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### Acculturation of Japanese and American Intermarried Couples: Case Study of Their Marital Experiences and Parenting

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#### **Abstract**

This qualitative case study sought to gain in-depth understanding of Japanese and American family unions and the intermarried couples' acculturation processes. It explored how intermarried couples view cultural differences, and how they negotiate and compromise in conflicts caused by such differences. Qualitative interviews were conducted with four couples comprising Japanese wives and their European-American husbands residing in the Midwestern United States. Interview questions included couples' communication style, marital expectations, and parenting, from their perspective. The study found factors such as communication style, gender role expectations, marital expectations, and parenting style, contributed to conflicts in co-parenting and communication. Further investigation including sociopolitical aspects and cultural adaptation are recommended for future research.

**Keywords:** Acculturation; Intermarriage; Interracial; Communication; Parenting

#### **Introduction**

Globalization not only affects world economics and politics, but also changes the face of family unions. In the United States, the number of interracial marriages has expanded from 0.7% of total marriages in 1970 to 4.9% in 2000 (Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007). Particularly in Japanese international marriage, Americans have comprised a large percentage of the spouses (Want, 2013) in both Japan and the United States. Despite the major increase in interracial marriage, there are few empirical studies, especially concerning Japanese and American marriage unions. Most studies about intermarriage have focused on interracial African American and European American unions rather than transnational and cross-cultural unions (e.g., Hud-Aleem, Countryman, & Gillig, 2008; Walker & Prasad, 2006; Wardle, 1999; Wardle, & Cruz-Janzen, 2004). Understanding the experiences of the ever increasing population of Japanese and American unions is critical to filling the gaps in the literature on intermarriage.

Moreover, literature is particularly lacking in qualitative investigation of this population. Previous studies on intermarriage often concern various aspects of sociocultural differences, such as social support (Fu & Wolfinger, 2011), family supports (Fu & Wolfinger, 2011; Huijnk, 2012) or societal tolerance to racial integration (Voigtlander & Voth, 2013), communication styles (Kline et al., 2012; Rohrlich, 1988), and expectations for marriage (Kline et al., 2012; Taniguchi & Kaufman, 2014) through quantitative methods. These differences may lead to the couples having to work on acculturation to each other.

To bolster previous studies, this examines Japanese and American marriage unions (consisting of Japanese wives and European-American husbands) and their mixed-heritage children, living in Midwestern United States. It focuses on how the couples' acculturation to each other affects how they deal with differences, disagreements, tensions, and conflicts in their married life, and how these differences, in their perspective, contribute to their disagreements and conflicts. It addresses two main questions: 1) What are the intermarried couples' marriage experiences? 2) What are their experiences in communication, marital expectations, and parenting styles? By conducting qualitative interviews with the couples, it offers an in-depth understanding of the intermarried couples' marital experiences, challenges, and acculturation processes.

### ***Terminology***

This study involves intermarried couples comprised of a Japanese wife and a U.S.-born European American husband. Different terms for "intermarriage" are introduced in this paper according to the different concepts for different languages and nationalities. The term "intermarriage" in the United States often refers to interracial marriage (Collet, 2015; Fu & Wolfinger, 2011; Rodriguez-Garcia, 2015; Sporlein, Schlueter, & Tubergen, 2014; Wu, Shimmele, & Hou, 2015) amongst European American, African American, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, and other groups. In contrast to intermarriage in the U.S. focusing on race, Japanese intermarriage is focused on nationality. The term "mixed-heritage children", used throughout the article, is chosen over "interracial" or "interethnic" children to convey cultural heritage such as language, cultural norms, and beliefs derived from parents of different backgrounds.

### ***Acculturation***

Acculturation theory has been primarily used in studies of intercultural adjustment (Greenland & Brown, 2005), defined as the process of adaptation to a new culture in order to survive and function in a new environment, and is often used to examine assimilation and integration of immigrants into new environments (Chae & Foley, 2010). Cultural adjustment of spouses is often challenging for intermarried couples (Negy & Snyder, 2000; Nitta, 1988). In their study of acculturation of Mexican American and non-Hispanic White American interethnic couples, Negy and Snyder (2000) found that the level of acculturation for interethnic couples was significantly related to marital distress, such as financial management and child rearing roles. Kim, Edwards, Sweeney, and Wetchler (2012) found acculturation and differentiation factored into increased relationship satisfaction, and stressed integration of cultural values and beliefs are important to the acculturation of intermarried couples.

## ***Communication and Expectations for Marriage***

Japan being collectivist and the U.S. individualist (Kline et al., 2012), these two cultures may have different familial approaches in communication style, behavior, values, and beliefs. Japanese spouses view direct communication as a cause of conflict, and prefer avoiding direct confrontation to maintain harmony (Taniguchi & Kaufman, 2014). Despite very few empirical studies on intercultural couples' communication (Hiew, Halford, Vijver, & Liu, 2016), Li (2006) found convergence in intercultural communication amongst those not in an intimate relationship.

Referencing marriage between two cultures, Kline et al. (2012) found cultural tendencies in mate preferences and marital expectations, and Americans valued romantic love more than collectivists societies such as Indians, Koreans, and Chinese (Kline et al., 2012). Taniguchi and Kaufman (2014) argued Americans emphasized personal happiness, whereas Japanese were more pragmatic, with younger Japanese couples often looking for equal partnership and child rearing responsibility (Taniguchi & Kaufman, 2014).

## ***Parenting Styles***

Parents learn to negotiate when they have different cultural, traditional, historical, and religious values (Edwards, Caballero, & Puthussery, 2010). In Western societies, authoritative parenting is considered the best approach in encouraging a child's self-generated willingness and maturity, because it applies firm control with negotiation as family values (Rudy & Grusec, 2001). Whereas authoritarianism, characterized by forcible authority that demands absolute obedience and respect to, is not considered the best parenting style (Rudy & Grusec, 2001).

Previous studies have shown that mothers from collectivist cultures tend toward authoritarian parenting; however, the expected negative outcomes of an authoritarian style have not been observed in children raised that way (Rudy & Grusec, 2001). Scholars suggest that the parenting style represented in the East Asian Parenting Model (Chao, 1994; Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Wu, 1985) may involve parental support in other ways, differing from the traditional conceptualization of authoritarian parenting (e.g., Baumrind, 1971; Chao, 1996). It has been believed that authoritative parenting works better in individualist societies, where expressing your own wishes and needs is expected, whereas, East Asian parents' authoritarian parenting may involve transmitting values while setting solid rules based on family rather than restrictive control (Cho, 1996). In East Asian countries, family honor dictates child behavior through expectations set by their parents and ancestors (Otto, 2016).

## ***Method***

Qualitative case study methodology enabled us "to explore and examine various phenomena of specific targets, such as individuals, groups, and their relationships" (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 544) in the communication, marital and acculturating experiences of the intermarried Japanese and American couples, bounded by limitations of location (in the Midwestern U.S.) and frequency of interviews (3 interviews per couple over 3 months).

### ***Sample Recruitment***

Participants were chosen by following criteria: Couples consisting of Japanese wives and U.S.-born American husbands, where the wives were raised through adolescence in Japan and the husbands

were of European American descent, defining two specific extremes in cultural difference. The couple must have resided in the United States for at least one year, and been married for at least five years giving them sufficient exposure to their partners. The couple must have raised, or currently raising children together because child rearing was an important factor when observing the acculturation of intermarried couples (Negy & Snyder, 2000). Eight couples were introduced as possible participants by the informant, who is an acquaintance of the researcher. Two husbands refused, and loss of contact with two couples left four couples participating in the study (see Table 1 for a summary of the participants' characteristics).

**Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Sample**

Participants		Age	Years of Marriage	Age of Child(ren)
Adams	Mr. Adams	42	16	11 & 8 years old
	Mrs. Adams	44		
Brown	Mr. Brown	40	11	12 & 8 years old
	Mrs. Brown	39		
Cooper	Mr. Cooper	36	10	8 years old
	Mrs. Cooper	49		
Duncan	Mr. Duncan	47	10	10 years old
	Mrs. Duncan	46		

### *Data Collection*

Qualitative interviews collected detailed information about how the couples acculturate to each other's marital expectations, communication style, and parenting style. The first interview was conducted with the couple for marital background, and the second with each spouse individually, to explore their thoughts and experiences independent of their spouse's presence. The last interview was to confirm the information from the second interview and ask further questions if needed. The interviews were video recorded to include behavioral observations, and participants were given pseudonyms for confidentiality. The interviews were semi-structured, with focused research questions, but giving interviewees space for variety in their answers.

The first interview set a relaxed environment while collecting basic background information (marriage period, number and age of children) through a combination of open-ended and close-ended questions. The first interview, except for the Duncan's, was conducted in English. Mr. and Mrs. Duncan both expressed concern about the wife's ability to speak English during explanation of the interview procedure. Mr. Duncan was able to conduct the interview in Japanese, with all interview questions being asked in Japanese, while each spouse responded in their native language. When Mr. Duncan had difficulty understanding, the interviewer used both English and Japanese to ensure the couple understood the questions, and equally participated in the interview.

Core questions during the second and third interviews were open-ended, centering on the couples' experiences in communication, marital expectations, parenting, and any changes made during the course of their marriage (see Table 2 for selected questions during the second interview).

Table 2. *Selected Second Interview Questions*

1	Do you remember what you expected in marriage when you were younger and single? Has it changed since you got married?
2	How would you describe your communication style?
3	How about your spouse's?
4	How do you feel about your communication style before your marriage and after marriage, any changes?
5	How about your spouse's? Any changes?
6	Any changes in family customs before marriage and after marriage? Any traditional events or customs added or removed, and why?
7	Do you have any conflicts or challenges in marriage?
8	How do you solve/negotiate conflicts if you have any?
9	Do you have any conflicts or challenges in child rearing (if it was not suggested in marital challenges)? 9-a) Who disciplines the child more? b) Who listens to the child's needs and desires more?
10	How do you solve such child rearing issues? How do you make decisions for your children? At what point do your spouse and you allow your children to get a sick day from school, fever, and their behaviors? How do you come up with such decisions? How about applications of medications and doctor visits?
11	Do you feel your spouse's culture affected you in any way? If so how?
12	Considering all we have talked about today, how do you think the experiences you described and these changes you made, negotiations, compromise with each other affect your children?

The second interview transcripts and notes dictated the questions for the third interview.

During the second and third interviews, English was used with all husbands, and Japanese was used with all wives, in order for them to express their thoughts more comfortably.

### *Data Analysis*

Using content analysis, data analysis was driven by participants' experiences, and codes were developed based on interview transcripts, with only coding for communication styles, marital expectations, and parenting prepared prior to the interviews. Once the transcripts were completed, specific words and phrases that represented adaptation, acculturation, and negotiation were marked to code the data. The key words and phrases were coded for each participant, as well as for each couple, then compared against each individual and couple. The transcripts went through member check (Stake, 1995) to increase the data validity, and each participant checked own transcript to ensure an accurate account. Interviews conducted in Japanese were transcribed first in Japanese and then translated into English, and the Japanese wives reviewed the English transcripts to ensure nothing significant for them had not been lost in translation. Emerging codes were added and revised during these processes, such as social and political issues and struggles and challenges in marriage.

## ***Findings***

### *Communication Patterns and Styles in Intermarried Couples*

Most participants, regardless of cultural background, felt direct communication helped avoid language associated misunderstandings and conflicts. Couples also noted convergence in communication, with both husband and wife influencing the other's communication style, with some participants viewed the different language backgrounds as an advantage, not an obstacle.

Of the couples, only the Adams' expressed satisfaction with their communication, who waited until their children had gone to sleep to discuss distressing matters. They also used "timeouts" from each other to calm down and organize their thoughts, returning later to talk, apologize, negotiate, and find a middle ground. In addition to frequent communication, Mr. Adams suggested that they had built confidence in each other over the course of marriage, allowing them to be direct while also lessening conflicts.

The Duncan's were the only one whose principal language at home was Japanese, and they felt their communication was fairly good. They scheduled a "business meeting" when they needed to talk, which satisfied their needs as a successful communication method. According to Mr. Duncan, instead of arguing in the moment, scheduling a meeting gave them time to calm down and think beforehand. Mr. Duncan initially found the more indirect communication style of Japan difficult, but now prefers it to the more direct and self-centered American style of communication, while Mrs. Duncan has adapted to more freely expressing her emotions. This type of convergence (Li, 2006) was noted with both the Cooper's and the Duncan's, with both husbands feeling their wives had adopted a communication style more expressive of her emotions.

The Brown's spoke both Japanese and English at home, and felt discomfort in each other's approach to communication. Mr. Brown suspected his direct and assertive style of communication frightened his wife, evidenced in their non-verbal communication during the first interview. Mrs. Brown shrunk and maintained distance from her husband, while he stated his opinions strongly to assert control over the argument. The resulting discomfort and power imbalance, and lack of acculturation in communication style, led to Mrs. Brown to withdraw from conversation. When asked to describe the couple's communication, Mr. Brown summarized it as "lacking."

None of the husbands expressed concerns about language barriers, while the wives found it to be a hurdle they had to overcome. Mrs. Adams found it to be beneficial for both her and her husband's acculturating process, and stated "He knew the language issue comes with me when we got married, so I expected him to understand it.", rather than expecting her to improve her English. She explained that her husband constructed a means of communication that adapted to her English. Mrs. Duncan also felt the need to overcome language barriers contributed to lessening arguments in favor of building lines of communication.

### *Expectations for Marriage*

### *Cultural Norms of Gender and Marriage*

Three Japanese wives' prior disinterest in marriage was influenced by the models witnessed in older generations. Mrs. Adams suggested that Japanese traditional values still prevailed, and that women of her generation were expected to get married to be happy. Seeing her mother bound by those traditional values had a profound effect on her view of marriage.

All four wives' expectations were influenced by their parents' marriages. Mrs. Adams' mother struggled with staying at home rather than having her own career, leaving her desirous of a life outside the home. Mrs. Brown imagined a dual income household, because both of her parents had worked. Mrs. Cooper's parents never had time as a couple because they always focused on their work and children, so, she also focused on her daughter and work. Mrs. Duncan expressed frustration over her parents taking each other for granted, which eventually led to contempt for each other, leading her to make an effort to always show gratitude to her husband.

In regards to husbands' expectation for marriage, only Mr. Brown expressed strong expectations for marriage. Mr. Cooper was the only husband that expressed parental influence played a role in his marital expectations. He expected not to divorce, and his reserved, harmonious communication style was the obverse of what he witnessed with his parents.

Since Japanese cultural concepts are often constructed by native Shinto, Confucian, and Buddhism beliefs, marital roles have been traditionally separated by gender, allowing wives to focus on child rearing (Kline et al., 2012). Mrs. Cooper expressed her determination to lead a child-centered life style, as her parents did. Mrs. Adams expected gender role separation, but when her first child was born, her husband expected that mother and father would have equal roles in raising children. This contradicted her gender role expectations of separate roles, and she explained how her husband tried to play an equal part. Her husband took time to acculturate to her values, as she stated, "He had to realize that there were many things that he couldn't do. Now he realizes that there are different roles." Mr. Brown, on the other hand, emphasized his preference not to follow Japanese gender role expectations, wanting to take a disciplinary role and actively participate in child rearing activities, while expecting his wife to take the motherly role, spending more mother-daughter time with their daughter.

### *Differences in Social Issues and Values*

All couples felt cultural aspects such as food and holidays posed unique problems that same-culture couples might not have. This section explains couples' difficulties and struggles caused by different social concepts and values, which are at the core of their acculturation experience.

### *Racism and Self-Concept in the U.S.*

Racism, religious oppression, political issues, legal matters, and social hierarchy in the U.S. were repeated themes during the interviews for all four Japanese wives. Mrs. Adams reported:

"I thought I knew the U.S. pretty well from traveling here, but I had no clue about real Americans...I struggled with the differences in system but major struggle was family events. Well, Americans believe that they are the greatest, and their culture is the greatest. And as for me, they think 'coming from Asia, you are lucky to be married here and have a good life.' Well the U.S. has clear social hierarchy, compared to Japan, and their socioeconomic gap of rich and poor is enormous. And we, at first, had more opportunities to hang out with middle class and lower middle class people. Such people have never owned a passport, never been in a foreign country, and never even been interested in foreign countries. That's the world they grow up in. And that's ok. But having to hang out with such people was such a stress."

Her husband's family view of her as a "poor Asian" was unacceptable at the beginning of marriage, though she eventually understood their cultural background and found forgiveness. Mr. Cooper's experiences in Japan supported Mrs. Adams's view, Mr. Cooper recounted "in America, it's, especially around here, you're brought up that this is the best place in the whole world, that you want to be, that everybody wants to come to America, and life isn't good anywhere but America, and then you go to different countries and you're just like (making exploding noise holding head) you know" continuing with, "I can't believe I've been, you know, indoctrinated my whole life." He felt the low rate of passports issued per-capita is in the U.S., and that are "too busy thinking just about themselves" left them ignorant of the world. He was happy his daughter was growing up in a bicultural environment, making her much more globally aware.

Mrs. Cooper, in tears, expressed concerns about religious oppression, and desired more varied influence and choices for her daughter. Her husband supported this during his solo interview, citing a religious oppression in his community: "there was a time I got super pissed off at the nursery school because one of the nursery school teachers had told my daughter, her grandparents were going to go to hell because they weren't Christians." Mr. Cooper suggested that kindness is a Christian teaching, and pointed out that the kindness Japanese people show each other, and that "there's only one percent Christian population" in Japan.

Self-concept in the U.S., in contrast to Japanese valuing humbleness, confused Japanese wives, especially when having to convey them in English. Mr. Brown rated his wife's communication as "not confident", though she teaches at a prestigious local university. Harmony within one's community, rather than personal display of opinion, is the precept of confidence in Japan. This differing concept of "confidence" may be a key factor, as both Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Duncan felt it greatly influenced their marital communication.

### *Standard of Living*

Mr. Cooper believed medical costs and lack of public transportation marked a great difference in standard of living between the middle class of Japan versus the United States, stating he lived more comfortably at a lower wage in Japan because "basic human needs" were provided by the government.

Mrs. Cooper felt the American social hierarchical system, and great disparity between upper and lower class, left her struggling with financial insecurity. The gap between upper class and working class is not as prominent in Japan, and she felt being part of a much larger layer of middle class offered a sense of security. Combined with high medical costs in the absence of universal health care, and a political climate that has become increasingly hostile toward immigration, she is often concerned that an emergency could cause her family financial ruin.

### *Standards of Safety*

Safety was a deep concern for the wives, and often caused discussion of moving back to Japan. All participants viewed Japan as vastly safer than the United States. Mr. Cooper, having lived in the town with the highest crime rate in Japan, felt it was much safer than the rural town in Northwest Indiana, a supposedly low crime rate area, where he grew up. Mrs. Brown expressed that she did not want to live in the U.S., due to the America's notoriously high rates of violent crimes.



## *Parenting*

### *Authoritative vs Authoritarian*

All couples agreed that the husbands tended toward authoritarian parenting, while the wives took an authoritative approach. Mr. Adams and Mrs. Adams agreed that Mr. Adams often yelled, saying things he should not have, and later regretted, while Mrs. Adams took time to explain things to their children. Mr. Brown used corporal punishment, which contrasted with Mrs. Brown's parenting style. Mr. Cooper yelled at their daughter, and would revoke privileges, only to not follow through, while Mrs. Cooper wanted to set more stable rules for their daughter. Mrs. Cooper said their daughter played "good girl" in front of her father, and did not express what she really thought. Mrs. Duncan felt her husband's parenting was so strict that it was eroding their daughter's confidence.

### *Differences of Cultural Customs and Standards in Parenting*

Mrs. Brown gave many examples of differing culturally based parenting styles. Co-sleeping of parents with newborns or infants to develop healthy attachment is common in Japan, while Americans prefer separate bedrooms to establish a sense of independence. Mrs. Brown felt she missed a bonding opportunity with her first born, and was inconvenienced by sleeping separately, but complied with her husband's wishes. She was also shocked by the use of Sprite to ease a sore, and said "It's out of question for Japanese common sense." Bathing was also a cultural difference, as common sense in Japan was "washing off the dirt we bring back home from outside, and keep our bed clean". Mr. Brown preferred showering in the morning, and would leave the children unbathed for days.

### *Health Standards*

Excessive sugar, additives, and artificial colors present in the American diet were a common concern among the wives, as they wanted to establish healthy eating habits for their children. Mrs. Duncan specifically mentioned strong medication, which her husband and mother-in-law advocated, and she was culturally opposed to. The couple compromised by using homeopathic medicines and limiting soda to once a week when dining out.

## **Discussion**

This study explored acculturation experiences of intermarried couples through their communication, marital expectations, and parenting styles. The findings showed that the Japanese wives favored a direct communication style. Except for Mr. Brown, the husbands viewed the shift toward a more direct style with their wives as progress, or building of confidence, in their relationship, rather than understanding it as something they brought into their marriage. The husbands' previous experiences of having lived in Japan might influence their appreciation of being "group-centered" as opposed to "asserting personal opinions" via a rather indirect communication style. Indirect communication is designed to avoid confrontation and conflicts within the group, due to collectivists' tendencies to favor interdependence and determining self in the group context (Kitayama, & Markus, 1994). As the wives mentioned, within intercultural communication, they would prefer a direct communication style to convey messages more clearly and avoid misunderstanding. Alternatively, these participating couples found a convergence of style, in line with literature on intercultural communication (Li, 2006). "Good"

communication seems to be a principal indicator of a “successful” relationship with the participants of the study (Fletcher, 2002). Adams, who were satisfied with their communication, also showed satisfaction in marriage, as opposed to the Browns, who were dissatisfied with both. Goldman’s (1992) findings of the argumentative nature in the U.S. versus the non-argumentative nature of Japan’s communication style supports the findings of this study. The husbands felt their wives tended to “build things up,” avoiding confrontation until they erupted. Several husbands did feel their wives had “taken their style,” indicating a convergence, and now speak up more often. Such incongruences in the wives’ communication can be explained by Park et al. (2012) despite cultural preferences in direct or indirect communication style, overgeneralization is problematic due to the variations of individual differences within culture.

Traditional values of marital expectations in collectivist-individualist theory (Kline et al., 2012) were clearly seen in the Cooper’s. Mr. Cooper expressed need for his wife’s attention and romantic love, whereas, Mrs. Cooper expressed her determination to focus her attention on their daughter. Traditional gender role expectations, husband as breadwinner and wife as home maker, were only seen in a half of the couples. Some husbands expressed understood and accepted their wives pursuing a career, while others preferred more traditional gender roles. Other than Mrs. Adams, the wives adopted a traditional gender role, following the example of their parents.

This study contradicts previous empirical studies (i.e., Kimmelmeier et al., 2003; Rudy & Grusec, 2001, 2006), that found collectivists practice authoritarian parenting, in order to implement obedience to authorities and discipline, while individualists practice an authoritative style in order to facilitate a child’s self-generated willingness and maturity. However, in this study. The husbands were disciplinarian, while the wives were listeners to and advised their children. Some of the authoritarian parenting practices the husbands employed are related to East Asian parenting model (Chao, 1996), contrary to the authoritarian parenting style traditionally normalized in the U.S. (Baumrind, 1971). These contradictory findings can be attributed to gender role expectations, rather than cultural parenting styles of collectivists or individualists.

### ***Limitations***

The small Japanese population in the area limited the number of possible participants. It might affect the participants’ experiences and perspectives about acculturation, such as job choices and school choices for their children. In metropolitan U.S. cities, where Japanese businesses maintain branches, the wives could work without speaking English, and most major cities also have Japanese schools. Intermarried Japanese wives could benefit from a metropolitan environment, which could influence acculturation significantly. The sample recruitment was limited to a Northwest Indiana area, which could also affect the participants’ cultural experiences.

There may exist a potential bias amongst the sample. The participants are of similar SES, age, profession, and age group of children. Husbands were limited to those of European descent, intending to examine the cultural contrast of collectivists and individualists. Unintentionally, all husbands had lived in Japan, which could significantly affect the acculturation.

Qualitative interviews were conducted by one researcher, herself intermarried Japanese, which might affect the nature of interviewer-interviewee connection. In this qualitative case study, a native Japanese speaking interviewer was crucial, as all of the wives expressed concerns about their English skills. Though this offered comfort to the wives, the husbands may have felt bias in having an interviewer with cultural and marital experiences more closely related to their wives’. A bilingual interviewer avoided

a primary concern of qualitative inquiry, interpreting and translating the native language of interviewees to English (Littig, & Pochhacker, 2014).

### ***Suggestions for Future Studies***

This study was conducted in a small Midwestern area, with a limited Japanese population, and studies from a broader spectrum of population would find different experiences and issues. Longitudinal studies would provide richer data about the effects of times differing locations.

The wives experienced similar hardships marrying into a vastly different culture, more social support to help intermarried couples, particularly those from different countries, would help the couples succeed in their global family union. Community based cultural centers and culturally sensitive mental health professionals would be of great advantage to these families. As this population rapidly grows, it is important to continue to investigate and explore their needs.

**Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Sample**

Participants		Age	Years of Marriage	Age of Child(ren)
Adams	Mr. Adams	42	16	11 & 8 years old
	Mrs. Adams	44		
Brown	Mr. Brown	40	11	12 & 8 years old
	Mrs. Brown	39		
Cooper	Mr. Cooper	36	10	8 years old
	Mrs. Cooper	49		
Duncan	Mr. Duncan	47	10	10 years old
	Mrs. Duncan	46		

**Table 2. Selected Second Interview Questions**

- 1 Do you remember what you expected in marriage when you were younger and single? Has it changed since you got married?
- 2 How would you describe your communication style?
- 3 How about your spouse's?
- 4 How do you feel about your communication style before your marriage and after marriage, any changes?
- 5 How about your spouse's? Any changes?
- 6 Any changes in family customs before marriage and after marriage? Any traditional events or customs added or removed, and why?
- 7 Do you have any conflicts or challenges in marriage?
- 8 How do you solve/negotiate conflicts if you have any?
- 9 Do you have any conflicts or challenges in child rearing (if it was not suggested in marital challenges)? 9-a) Who disciplines the child more? b) Who listens to the child's needs and desires more?
- 10 How do you solve such child rearing issues? How do you make decisions for your children? At what point do your spouse and you allow your children to get a sick day from school, fever, and their behaviors? How do you come up with such decisions? How about applications of medications and doctor visits?
- 11 Do you feel your spouse's culture affected you in any way? If so how?

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