship his colleague's wife experienced when she tried to remain in Hawai'i until her son finished high school, after her husband was sent back to Japan. Mrs. Kojima heard that there would be only a few months notice before having to return. To avoid worrying about the timing of going back and to have the option to live in Hawai'i permanently, the Kojimas decided to apply for green cards.

> My husband and I wanted to go back to Japan when the timing would be good for our daughter's education. We were worried that we might receive the order while Mieko was in the 3rd grade, but we wanted to continue her education in the States a little bit longer if possible. There was an option to remain without my husband by getting a student visa for myself, but there was no guarantee for that. Getting green cards sounded like a more secure way to remain here. My husband liked Hawai'i and wished that we would be happy with him working and living here permanently. … We were not sure if we could obtain green cards soon enough as we know people who waited for a year or two. But fortunately, we received our green cards without waiting for a long time.

Around the time they received green cards, Mr. Kojima was transferred back to Japan while Mrs. Kojima and Mieko remained in Hawai'i.

About the same time the father left Hawai'i, Mrs. Kojima heard that most of Mieko's classmates were going to apply for a private school that had a middle and high school. When Mrs. Kojima talked with other parents of Mieko's friends, they said to "Try first, then think after being accepted". The school Mieko had attended had only an elementary level. Other mothers explained that they let their children take exam because there are no guarantees they are going to be accepted to the 6th grade. Mrs. Kojima asked the opinion of Mieko's English tutor, who was a retired elementary school teacher.

> That day (Mrs. Kojima heard many classmates of Mieko were going to take entrance examination) was the day Mieko went to the tutor. So, I went there and asked her what I should do, the deadline for the application was that day, though. She said the same thing as the other mothers. "Try first, then think later. You only have to send the application today." I told her I had no picture of Mieko. Then she gave me the school picture that I had given to her. The tutor had already asked the school to send an application form for my daughter. She had asked me before, but I hadn't decided because I liked the school Mieko had attended, I thought changes were not necessary, and my husband already left Hawai'i so I could not consult him. I was not good at English, so I wrote a draft and the tutor proofread it. I completed the application form and ran to the post office.

Mieko passed the examination and started going to a prestigious private school.

Preparing to Go Home

Mieko was in the 5th grade at the time of the interview. It had been a year and a half since the father had returned to Japan and they were forced to live apart. Mieko enjoyed her school life and a good academic record. Mrs. Kojima had not yet decided when they would join her husband.

> If financial resources permit, I would like to stay here until Mieko becomes old enough to decide where she would like to go to high school, or even to which college. If we decide now, it is not her will, but the parents' will. I know that the longer she stays here, the less likely it would be that she would choose a Japanese school. But I wish we could hang on until she can decide.

Mieko has attended *hoshûkô* since she was four. She liked Japanese school, too. Mieko had also visited a Japanese elementary school near her grandparents' house in Japan for a month and a half during the summer, every year since she was in the 1st grade[4].

> Mieko likes Japan very much. She goes to elementary school in Japan during summer vacation instead of going to summer school here. Before going to Japan, she always cries and says that she doesn't want to leave Hawai'i because she would miss her friends and their birthday parties. But in August, she doesn't want to leave Japan because she likes to live with her grandparents, to play with friends there, and to go to the park by herself without her mother! She even enjoys cleaning the classroom and helping set school lunches.

Mrs. Kojima thought that Mieko would miss the life in Hawai'i if they decided to return to Japan. "While she is here, she can enjoy the school life both in Hawai'i and in Japan. But if we go back, she would not come back to school in Hawai'i. I think she is old enough to realize that."

After returning to Japan, Mr. Kojima usually visited his family in Hawai'i about twice in three months for several nights each visit. The family lived separately, however, Mrs. Kojima thought the quality of communication between her husband and daughter was as high as when they had lived together. During the time they had lived in Japan, Mr. Kojima left home for work before Mieko woke up and came home after she went to bed. He was away from home one week or so each month due to business trips. Surprisingly,

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[4] This is called "*taiken nyûgaku,*"or school visiting. Some parents send their children to school in Japan after the school year ends in May or June at a host country. Since the summer holiday starts around July 20th in Japan, children can experience the school life in Japan about a month or so without becoming absent from the school in the host country.

it was not until he left his family and returned to Japan that he had the time to visit his daughter's school, and see all the events he had never had time for when they lived together. While he worked in Hawai'i, he was too busy to attend such events.

Case of Miyamoto Family

After graduating junior college in Japan, Mrs. Miyamoto went to California to study English for four months. She then worked for a media company for four years until she got married. She has been a housewife since and has raised two children, Akira and Eriko.

Before Leaving Japan

When his son, Akira, was five years old, Mr. Miyamoto decided to study in the United States for his Master of Business Administration (MBA). He applied to a graduate school in Hawai'i because he thought Hawai'i would be less dangerous than the mainland. Mrs. Miyamoto thought the oversea experience while the children were young enough would be beneficial for them and less harmful for their Japanese school life than the older children.

> At first, I thought that we were going to stay here (in Hawai'i) only two or three years. So, Akira, at that time six years old, was supposed to go back to Japan by the 3rd grade or so. I heard that children who return to Japan by the 3rd grade have a better chance at success and can catch up on the curriculum sooner. They can adjust themselves to the Japanese life easily without severe problems and can maintain their academic ability. So, I thought living in Hawai'i for a couple of years while Akira was young would not be a problem for our family nor for our children.

Mrs. Miyamoto taught the alphabet to Akira who was attending kindergarten at that time.

In Hawai'i

The Miyamoto family arrived in Hawai'i on September 1st. When Mrs. Miyamoto brought her son to the school office, she was told that Akira would join the 1st grade class. She did not expect it, but she followed the administration. She took Akira to the doctor for immunizations, and he started going to school the second week of September.

At first, Akira had a hard time. One morning after a few weeks had past since he started going to school, Akira asked his mother not to leave when she dropped him off in the morning. Akira said he could not understand what the teacher said. Then, Mrs. Miyamoto started English training for her son. She taught "survival English" for school life such as asking for permission to go to the bathroom. She also helped with his homework at night.

There were no other Japanese students in his class. The homeroom teacher asked two students, one of whose parents were Japanese, to help Akira; however, they did not use Japanese with Akira. This actually turned out to be more positive as Akira was immersed in an English environment. Over the course of six months, he learned English phrases quickly and began to enjoy his school life. He soon made friends and played with them about half an hour or an hour or so after school while his mother was chatting with Akira's friends' parents. He also joined the basketball team in the neighborhood with his friend. He only needed to participate in ESLL class during his first year.

Mr. Miyamoto completed a certificate for business after four years attending classes. By this time, Mrs. Miyamoto started thinking about going to an American college to earn a bachelors degree for herself. She thought this would be her last chance to go to college, especially for a mother with two children. She talked about her wishes with her

husband, and he agreed with her. He knew that his wife had attended an English school in the United States and was interested in studying abroad again. Without saying, the children were to remain with their mother.

> In my family, children are always attached to me. So, automatically, they remained with me. I knew that school life would be harder with children, but I cannot imagine life without my children. We didn't discuss the children, but it was understood they were to stay with me.

She thought it would take only two years or so to obtain a bachelor's degree since she had already studied for two years in a junior college in Japan.

Full time student life with two school age children was tougher than Mrs. Miyamoto expected. She had to handle all the domestic matters including house management, raising children, as well as keeping a high academic record to maintain the requirement for her scholarship. She had to take her children to school and to after school activities. When her children had trouble at school, she had to deal with it by herself before she could even talk with her husband. She and her husband communicated often via phone and email. While Akira did not talk with his father so much, his sister, Eriko, enjoyed chatting with him on the phone and emailing him. Mrs. Miyamoto knew that Eriko missed her father very much.

> I feel sorry for my children and husband because they have not lived together for a long time. The longer we live separately, the more time my husband misses out on time with his children while they are young and cute. Especially Eriko missed her dad a lot because he loves her. For example, she looked sad for a while after coming back from Japan during the summer break. I feel sorry for her. Akira also needs his dad because he is now a teenager.

Mrs. Miyamoto had sent their children to *hoshûkô* from the 1st grade for Akira and kindergarten for Eriko. She also tried to arrange chances for their children to play with Japanese friends after school on Saturday. However, Akira started feeling that going to

school on Saturday was a burden. Akira, whose friends were mostly locals, had to give up hanging out with his friends on Friday evening or Saturday because of Japanese school.

> The longer the family stays abroad, the tougher it is to send the children to *hoshûkô*, because they have to go to school one more day than their local friends. We know learning Japanese is hard, but parents want their children to keep going to *hoshûkô* even if only to meet Japanese friends.

At an open house when Akira was in the 6th grade, however, Mrs. Miyamoto found that he had no interest in class.

> I thought sending Akira to *hoshûkô* might have negative effect. I sent him there to learn Japanese, but it became a pain to him. I was afraid Akira would come to dislike Japanese. I didn't think it was good for Akira to stay at school for eight hours. The stress was too much to bear.

Mrs. Miyamoto asked Akira if he wanted to study Japanese with a tutor or at Saturday Japanese school. Akira chose the former. To make it fair among siblings, Mrs. Miyamoto also asked Eriko if she would like to continue to go to *hoshûkô*.

> Eriko said she had friends in Japanese school and that she had to say "I don't understand" with a tutor when she didn't understand. She is such a girl. So, she preferred to go to Japanese school. She is still attending every Saturday.

Akira and Eriko speak to each other in English. Akira used to speak to his mother in Japanese, but he started using more English after quitting Japanese school. Eriko tried to answer her mother in Japanese, but she began to use English once her brother started answering in English.

Preparing to Go Home

After living separately for four years, Mrs. Miyamoto became a little worried about the relationship with her husband. They still contacted each other via email during the weekdays and on the phone during weekends. However, she sometimes became

frustrated because she could not ask her husband's opinion immediately when something happened to their children. She also needed to explain Akira's situation to her husband, and then to explain the father's opinion to her son because they did not talk with each other. Eriko, however, enjoyed chatting with her father, and took the opportunity whenever he called. Mrs. Miyamoto also felt they carefully selected the information they would share; they did not share everything that happened in their lives because sometimes it required a long explanation to understand the entire background of the story. She worried about the relationship with her husband. However, it seemed to her that it would take at least a few more years until the Miyamotos can once again live together. Mrs. Miyamoto needed to take several more classes to fulfill the requirement for a business certification. She also wished to work one year after graduation by using the Optional Practical Training (OPT) in order to strengthen her career. Furthermore, after returning to Japan, Mr. Miyamoto said that ideally, he would like his son to continue his schooling in the United States until he graduates high school.

> We have already lived in the States for eight years. My husband said that he wants our son to stay in the States until he graduates high school. Then, he can choose which college he will attend by his own will. So we want to stay until Akira graduates high school. At first, my husband felt lonely when he went back to Japan without his family. But after four years, he is sort of getting used to his life, to some extent. So, the focus is now on the children's happiness, not on his. He thinks that we are responsible for bringing our kids overseas, so we should place the priority on our children and do the best for our children by considering their situation first. The decisions of the parents should not change their lives so much. .... But, I also know that we were staying here on my student visa. So when I have to go back, we all will have to. I want to choose the best option for our children at that time.

Regarding the school that Akira and Eriko would attend after returning to Japan, Mr. and Mrs. Miyamoto thought that they would have a hard time if they were to go to public

school. It was because their children's culture and academic knowledge seemed far different from those of their Japanese counterparts. They were considering sending their children to private schools that accept many returnee students or to an international school once returning to Japan, if they can afford it.

> Neither of my children wants to go back to Japan because they have been here for eight years. While visiting their grandparents in Japan, they always have a good time. But, they don't want to go to schools in Japan. They know school life there is hard because they sometimes cannot play with their friends who go to *juku*. I tell them that we have to go back to Japan because we are just staying with a temporary visa, not as a permanent residence. They know that too, but insist that they would only go to an international school upon returning to Japan.

Case of Kidani Family

After graduating high school in Japan, Mrs. Kidani went to a community college in California for a year and a half. Thereafter, she returned to Japan and worked for a realtor in order to earn school tuition to attend an American college. While she was working there, she met her future husband, who was an architect. She got married and has been a housewife and a mother of one girl, Sachiyo.

Before Leaving Japan

Mrs. Kidani decided to come to Hawai'i when Sachiyo entered elementary school. Sachiyo had asthma and it became worthwhile moving to a better climate when she started school.

> My husband and I were worried about Sachiyo's asthma. We talked about moving for her. When I thought about where to go, Hawai'i came to mind. I have wanted to go to an American college, which I gave up after getting married. We visited Hawai'i many times because we like Hawai'i and because my sister lived here. I thought I could live in Hawai'i.

For Mrs. Kidani, Hawai'i was closer than other cities in Japan. She and her parents often visited Hawai'i with Sachiyo and stayed for several weeks every year. She also thought that if they were going to go to Hawai'i the time was now. She believed that the younger her child was, the less problems she would have in Japanese schools upon returning and the easier it would be for her to learn English.

> If the child reaches the 2nd or 3rd grade, parents need to think about preparing for future entrance exams (*juken*) and considering the child's potential educational problems. If I go to Hawai'i, I wanted my child to learn English. I thought the older she became, the harder it would be to learn English. It would also be more difficult to maintain the Japanese curriculum as she grew older.

The easiest way to stay in the United States was for the mother to get a student visa. Mrs. Kidani applied for an English program at a university and was accepted.

In Hawai'i

When Sachiyo knew that she was going to Hawai'i, she agreed to go with her mother. She also had been to Hawai'i and had a good time. After arriving, however, she started asking her mother to take her back to Japan. She did not listen to her teachers, and did not try to make friends.

> Sachiyo kept saying she wanted to go back to Japan ever since arriving here. She is a child who likes Japan. During the first year, she seemed to refuse learning English. At school, she did not listen to what she was not interested in. She had that tendency in Japan, too. At first, I was not worried about her. I thought it was fine as long as she went to school. But, I saw her not listening while I was talking with her teacher or while she was sitting in her classroom. She did not try to make friends. There is another Japanese girl in her class, but she did not even talk with her. Her homeroom teacher said she was worried about Sachiyo because she did not talk with her Japanese classmate even in Japanese. I think she has a tendency to be happy in her own world.

Sachiyo begged her mother to take her back to Japan especially after meeting her father there. The mother and daughter typically visit Japan three or four times a year. Mrs. Kidani thought the frequent trips were one of the reasons Sachiyo yearned to return to Japan.

A few weeks before Sachiyo started school in the 5th grade, Mrs. Kidani decided to change her school in order to improve Sachiyo's situation. She did not seem to try hard enough on her schoolwork because she noticed everyone knew that English was not her native tongue.

> I thought that everybody around Sachiyo knew her personality and it became a solid image. She didn't try to make friends. Even when she was talked to, she sometimes was not willing to respond when she did not want to. ... She seemed to think it's OK because everyone knows English was not her first language. She didn't try to improve her English. So, I thought it might be good timing to change her surroundings. The school she goes to now has 6th graders, too. She has time to get used to the new environment before graduating school.

Mrs. Kidani searched for a public school that maintained a good academic reputation and that was close enough to her residence. Many schools said they already finished accepting students as geographic exceptions. But finally, Mrs. Kidani found one school that was still able to accept students. Sachiyo started going to that school from the 5th grade.

After her daughter changed schools, Mrs. Kidani saw some improvements in her daughter's habits. Sachiyo sometimes opened her books at home to prepare for tests, something that had not been seen previously. However, Sachiyo still remained alone. Mrs. Kidani used the after school program (A Plus) for her daughter with the hope that "she would finish her homework" and "she would make friends." However, Sachiyo was usually sitting by herself drawing pictures when her mother picked her up. Sachiyo even

asked her mother to pick her up sooner. Mrs. Kidani was worried about Sachiyo remaining in an unpleasant situation, so she tried to pick her up around three thirty or four, instead of five o'clock.

At home, Sachiyo enjoyed reading Japanese books and drawing pictures. She borrowed Japanese books from the *hoshûkô,* books ranging from picture books for infants to books for adults. She also wrote many stories in Japanese but only once in English after getting an assignment from school.

Sachiyo had been to *hoshûkô* since she arrived in Hawai'i. It does not seem to bother her to go to Japanese school on Saturday.

> There are many children now who come from permanent resident families. In contrast, there are fewer children from sojourn families. Those children from homes where they speak English and seldom use Japanese must have a hard time at *hoshûkô.* But in our case, we came from Japan and Sachiyo attended school in Japan until the 1st grade. She is more fluent in Japanese than English. So, in a sense, Saturday school is a place where Sachiyo can relax. Of course, she would prefer not going to school at all because she dislikes the group life (*shûdan seikatsu*), but it is not nearly as bad for her to go to *hoshûkô*, as it is attending the local school.

At home, Mrs. Kidani usually turned on the cartoon channel for Sachiyo with the hope that she would pick up English. However, it often changed into videos of Japanese television programs that Sachiyo's grandfather recorded for her.

Preparing to Go Home

Mrs. Kidani's biggest concern was the timing of when she would go back to Japan with her daughter. Mrs. Kidani could get her degree in the next semester if she worked hard. However, she considered keeping one class for the following semester so

she could spend more time with her daughter. She sometimes felt guilty because she had not taken good care of Sachiyo.

> I doubt my husband knows that I have not taken good care of Sachiyo. Once school starts, I become too busy to take care of her. But my husband believes Sachiyo is the priority and she is the reason why I am living here. It was our purpose in the beginning. .... We came here because the environment is good for her. And English... my husband strongly wish Sachiyo to learn English. Also he wishes her to enjoy her life. I feel guilty because Sachiyo has done neither.

Mrs. Kidani thought the time they visited Hawai'i for vacation was much more fun for Sachiyo. Since beginning their sojourn, Mrs. Kidani seldom takes Sachiyo to the beach or other fun places. She thought it was one of the reasons why Sachiyo does not like Hawai'i. Only taking one class in a semester would allow Mrs. Kidani to spend more time concentrating on Sachiyo, rather than on herself.

Another option for her was to stay another one year after graduation to participate in Optional Practical Training. While it would be more beneficial for Mrs. Kidani's career to remain in Hawai'i, her husband wanted Sachiyo to attend junior high school in Japan.

> My husband hopes our daughter will master English while staying here. He also wants her to come back to Japan in time to enter junior high school. In other words, he thinks it would be good for her to stay here while she is in elementary school. If she remains here for middle school, my husband would miss the chance to live with her any more. Once she becomes a high school student, she will be more independent. If she graduated middle school here, she might ask us to leave her here alone to go to high school here.

Mrs. Kidani was also concerned about Sachiyo entering a private middle school in Japan. She explained that to prepare for the entrance exam, students usually start going to *juku* no later than the 5th grade. Another option was to use the special allocation for

returnee students. However, returning at the 4th grade level might be too early to apply for the special allocation.

> I am thinking to use the special allocation for the entrance for my daughter to a Japanese school. But, returning in the 4th grade may be a bit early. Usually students can apply for special allocation if they return within two years from the date of the exam. Schools, good ones, accept only within one year, or at least only those returning after June of the previous year. So, my daughter would be one year short to apply for the special allocation if she goes back to Japan now.

Mrs. Kidani thought private school was a better option than public, because she heard that many students in public school were from families where parents pay little attention to their children's education. In contrast, private schools would provide a good educational learning environment. After explaining how hard it is to prepare for the entrance examination in Tokyo, Mrs. Kidani added her thoughts about the future of her daughter.

> I heard from my friends that children who sleep six hours a day would fail the exam. Of course, this story may be a little exaggerated. But studying for exams sounds very hard. I also worry about cases where the child may be less equipped academically. If so, I think it is pitiful for the child to spend that much time studying. I would like my daughter to choose her course. I'm not sure what direction is suitable for her. If she wants to go to a Japanese college, she needs the material taught in the Japanese curriculum. If she wants to go to an American college, she needs better English proficiency. I don't know which course is best for her yet.

Thus, there are several options available to Mrs. Kidani and Sachiyo, but she is having difficulty in choosing the correct option that will be best for Sachiyo and is still good for the family.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Chapter four presents six cases. There is a great degree of variation among the cases, but each mother made an effort to help her children adjust to their new life in the host country. This chapter analyzes and discusses the mothers' concerns, strategies, and beliefs in the following aspects: choosing the right time and place to sojourn, helping children, consulting friends, other parents, and teachers, and the reasons for mothers' commitment to their children's education.

Choosing the Right Timing and Place

When to Leave Japan

Salaried men are forced to relocate once they receive the order; there are few opportunities to choose the time of their transfer. In addition, they are less likely to be given enough time to prepare for the transfer even to an office abroad. Among the cases, Mr. Maeda had three months to prepare his sojourn before leaving, Mr. Hasegawa had four months, Mr. Yamaguchi had two months, and Mr. Kojima had less than two months. These husbands came to Hawai'i several months prior to their family except for the case of Mr. Maeda. This is common among oversea sojourners so the husbands have time to prepare such items as finding accommodation, visiting schools, and opening bank accounts (see cases in Minoura, 2003). At the same time, by sending the husband ahead, wives can choose when to leave Japan with their children.

For Mrs. Hasegawa and Mrs. Yamaguchi, one of the important reasons for the delay of their arrival was children's education. Mrs. Hasegawa and her three children remained in Japan until March so the children could finish their Japanese school year. In contrast, Mrs. Yamaguchi waited until June to arrive in Hawai'i, considering the American school year rather than the Japanese school year. This decision allowed her son Noboru to get accustomed to his new life by attending "Summer Fun" and learning English from a tutor four times a week before school started in late August.

While salaried men cannot choose when to come, college students can decide the timing and usually have more time to prepare. In addition, student mothers in this case study considered the age of the children; they believe that the younger the children are, the better the results they would have. Mrs. Kidani was concerned about her daughter's learning of English and preparation for entering a private junior high school. She believed that younger children could learn English more easily than older children, and knew that she needed to consider sending Sachiyo to *juku* to prepare her for future entrance examinations for junior high school. Mrs. Miyamoto thought that overseas experience while the children were younger would be less harmful to their re-adjustment and would allow them to catch up on the Japanese curriculum after returning. According to Minoura (2003), the children who were younger than nine years old when they entered into a different cultural setting are likely to accept the new behavioral pattern more easily. Both Mrs. Kidani and Mrs. Miyamoto were concerned about their children's developmental stage as well as the hardship of mastering the Japanese curriculum.

Thus, some mothers carefully plan the time to come to the host country. This decision is deeply connected to their children's education. Some believe that completing

the Japanese school year is important, while others consider that having time to settle down into the new environment before school starts is crucial for a smooth transition. Others think that younger students are more flexible in adjusting to the new environment and to re-adjusting to the Japanese school life. However, choosing the correct timing is not only a matter of when to arrive, but also a matter of when to leave following several years of sojourning. The latter is also a major concern among sojourning families with regard to their children's education.

When to Return to Japan

As businessmen have little chance to choose the time to leave Japan, neither do they have that luxury when it comes time to leave; when they receive the order, they need to follow it. In order to deal with this uncertainty, some families prepare to be ready for going back at anytime, while others take away the uncertainty by deciding for themselves when the family members will return. Two ways of doing this was observed in the case studies, including: leaving the husband in the host country while the wife and children go back to Japan (*senkô kikoku*) or sending the husband back to Japan while the wife and children remain with green cards or student visa (*gyaku tanshin funin*)[5].

In the case of Mrs. Hasegawa, she expected that her husband's company would issue the order to transfer sometime after four years had passed. Her strategy to deal with this uncertainty was to motivate her children to study hard and maintain a good academic record at school. She believed that a good academic record is necessary to be accepted to

[5] *Tanshinfunin*, or separation because of a job transfer, is a phenomenon that, in most cases, the husband moves to an assigned place while his wife and children remain at home (see Iwao, 1993; Tanaka, 1991; White, 2002). *Gyaku tanshinfunin* refers to the situation in which the husband, in most cases, returns "home" while his wife and children remain in the sojourn locale following a job related move.

the type of school their children might want to go to. Interestingly, according to a newsletter published by the children's support room at the human resource office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*gaimushô jinjika shijokyôiku sôdanshitsu)*, one popular high school for returnee students take the academic record at the school they attended in the host country seriously upon deciding its candidate. If students make remarkable progress during their stay overseas, they will be accepted to the high school (Shijo kyoiku news, August 2003).

Mrs. Yamaguchi also anticipated that her husband would be ordered to return to Japan before their son would finish high school. Instead of waiting for the order as Mrs. Hasegawa would, Mrs. Yamaguchi was planning to take her son back to Japan the next summer when he would be able to take the special examination to enter a high school for returnee students. This phenomenon that the wives and children go back to Japan and leave their husbands in the host country is called "*senkô kikoku*" or prior returning. Kaigai Shijo Kyoiku, periodicals for the education for students overseas, claims that "*senkô kikoku*" is not a preferable option because it forces families to live separately and it also takes the chance away from the children to have further rich experiences by living abroad. The article also emphasizes the recently expanding opportunity to enter private schools and public high schools in the middle of the school year. It recommends collecting information on the perspective schools and considering the family's and children's happiness (Kaigai shijo kyoiku, July 2003). However, the selection of the school is still limited especially for students who want to enter from the 2nd or 3rd year of high school. The same article reports that there are few choices of high school for *kikoku shijo* who are in or will enter the 12th grade. For mothers who are highly concerned about

which school their children will enter upon returning, such as Mrs. Yamaguchi, the school system has not changed enough to accommodate their demands. As a result, the family chooses to live separately for the benefit of their children's education.

Mr. Kojima and his family obtained green cards following four years living in Hawai'i. He saw the hardship of one of his colleagues who received the order suddenly and had to make a tremendous effort to leave his high school son with his mother in the United States to benefit his son's education. Mr. Kojima applied for the green card for his family after considering his daughter's educational opportunity and his own wish to remain in Hawai'i as a resident. Just after they successfully obtained the green cards, Mr. Kojima received the order to go back to Japan. His daughter Mieko was in the 4th grade at that time and Mrs. Kojima planned to remain until Mieko would be old enough to qualify to apply for the special allocation to enter a private junior high school. After living one year separately, Mrs. Kojima wished to remain with her daughter in Hawai'i until she enters the 9th grade so she can decide whether she wants to go to high school in Japan or in the United States, or possibly until she enters the 12th grade so she can decide to which college she will apply.

It was not only the Kojimas who wished to stay in the United States until the children become old enough to make their own decisions, but also the Miyamotos and the Kidanis. For the student mothers such as Mrs. Miyamoto and Mrs. Kidani, they need to go back to Japan when they graduate from school or when their OPT, if they take this opportunity, has ended. In other words, they can plan when they graduate and when their children return to Japan unlike the case of salaried men.

Mrs. Miyamoto was expecting to go back to Japan in two years after completing her OPT. However, she wished to remain longer for the sake of their children. Mr. Miyamoto told his wife that they should consider the best timing for their children to return to Japan, thus taking responsibility for having brought their children to Hawai'i. He also said that it might be better for their children to finish high school so they can choose which college they want to go to by themselves. Mrs. Miyamoto agreed with her husband, but at the same time, she knew she had to go back to Japan with the children when she finished school and OPT. She was thinking to send their children to American school in Japan, if it is possible financially, or to private school which was accepting many returnee students.

Mrs. Kidani was also wondering when she should return to Japan with her daughter, Sachiyo. She could finish her degree in another semester. However, when she thought about the Sachiyo's entrance examination for a private junior high school in Tokyo, it seemed better for her to remain at least another year in Hawai'i to qualify as a returnee student to take the special entrance examination. Mrs. Kidani also thought about the option to let Sachiyo apply for school without using the special quota for returnee students, in case they returned sooner. In that case, she would send Sachiyo to *juku* to prepare for the entrance examination. Mrs. Kidani had still not decided, but at the same time, she wished to stay longer in Hawai'i until Sachiyo was old enough to choose which school she wanted to go.

Thus, mothers in these cases take their children's education, especially in Japan at the time of returning, as a priority to decide the time to return. Some mothers and children remained by obtaining a green card or would leave with the children prior to the

husband. This allows them to decide for themselves when to return, rather than being at the mercy of the company. They wish to go back when their children are the age that they start going to junior high school, high school, or college. This facilitates their transition by avoiding entering the middle of the school curriculum and making the selection wider. Some mothers also wish to wait until their children become old enough to make the decision by themselves, up to the time when they choose a college. One reason may be that the parents feel guilty for having changed their children's life course by withdrawing them from Japanese society and bringing them abroad, as in the case of the Miyamotos.

As well as choosing the right time to come and to leave, selecting the neighborhood and school is a major concern among mothers. They collect information in order to choose their residence and children's school very carefully.

Where to Live, Which School to Go

Mothers in this case study considered the environment of the neighborhood and also their children's school except for Mrs. Maeda who simply took over the place where the person Mr. Maeda replaced used to live with his family. Many of them responded that they checked local magazines and website to find schools that achieved better scores on the statewide exam. Selecting well-to-do communities often brings Japanese sojourn families to live closer to one another (Befu & Stalker, 1996). As a result, it creates a high population of Japanese students in a school and a delay in learning English because they continue using Japanese while at school (Cunningham, 1988; Sato, 2001). However, this concentration did not occur among the cases in this study. Mrs. Hasegawa and Mrs. Yamaguchi carefully chose the residence and neighborhood, but their children were the

only Japanese students in their class. These mothers felt it was fortunate because this English only situation helped their children learn English faster.

In the case of Mrs. Kojima who sent her daughter to a private preschool where many Japanese children were enrolled, she first felt it convenient to be able to share the information with other Japanese mothers easily. They gathered together and chatted for a while after dropping off and picking up their children. Sometimes they went to a coffee shop in the morning after dropping off the children. However, this Japanese mother's group became one of the reasons why Mrs. Kojima changed her daughter's school upon entering to elementary school. Ueda (1996) also reports that some Japanese mothers of preschool children in the United States first appreciated being in a Japanese community, but may want to distance themselves from this Japanese microcosm once they become accustomed to life in the host country. Mrs. Kojima believed that both the mother and the children should make friends among local residents rather than forming a Japanese community.

In Japan, changing schools is considered to have a negative influence on children's social life and their success at entrance examinations. For Japanese businessmen who live separately from their family, the children's education is the most important reason to leave their family behind (Tanaka, 1991). However, changing schools was one of the strategies to provide a better educational environment for their children among the cases studied.

A week before Sachiyo entered the 5th grade, Mrs. Kidani decided to move her into a different public school using a Geographic Exception (GE). One reason for this decision was to change the environment around Sachiyo who, from her mother's eyes,

was content with her current situation but did not try to make friends or study hard. After going to a new school, Sachiyo sometimes opened her books to study at home. Sachiyo still seemed to be isolated, but Mrs. Kidani was happy with Sachiyo's slight improvement.

Noboru Yamaguchi and Mieko Kojima took the entrance examination for a private school. Unlike *kyoiku mama* in Japan who pushes her children into such schools, neither Mrs. Yamaguchi nor Mrs. Kojima had been enthusiastic at the beginning. In Noboru's case, it was his father who suggested his son take the examination. Mrs. Yamaguchi thought, "If he passed, it's OK. If he doesn't, it's OK, too." Mrs. Kojima decided to let Mieko try the entrance examination when her friend said, "try now and think later after getting accepted." Both Noboru and Mieko were accepted and started going to a private school. Mrs. Yamaguchi and Mrs. Kojima were very satisfied with the quality of education given to their children.

Thus, most mothers in these case studies carefully chose their residence and children's school by gaining information from publications, following advice from friends, and/or personally visiting prospective schools. They then sometimes changed their children's school to a "better" public or private school. As opposed to Japanese schools, where entrance is normally only allowed at certain grade levels, the American system allowed parents in this study to change schools when they felt it best for their children. Compared to the Japanese school system, the system in Hawai'i allows students to transfer much more easily to a school in another district without having moved geographically. Although this practice is not desirable in Japan, it seems like it is much more acceptable in the cases studied here.

Helping Children

I noticed some mothers, namely wives of sojourn businessmen such as Mrs. Maeda, Mrs. Hasegawa, and Mrs. Yamaguchi, used the words "*herupu-suru*" (to help) repeatedly during the interview. They simply added the verb "*suru*" (do) after the English word "help". This is not a popular usage in Japan and the only English-Japanese connected word they used in the interview. This word may be jargon among such wives of Japanese businessman when they talk about their children's education with other Japanese wives. In this section, I will discuss first the help before leaving Japan: convincing and preparing, then the help after arriving: assistance with schoolwork and English proficiency, and the help for life in Japan upon returning: maintaining Japanese language skills and keeping up with the Japanese curriculum.

Convincing and Motivating Children

The older children are, the more likely they will oppose moving overseas. Whether the children agree with living overseas seems to affect their willingness to prepare for life abroad. For instance, Mrs. Hasegawa's two sons, twelve-year-old Susumu and fifteen-year-old Takashi at the time they heard the news, opposed moving to Hawai'i, whereas nine-year-old Kanako agreed to the move. Mr. Hasegawa was successful in convincing Takashi by offering the chance to play tennis as much as he wants. After learning that his siblings accepted the move, Susumu also agreed to leave Japan. Then Mrs. Hasegawa decided to move with her husband, instead of sending him alone to Hawai'i, as she had first asked him to do. She then started preparing for the move by attending meetings for sojourn families.

Just like the Hasegawa's two sons, Mrs. Maeda's twelve-year-old son, Shigeru, also opposed coming to Hawai'i when he heard the news. However, Shigeru remained as unhappy to leave his home even at the time of the departure. Shigeru's mother told him that he had no choice (*shikata ga nai*) other than coming to Hawai'i together with the rest of the family. Her attempts to convince him that he would have a very positive experience failed. Shigeru went to English *juku* once a week after hearing the news of his moving, but refused to watch English videos with his sister. He refused to have another English tutor when his first tutor quit after three months in Hawai'i. Mrs. Maeda analyzed her son's unwillingness to study English as a protest against being brought to Hawai'i against his will. She said that Shigeru "probably still thinks, 'why I am here, why I am suffering, why was I brought here just because of my parent's job transfer?'" Thus, it appears to be very important to positively motivate children to leave their home and go abroad. Children who feel they are the victims of the father's transfer might need more time to accept the new situation and adjust to their new life. Before leaving, convincing the children that moving from one place to another will be a good experience will encourage them to prepare themselves for their new environment.

Teaching English and Getting Accustomed to Foreigners Before Leaving Japan

Teaching children English before moving to the United States was one of the common preparations for the school-age children. Mrs. Maeda, Mrs. Hasegawa, and Mrs. Yamaguchi sent their children of elementary school age to an English *juku* or a tutor after hearing the news of their impending sojourn. For preschool-aged children, mothers tried to teach some degree of English at home. Mrs. Miyamoto taught her kindergarten aged

son the alphabet before leaving Japan, but later regretted not having done more after learning that he was placed in the 1st grade upon their arrival in September. Mrs. Maeda bought a set of English videos for her daughter and let her watch them at home. In the videos, a bilingual girl explained about life in America in addition to "teaching" English. Watching it repeatedly seemed to be useful for Masako not only to become accustomed to English sounds, but also to learn about life overseas. This is most likely one of the reasons for Masako's smooth adjustment to her new school.

Some mothers also tried to help their children to become accustomed to foreigners and foreign cultures. Mrs. Yamaguchi made an effort to integrate into the community by joining the "Mommy and Me" class with her son in San Francisco for two years. Later, upon their return to Japan, she sent him to an American woman once a week for five years to study English. Mrs. Kojima sent her daughter to rhythmic class taught by an American instructor from the age of two until she entered preschool. Mrs. Kojima thought it would be a good experience for her to know "there are people other than Japanese," and to play with other children before entering preschool.

In the case of Mrs. Hasegawa, her three children attended four sessions of preparatory classes provided by the Foundation for Overseas Children's Education. They learned basic classroom English and basic information of American school life. Attending these classes also seemed to remove the anxiety from children toward the unknown life overseas and give them a positive impression of their new school life. Mrs. Hasegawa's three children were, in a sense, ready for their new life when they arrived at the airport.

Using Tutors for Learning English and Helping With Homework

Mothers become even more concerned with building their children's English skills when the children start going to school in the host country. A 1999 study reports that Japanese mothers tend to connect their children's academic problems in English speaking classrooms with their poor English proficiency (Yokota-Adachi & Geva, 1999). In this case study, all mothers have asked for some tutoring services for their children.

In the case of Mrs. Yamaguchi, she hired a tutor as soon as they arrived in June. Her son, Noboru, learned English from him four times a week and also attended "Summer Fun." After three months, he could understand what other people were saying. He made his first friend toward the end of November. Mrs. Yamaguchi thought it was the extensive English environment, tutoring by a native English speaker, and hanging around non-Japanese speaking peers that helped Noboru adjust to his new life. In Noboru's case, his early experience living in San Francisco and going to an American family's house may also have contributed to his early English ability.

Mrs. Hasegawa also employed a tutor for their children four times a week. However, this did not happen until she figured out she could not help all three of her children by herself. She felt her 12-year-old son had the most priority for the tutoring. She mainly used the tutor to help with their homework. Her children still went to the tutor three times a week even after two and a half years in the United States. She said she would not send their children to the tutor or *juku* if they were in Japan because she and her husband would be able to help with their children's homework. However, she believed that asking for help was a necessity for their children to get good grades during

their sojourn because helping all three children's homework in English was beyond her ability.

In the case of Mrs. Kojima, it was Mieko who asked her mother to have an English tutor. She had already taken gymnastic class and swimming class. According to her mother, she seemed to think it natural to ask for a tutor to learn something new just as it was for swimming or gymnastics. Mieko kept showing interest to take other classes after school and she soon became busy attending extra curricular activities every day after school.

Letting Children Go to Extra Curricular Activities

In Japan, *okeiko-goto* or *narai-goto*, such as taking piano lessons or going to swimming class is also popular among children. While *juku* is for the academic lesson, this *okeiko-goto* is more about hobbies. In this case study, four mothers sent their children to extra curricular activities.

Mieko Kojima, for instance, was busy with lessons every day after school. She was taking hula, voice training, piano, tennis, gymnastics, and Japanese calligraphy (*shûji*) during the weekdays. Every time Mrs. Kojima obtained information from the school about after school activities, Mieko always wanted to participate. She always enjoyed her activities and continued to do them. Mrs. Kojima appreciated these activities because Mieko had more opportunity to learn English by having fun. In the case of Yamaguchi, Noboru went to piano lessons that he had been enjoying before leaving Japan. According to Mrs. Yamaguchi, playing the piano was Noboru's way to "diminish stress." Takashi Hasegawa had been taking tennis lessons and Akira Miyamoto had joined the

neighborhood basketball team. Attending these extra curricular activities increased the time to use English, the opportunity to meet other people and friends, and as a result, increased the confidence among the Japanese children who, otherwise, might feel inferior to other students because they could not communicate well in English.

In the case of Sachiyo Kidani, she was participating in the A Plus program after school. Mrs. Kidani wanted her daughter to finish her homework with the aid of the ESL teacher and to have fun with friends there. However, Sachiyo was always sitting alone and drawing pictures when her mother picked her up. Sachiyo wanted to go home sooner and then to write stories and draw pictures at home. Mrs. Kidani worried about her socialization skills and ability to get along with other people. If Mrs. Kidani had sent Sachiyo to an extra curricular activity such as art class, she may have had more communication in English, made friends who shared the same interest with her, and found fun in her life overseas.

Weekdays, students may be busy with schoolwork and going to tutors or taking extra curricular activities. Then on Saturdays, many Japanese children overseas attend Japanese supplementary school, *hoshûkô.*

Keeping Studying Japanese Curriculum

Among the cases, all the mothers had sent their children to *hoshûkô* except Mrs. Yamaguchi. As a whole, they appreciated having such an institution nearby. Sato (1997) discusses the diverse backgrounds of families which send their children to *hoshûkô* and thereby the differing expectations toward it. However, the families in this study are all

Japanese sojourners and have plans to return to Japan in the future. Despite their similar backgrounds, their expectations of the school and of their children were varied.

For Mrs. Hasegawa, *hoshûkô* was a place to study the Japanese curriculum. She told her children, who once asked her why they had to go to school on Saturdays, that going to *hoshûkô* was necessary for them because they were returning to Japan in the future. In addition, she pressured them to study harder because "they would not be able to get 50 points at a Japanese school even if they get 100 points at *hoshûkô*."

In contrast, Mrs. Miyamoto who had stayed in Hawai'i for seven years wanted her children to keep going to *hoshûkô* even it was just for the fun of meeting Japanese friends. According to her, the longer the family stays abroad, the harder it becomes to have the children go to *hoshûkô*. Unfortunately for her, she had to allow Akira to quit because she was afraid that he, who seemed very bored in the classroom at the open house, might have a negative attitude toward leaning Japanese. In Akira's case, he had had his entire school education in the United States. In addition his friends were mostly locals who lived in his neighborhood. He used more English at home than Japanese. Furthermore, his mother agreed with his wish to go to an American school once he returned to Japan. Thus, Akira did not see the benefit of studying the Japanese curriculum by attending school an extra day per week.

However, even if the child remains a relatively long time in the United States and has never attended school in Japan, some still enjoy going to *hoshûkô* and maintain good academic records. Mieko Kojima was such a child. She had been in the United States for six years and attended American schools beginning in preschool. Gender, characteristics, and her ability as "gifted" may have affected her willingness to study the Japanese

curriculum. However, her annual one-month visit to a school in Japan may have also motivated her to keep learning the Japanese curriculum. In the future, this experience will most likely make her adjustment to school in Japan upon returning much easier because she already has an idea of what school life in Japan is like. Minoura (2003) also demonstrates the effectiveness of short-term visits to schools in Japan in order to help children build an idea of Japanese school culture. These experiences help lessen the anxiety children may feel toward enrolling in a Japanese school. Not all students had positive experiences while visiting schools in Japan, as Mieko did. However, it could be worthwhile especially if the child could attend the same school and enter the same class every year, thus allowing him/her to maintain relationships with friends and teachers.

Maintaining Japanese Ability

All the mothers in this case study used Japanese at home when they talked to their children. All the children except for Miyamoto's spoke to their mothers in Japanese, too. Some children watched more Japanese programs on television, yet others who lived longer in Hawai'i tended to prefer American shows.

Mrs. Yamaguchi did not send her son to *hoshûkô* because she thought studying both the American and Japanese curriculum was too much for him. In addition, she decided to focus on building English ability to Noboru while this sojourning. However, there was another reason why she was not anxious about Noboru's Japanese ability. He liked reading books and kept reading a good number of Japanese books for his age and for adult even after several years had passed in Hawai'i. Mrs. Yamaguchi was not worried at all about her son's Japanese language ability.

Instead of going to *hoshûkô*, Noboru Miyamoto started going to a Japanese tutor once a week. Mrs. Miyamoto was wondering how she could make her children bilingual, that is, how she could provide enough opportunity to them to learn Japanese. It was hard for her as a full-time college student to spend enough time for them to learn it.

Networking

Mothers collect information through their friends about life overseas, other parents about their children's school, and teachers about the child behaviors. Availability of these friends, English ability to communicate with the teacher, and overcome societal differences are key to maximizing the benefit of these relationships. Though the links of networking can be as varied as one wishes, the importance of have this network has been shown to be very important for sojourn families.

With Friends

Since Japanese companies often send several workers to a branch office overseas, wives become friends of other wives of their husbands' colleagues. These friendships sometimes last even after they return to Japan and they settle in different places. They often exchange information about their life abroad as well as their life in Japan since returning. Mrs. Hasegawa and Mrs. Yamaguchi were both on their second sojourn. Through this friendship, they gathered as much information as they could about what they should do overseas and what they should prepare for upon returning. In the case of Mrs. Yamaguchi, she heard of the benefit of sending her children to a private school from their friend who lived in Europe. She also gained information about entrance

examinations in Japan not only by asking schools in Japan, but also by contacting friends living in California, who obtained it from a Japanese preparatory *juku* located in California. This information had helped her to decide her son's school both in the United States while sojourning and in Japan upon returning.

Among Parents

Mothers also relied on the information among other parents whose children went to the same school as their children. Mrs. Maeda, for instance, called one parent of her daughter's friend almost everyday to find what was written on the material her child brought home from school. She regretted that she could not do the same thing for her son because she did not know any parents of his classmates.

As we saw earlier in the section of choosing a school, Ms. Kojima first took advantage of knowing many Japanese mothers whose children were in the same preschool as Mieko. Being able to communicate in Japanese was helpful for Mrs. Kojima to gain information easily.

It was not only Japanese mothers who shared information of their children's school life. Mrs. Miyamoto, for instance, chatted with two local parents whose children always played with Akira after school. In the case of Mrs. Yamaguchi, a parents' meeting of Noboru's ESL class was the source from where she learned of similar cases or different situations of other ESL students form various backgrounds. Those who were confident with their English ability were more likely to communicate with local parents. They also did not hesitate to contact the school and teachers.

With Teachers

Almost two decades ago, the wives in Japanese sojourn families were reluctant to communicate with agencies and schools because of their limited English proficiency and the cross-cultural differences in communication style and social context (Vogel, 1986). However, the mothers in the cases except Mrs. Maeda were eager to contact the teachers when needed. Mrs. Hasegawa, for instance, wrote letters to teachers to ask about homework and to find out about assignments missed when their children were absent. She also wrote Takashi's science teacher to ask him about receiving poor grades. Other mothers talked directly with teachers. Mrs. Kojima often made appointments with principals and teachers to discuss Mieko's educational issues including which classes she should choose. Mrs. Yamaguchi talked with Noboru's homeroom teacher when she picked him up. She learned how Noboru did at school that day and what the homework was by asking his teacher directly. Mrs. Miyamoto also contacted her children's teacher every morning when she dropped her children at the door of the classroom. In this way, these mothers kept contact with homeroom teachers often and gained information about their children promptly. This resulted in the early discovery of problems if their children faced any and also the quick response to solve these problems.

Mrs. Maeda, unlike other mothers in this case study, was reluctant to contact teachers or the school. She did not know how or what Shigeru was doing at school during the first several months because he did not talk to her, the school did not tell her, and she "could not" ask school. She did not know what Shigeru's homework was but "could not" call the school, she simply told him to "do his homework." There are several possible reasons why Mrs. Maeda was hesitant to contact his teacher and school. First, she was not

confident with her English ability. Before interviewing, I saw she had a hard time asking a condominium manager in English if we could use the picnic area for a while. In addition, she might have the idea that it was the teacher's responsibility to contact her if there were problems with the children. When she described why she did not realize that her son had a hard time with learning English during the first several months, she said, "I didn't notice that because my son didn't say so, the school didn't contact me, and I couldn't ask the school." Mrs. Maeda might think, "no news is a good news," as in a Japanese proverb. Furthermore, she might think that asking about her son's homework to his teacher was shameful because it may reveal the son's inability to understand the teacher's English or to solve the problem by himself. She also had an idea that children should take care of themselves, or parents might spoil them. She had this attitude especially for Shigeru because he was a "big brother" and she was busy taking care of "little sister" who needed more help in her eyes.

In a sense, Mrs. Maeda failed to adapt to the American system. In Japan, parents do not go into the school building nor sometimes even in the school yard unless it is the day to open the school to parents such as open house, conference, or school events. Parents see off their children at the gate, not at the classroom even for the small children. Mrs. Maeda did not contact Masako's teacher either. However, other mothers did contact teachers by dropping off and picking up children at the classroom (Mrs. Yamaguchi and Mrs. Miyamoto), writing letters (Mrs. Hasegawa), or making appointments (Mrs. Kojima). They learned about their children's situation and problems sooner and better than Mrs. Maeda did.

Why Mothers Help Their Children?

As we see among the cases, some mothers are enthusiastic about their children's education while others are not. What is the motivation behind this attitude toward their children's education? In this section, the thoughts underlying their educational strategies for their children will be explored by comparing the literature reviewed in chapter two.

Many mothers in this study helped with their children's homework. Vogel (1967) claims that mothers do so because they feel that their guidance is necessary for their children and it helps their children learn more efficiently and rapidly. Mrs. Maeda believed children in the 1st and 2nd grade, who were creating study habits, needed the assistance to complete their homework correctly. This is the very reason why she read easy English books together with Masako. However, she expected her older child, Shigeru, to do his homework by himself because he is the "elder brother." In Japanese society, older siblings are often expected to take care of themselves while caretakers are busy nursing the younger ones (Hendry, 1986). After finding Shigeru had a hard time at school, especially during the first year, Mrs. Maeda regretted not having understood his situation better.

In Japan, working mothers who are too busy to provide a learning environment for their children may pay for tutoring (White 2002). Mrs. Miyamoto, for instance, who was too busy with her own schoolwork to help with her children's studies, sent them to *juku* to provide an opportunity to read more English and to build strong skills in math. However, while overseas, not only time but also the lack of skills to help may become reasons to ask for assistance. This was the reason Mrs. Hasegawa relied on tutors for her children's homework. She said that tutors or *juku* were not necessary while they were in

Japan because she or her husband could help them. In Hawai'i, however, she felt it was impossible for her to help with all of her children's homework. She did not think that studying only at school would be enough to ensure they got good grades. She believed the cost associated with hiring a tutor was justified by the need for assistance for their children.

Lebra (1984) discusses the educational mothers' double identity. That is, for them, their commitment to their children's education is entirely for the benefit of their children. While to outsiders, the children's academic achievement determines the social standing of the parents, especially the mother. In this study, no mother admitted that the reason for their devotion to their children's education was for social reasons. Mrs. Hasegawa said it was for their children's future. Mrs. Yamguchi said she only wished her son to stand by himself when he becomes an adult. However, interestingly, Mrs. Hasegawa pointed out a particular shop while we were walking toward our cars after the interview and told me that a prestigious university in Japan accepted the son of the owner. It is not clear whether Mrs. Hasegawa herself cared about her own social status by having a son who also had been accepted into a prestigious university in Japan, but this incident shows that outsiders might care whose children are successful and whose are not.

In addition to thinking about their children's future, those mothers who asked for intensive tutoring and/or sent their children to private schools described providing a good educational environment as an "investment." Mrs. Yamaguchi, for instance, felt she should "invest" in the quality of education her son would receive at a private school. She said, "I know that teachers in public schools work hard, but there is a shortage in numbers to provide quality education. If we want more than that, parents need to spend money on

the child. If parents invest in education for a child, it will bring a big reward later." For Mrs. Kojima, education is something to be "inherited" by children from the parents. She said, "I want to leave my child a good education, including extra curricular activities, rather than money, land or a house."

While many mothers in this study spend time and money on their children's education, Mrs. Kidani seemed somewhat different from the other mothers. She did not help with her daughter's homework other than sending her to the after school program. She was not concerned about finding a tutor for Sachiyo while she was showing difficulty in learning English. Mrs. Kidani seems to be one of the mothers who were concerned more about pursuing her own life goals than worrying about those of her husband or children. Kashiwagi (1999) describes how many women in Japan have recently turned to their own goals instead of maintaining the traditional role of wife/mother. Mrs. Kidani wanted to study at an American university, however, her marriage disrupted this dream. When she first came to Hawai'i, primarily as a result of her daughter's asthma problems, she was going to spend her time helping Sachiyo adjust to her new life. However, Mrs. Kidani soon became busy with her own life. She believed the younger the person, the easier it is to learn English and that was why she did not pay much attention to Sachiyo's English skills. In other words, she felt she needed the help more than her daughter because Sachiyo had a better chance to learn due to her age. While being busy with her study at college, Mrs. Kidani relegated her daughter's education to others by sending her to a better educational environment; a public school that seemed better than the one Sachiyo had been attending. This school also offered an after school program where Sachiyo might be able to receive help from ESL teachers. Mrs. Kidani picked up Sachiyo

after allowing enough time for her to finish her homework during the after school program. By doing this, Mrs. Kidani did not have to help with her daughter's homework at home.

Recently, it has become more common to see Japanese women who are studying abroad accompanied by their school age children ("*kozure rûgaku*" or "*oyako rûgaku*")[6]. Unlike wives of sojourn businessmen who can spend their time and energy solely on their children, these student mothers are often busy with their own schoolwork and with handling a full range of domestic issues, in addition to dealing with the concerns of their children. In this study, Mrs. Miyamoto and Mrs. Kidani were enrolled full time in college and were accompanied by their school-aged children. Because of their busy school schedule, they admitted to having little time to take care of their children's schoolwork. These student mothers were relatively younger than other mothers. They also experienced studying in the United States prior to coming to Hawai'i. Furthermore, their husbands' backgrounds were somewhat different from those in the other four cases, who were occupying high positions in large corporations. Because Mr. Miyamoto studied overseas for four years to obtain a business certificate, he understood his wife's desire to study abroad and allowed her to pursue her own goals. Mr. Kidani is an architect and saw the benefits of his daughter studying overseas. As more young Japanese women study abroad, coupled with the idea that good English skills are necessary for their children's success in their future, this style of sojourning, *kozure rûgaku*, may increase in the future.

[6] Miyashita (2000) describes her experience and problems associated with studying overseas with school age children.

There are varied backgrounds among families of Japanese sojourners. Educators should strive to understand each family's background in order to better help the children adjust to their new school environment.

Summary

This chapter discussed the mothers' actions and the thoughts behind them regarding their children's education. They carefully chose the time to come and to leave for the benefit of their children's education in the host country and/or in Japan. They also selected the neighborhood in which to live and the school to which their children would attend in order to make their children's learning environment better. In addition, various kinds of aids were used to help children to be successful at local schools and at school in Japan following their return. Furthermore, mothers took advantage of the information they obtained from friends and other parents to decide what they should do for their children. Those mothers who had more contact with teachers enjoyed a better understanding of their children's school life and the difficulty they faced, and could help solve the problems by giving them the appropriate assistance. Mothers spend much time helping their children for various reasons. Some thought it was simply a responsibility as a mother while others believed education to be an investment, and expected a return in the future. However, some mothers, as in the case of Mrs. Kidani, choose to concentrate more on their own needs rather than those of their child. The next chapter will summarize this study and make suggestions to help these migrant students better adjust themselves to the schools in the host country.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

After hearing of one Japanese sojourn family's choice to obtain green cards for their children, I became interested in the parents' strategies for their children's education rather than educational issues the migrant children have in the classrooms in the host country. As I examined the literature related to the issue of *kaigashijo* or overseas students, I noticed there were few studies focused on the parents' actions and underlying beliefs. Examining these parents' educational concerns and strategies is beneficial for educators because understanding their prospects and supporting them are crucial to helping their children adjust smoothly to a new environment.

Chapter two reviewed the literature relating to *kaigaishijo*, *kikokushijo* or returnee students, parenthood thereof, and Japanese motherhood as a whole. The number of *kaigaishijo* was the highest ever in 2003, and about 31 percent of them including 57 percent in North America attended local schools on weekdays and supplementary Japanese schools mostly on Saturdays. Once these *kaigaishijo* return to Japan, they are called *kikokushijo* and many of them go to schools that have remedial programs for them and/or offer different criteria for acceptance than normal Japanese students must undergo. Like their children who have problems in understanding the language spoken in the host country, mothers may also have problems with communicating with agencies and institutions because of their low English proficiency and limited knowledge of social customs. They also tend to consider that learning the local language is the key to success

in foreign classrooms. Many Japanese mothers are enthusiastic about their children's education because they believe that the sooner the child starts learning, the better the results will be. Japanese mothers tend to think that children need to be nurtured rather than left on their own to develop their abilities. However, some modern day mothers may be more concerned about their own life goals than their children's because after raising the youngest child, they have more time for themselves than mothers decades ago.

Chapter three described the research method in this study. I used qualitative method in order to understand how people make sense of their world based on the experiences they have had. The style as case study is appropriate to gain an in-depth understanding of the participants' experiences. I conducted semi-structured interviews twice for each interviewee contacted by snowball sampling. Chapter four presented the data of six cases regarding the parents' actions and thoughts. They were described chronologically during each stage of sojourning.

Chapter five analyzed and discussed the mothers' strategies and beliefs relating to their children's education. It revealed that some of the mothers gained the autonomy to decide the time to arrive and leave the host country. They may send their husbands ahead in order to have more time to prepare and to wait for the best timing for their children to start attending school in the host country. They may also return to Japan with the children prior to the husband in order to maximize the choices for their children's school. Or, they may remain in the host country with green cards in order to wait until their child can grow old enough to decide for themselves which school they want to attend. Mothers also chose the residence and school carefully so that their children would be in a good environment for studying. They hired tutors to help their children learn English quickly

and to aid in their homework that was beyond the mother's capability. Many of them send their children to supplementary Japanese school to maintain proficiency in the Japanese curriculum and/or to have more chance to use Japanese. Through friends, they collected information about everyday life and the school system both in the host country and in Japan. Some of them relied on other parents to understand what was going on at school. Others frequently contacted teachers by writing letters or by meeting when they picked up and dropped off their children. The latter were more fluent in English and knew the importance of contacting teachers rather than waiting for the teacher to contact them. Furthermore, some mothers helped with their children's schoolwork because they thought it was their responsibility as parents. Others who sent their children to private schools and/or asked tutors for intensive care considered education to be an investment. While some mothers spent time and money on their children, one mother in this study seemed to be less interested in helping her child with her schoolwork and more interested in herself. She may fall into the new category of modern Japanese women who are also interested in pursuing their own life goals other than simply taking care of their husbands and children.

Recommendations

There are three main areas for recommendations: To help children to have a positive attitude while in the host country, to have positive expectations of life in Japan upon returning, and to help parents deal with the children's educational issues better by educating them and building networks.

Life in the Host Country

Positive Attitude Toward Living Overseas

As we see in the previous chapter, the child who felt he was a victim of his father's transfer might not be willing to study the language spoken in the host country or the curriculum in the classroom. In addition, the child also blamed his father rather than a lack of effort, if any, for the hardship he would face until getting used to his new life. To avoid such circumstances, parents or other caretakers should persuade their children with positive reinforcement to leave the home country and undertake the sojourn. In addition, they should provide children the opportunity to learn about school life and life in general overseas. This will also help the children to reduce their anxiety toward an unknown experience.

Intensive Training of the Language

When the language used is different between the home country and the host country, children need assistance in learning the new language. As we saw in the case of Sachiyo Kidani, just because the child is young, does not mean they will acquire the language "naturally." They need appropriate help to learn the language. If possible, they should start learning the language before arriving in the host country by using tutors and media. Age appropriateness is also a matter of concern. A twelve-year-old boy may not be interested in a video designed for an infant, but he may be agreeable to a sports program.

More Opportunity, More Friends, More Confidence – Joining Extra Curricular Activities

Sending children to extra curricular activities also helps them to have more chance to learn the language, to make friends, and in the end, to be confident with themselves.

They might feel inferior in the host country classrooms because of the difference of the language and/or the curriculum. However, to be able to practice skills they already have or are interested in developing will help to increase self-esteem.

Returning to Japan

Explain the Positive Qualities of Life in Japan

If the information children have about Japan is only negative, such as going to *juku* until 9 o'clock and intensive study requirements for entrance examinations, they may not want to return to Japan. The case of Noboru Yamaguchi showed that reading historical novels made him long to see the historical buildings and nature in Japan. This became one reason for Noboru to look forward to returning. Just as convincing children before moving to the host country is crucial to their smooth transition, motivating them to return helps them accept their circumstances and prepare to go home.

Visit Schools in Japan During Sojourn

Without an idea of what Japanese school life is like, the child may feel anxious about returning to Japan. To have an image of Japanese school life is important especially for the children who have never been in a classroom in Japan or have remained abroad for many years. To reduce this anxiety, *taiken nyûgaku* or attending school in Japan for a short term will be helpful, such as in the case of Mieko Kojima. In addition, this experience may motivate the children to keep learning the Japanese language and curriculum while overseas. Furthermore, it will give them an idea of school life in Japan once they return. In the case of Noboru Yamaguchi, he started looking forward to entering high school in Japan after visiting several schools during the summer when he

visited Japan. To have a practical image of life to come can help to reduce anxiety and increase motivation.

To help parents

Educate Parents

If the parents are worried about life overseas, so might their children. Parents, as well as children, should be prepared for their new life. Attending classes and seminars is a good method of obtaining information, as Mrs. Hasegawa demonstrated. There are several agencies to aid parents in obtaining information about life overseas such as the Foundation for Overseas Children's Education and various mothers' groups who experienced the overseas sojourn such as "Friends." This information should be within reach of parents, provided by companies sending their employees abroad and made available by a myriad of city, state and regional agencies that deal with overseas travel.

Teacher-Parent Communication

Parents should be encouraged to contact teachers when they have problems. In Japanese schools, parents expect to be approached from their child's homeroom teacher if the child has a problem. In other words, until the teacher or school contacts the parents, the child is doing fine or is at least not in trouble at school. Japanese parents may also drop their children at the gate of the school, but will rarely go into the school or the child's classroom. However, the case studies show that daily contact with teachers promotes communication between the teacher and parents as in the case of Mrs. Yamaguchi and Mrs. Miyamoto. Especially in the case of Mrs. Yamaguchi, it was the teacher who first asked her to come in after class to talk with her. In some cultures, such

as in Japan, it is not normal for parents to stop at the classroom on a daily basis. Teachers should be aware of such cultural differences and provide the opportunity to communicate with them. Likewise, parents of sojourn students need to research proper social etiquette in the host country to learn what is and what is not acceptable. In addition, as this case study shows, the backgrounds of the families are varied even though they are all Japanese sojourners. Teachers should try to find out what the expectations of the parents are.

Building a Social Network

Parents should share the own experiences with each other. Some may not have a social network established and do not know whom to ask if they need the help as we have seen with Mrs. Maeda. To have the opportunity to meet other parents in the classroom or in the same situation as new migrants or immigrants, parents' meetings of the ESLL class is a good opportunity for such parents to meet each other and share new experiences. Mrs. Yamaguchi demonstrated this tactic successfully.

Liaison

In Hawai'i, there is a specific person within the Department of Education who acts as a liaison, or "bridge" between the family from overseas and the school. However, none of the participants in my study mentioned such a person and several of my associates in the field of education have never heard of such a post. Presumably, this bridge is supposed to be available to families with foreign students attending school in Hawai'i. To be successful, this person must be visible to the Japanese community. An easy way to form this bridge with Japanese families would be to visit a *hoshûkô,* as many newly arrived families, usually less fluent in English enroll their children there. The bridge is an excellent idea, but seems to be lacking in results, based on the results of my study.

APPENDIX 1: CONSENT FORM

AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN
THE STUDY OF JAPANESE FAMILIES' EDUCATIONAL POLICIES

Chie Wilcock
Graduate student in Educational Foundations
University of Hawai'i

The more Japanese people who work abroad, the more children who will accompany them. In 2002, the number of Japanese students abroad from grade one to grade nine was 52,046. This represents the largest number of Japanese sojourn students in history.

It is important to understand the parents' expectations for their children's education abroad. This information is valuable to help educators understand the needs of children from different backgrounds. The experiences of Japanese who live abroad are invaluable for both the U.S. and the Japanese governments in order to form effective policies that will enhance children's smooth adaptation to life in the U.S. and re-adaptation to their life in Japan.

With the above concerns in mind, I am conducting research on Japanese families in Hawai'i. If you agree to take part in this study, you will be interviewed about your child and your educational views. The interview will be held twice, each lasting 40 minutes to one hour, in September to November 2003. These interviews may (with your approval) be tape-recorded. You are free to skip any questions you do not feel comfortable answering and to refuse to have any (or all) of the interviews recorded. The transcription and audiotapes will be kept in a secure location during the study and after it has been completed.

The research will follow guidelines established by United States Federal laws and the requirements of University of Hawai'i. The research will simultaneously follow the customs and conventions of Japanese society. The research will be reported in the Master thesis which will be written in English by the researcher and be submitted to University of Hawai'i. The name of the participants will never appear in the thesis.

Participation in this research is entirely voluntary. I hope this study will be beneficial for the participants. Hopefully, by verbalizing your thoughts and experiences, this will also help you to gain a clearer understanding of your educational ideas and views. I see no risk associated with your participation. However, you may refuse to take part or withdraw at any time from this study.

If you understand and agree to the aforementioned items, please sign below.

I certify that I understand the foregoing, that I have been given satisfactory answers to my inquiries concerning project procedures and other matters and that I have been advised that I am free to withdraw my consent and to discontinue participation in the project or activity at any time without prejudice.

I herewith give my consent to participate in this project with the understanding that such consent does not waive any of my legal rights, nor does it release the Principal Investigator or the institution or any employee or agent thereof from liability for negligence.

_____ Date _____.

Signature of individual participant

(If you cannot obtain satisfactory answers to your questions or have comments or complains about your treatment in this study, contact: Committee on Human Studies, University of Hawai'i, 2540 Maile Way, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822. Phone (808) 956-5007)

CONSENT FORM (in Japanese)

ハワイ在留邦人家族の教育への関心について　研究参加承諾書

ウィルコック千絵
ハワイ大学教育学部大学院生

海外で働く日本人が増えるにつれ、同伴する子供の数も増加しています。２００２年には海外で小中学校に通う児童生徒数は 52,406 人となり、過去最高を記録しました。

親の子どもの教育への関心を理解することは、子どもが何が必要であることを知ることにつながり、教育者にとって大切なことです。現地の学校への適応、また日本に戻ってからの最適応を促すためにも、日本人の海外生活の経験を研究することは重要です。

以上のことをふまえ、私はハワイに在留する日本人の家族について研究をすることにしました。もし、この研究に参加することに同意してくださるなら、子どもさんの様子と親御さんの考えについてのインタビューを日本語で受けることになります。インタビューは１時間程度です。許可が得られれば、インタビューは録音されます。答えたくない質問には答えなくて結構ですし、一部、あるいはすべての録音を拒否することもできます。インタビュー語録とテープは安全な場所に保管されます。また同意が得られれば、インタビューから約１ヵ月後に、内容の確認のためにもう一度会うことをお願いすることがあります。

この研究はアメリカ政府の法律とハワイ大学の指針にもとづき行われます。論文は研究者が英語で執筆し、修士論文としてハワイ大学に提出されます。参加者の名前はすべて仮名で扱われ、実際の名前が論文にのることはありません。

この研究への協力は、すべて参加者の意思にもとづくものです。考えや経験を言葉にすることが、自らの教育に関する考えをより深く知る機会につながれば幸いに存じます。この研究が危害を加えることはないと思いますが、必要ならば、いついかなるときでも協力を断ることができます。

以上のことをご理解いただければ、署名をお願いいたします。

私は、この研究に関する質問に満足できる回答を得、いついかなるときでも参加を取りやめることができるという趣旨を理解しました。
この承諾書が、自分のいかなる法的権利を剥奪しないこと、また研究者、組織、代理人の責任を不注意に免除することのないことを理解し、この研究に参加することを承諾します。

＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿　日付＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿.
署名

（もしこの研究に関して、ご意見、ご不満な点があれば、下記に連絡してください.
Committee on Human Studies, University of Hawaii, 2540 Maile Way, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822
Phone (808) 956-5007)

APPENDIX 2

Interview Protocol

1. How long did you have to prepare upon hearing of your move to Hawai'i and actually arriving in Hawai'i? How did your children react to the news of moving to Hawai'i?
2. What did you do to prepare for your children's education before leaving Japan? What steps did you take? Why did you feel these were necessary? How did you go about taking these measures?
3. What were your concerns for your children's education after arriving in Hawai'i? Why? Were their any unexpected successes or challenges your children encountered after arriving in Hawai'i? Please Explain. What was your reaction to these events?
4. What are your concerns for your children's education now? Why?
5. What will be your concerns about your children's education after hearing the news of your spouse's job transferring back to Japan? Why? Do you have a plan or strategy for your children upon returning to Japan? What to think your children's response to returning to Japan will be?

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