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Returning to the homeland: The migratory patterns between Brazil and Japan for Japanese-Brazilians

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Abstract

Migration to well-off countries has been well documented. However, the reasons why migrants return to their home countries, which often face severe economic disadvantages, are examined less frequently. The return migration of Japanese-Brazilians (Brazilian citizens of ethnic Japanese descent) who migrate to Japan and return again to Brazil has not been studied to any great extent. To understand the factors associated with Japanese-Brazilians' return migration, using Gmelch's (1983) model of push and pull factors, we examined what motivated Japanese-Brazilian migrant laborers to return to Brazil from Japan. With a mixed method including in-person interviews, a total of n=47 Brazilian migrants to Japan were sampled in São Paulo, Brazil. The present examination resulted in a pattern similar to the one Gmelch (1983) observed in his study on Irish and Newfoundlander return migrants. In the current study, pull factors were more important than push factors in terms of repatriation. Personal and social pull factors were stronger reasons compelling migrants return to Brazil than were economic or familial factors. Nevertheless, familial and economic reasons were also reported as important motivators for returning to Brazil in our interviews. Limitations are also discussed.

Introduction

Migration researchers have examined the causes and impacts of migration but have unfortunately often overlooked the reasons that individuals return to their home countries (de Haas, 2010). Although migration is often politicized within host countries (e.g., typically due to the belief that migrants are taking citizens’ jobs, among other fears), what is often ignored in migration research is the loss of intellectual capital, creative energies, and workforce production that the migrants’ countries of origin suffer due to migration and, conversely, the loss of such energies and workforce productivity in the host country when migrants repatriate. For the most part, the contributions of migrants to their host and home countries are often ignored. As a theoretical framework, we employ the early version of development theory, which stipulates that when migrants repatriate, returning migrants bring from the former (host) country economic capital, innovative ideas, entrepreneurial knowledge, and make significant contributions to their returning (home) country (de Hass, 2010, p.231). By the same token, the framework states that migration also produces unanticipated negative outcomes for those left behind in the home country. Researchers like Burrell (2005, p.20), in her study on Guatemala’s migrants, noted that migration stands to (1) destabilize the communities left behind, (2) further economic stratification, (3) fuel increased land prices, and (4) even structure crime rates.

Despite the negative impacts of migration, Burrell (2005, p.20) suggests that migrants play critical roles culturally, socially and economically in both their home countries and host countries—even while residing there only temporarily. Although migrants may consider their migration to be temporary, it is unclear what motivates them to return to their home countries. It was not surprising, therefore, that the factors contributing to the return migration of Japanese-Brazilians have not been well documented. As such, the purpose of this study was to examine push and pull factors in return migration among Japanese-Brazilians. More specifically, this study focuses on migrant laborers who returned to São Paulo, Brazil. We conducted this research from July to August 2008, using a survey questionnaire completed by 47 return migrants and face-to-face interviews with 20 return migrants. In the present research, we defined Japanese-Brazilians as ethnic Japanese citizens of Brazil who have returned to Brazil after years of employment in Japan.

Statement of the Problem

Research shows that individuals migrate to countries such as the U.S. to enhance their economic, educational, and social opportunities. A large body of literature has shed a spotlight on migration trends to the U.S., Europe, and Canada. Migration to economically stable countries is not new; early evidence reveals migration patterns by the Irish, Italians, Lithuanians, and other European immigrants to the U.S. For example, D’Souza (1995) states that from 1880 to 1930, 25 million White immigrants migrated to the U.S.; half did not speak English, and many entered illegally. Initially, these White immigrant groups faced many social and economic hardships, but they eventually assimilated. Unfortunately, the migration patterns of non-White ethnic groups, such as the Japanese, have been largely neglected in past research. Nevertheless, while there is ample research on out-migration (i.e., people who leave their countries of origin for host countries), research on return migration is still limited in its scope, especially in the case of Japanese-Brazilians. Indeed, moving to a country considered a world superpower (e.g., U.S., Japan) is alluring to individuals worldwide. Less clear is why individuals who have left an economically modest country (e.g., Brazil) for a relatively wealthy one (e.g., Japan) would turn around and leave the economic juggernaut and return to the country of origin. Given that immigration is a highly debated issue, a true centerpiece of international policy, it is imperative to understand the factors that shape such migratory decisions. The objective of this paper therefore is to outline the factors that structure the migration decisions of Japanese-Brazilian migrants who return to Brazil from Japan.

Return migration is defined as a type of migration that occurs “when people return to their country or region of origin after a significant period abroad or in another region” (King, 1986, p. 4). Gmelch (1980, p. 136) defined return migration as “the movement of emigrants back to their homelands to resettle.” These definitions do not incorporate migrants returning for a vacation or an extended visit. Gmelch (1980) also distinguished return migration from *remigration*, wherein “people . . . move back to their homelands and then emigrate a second time” (p. 186) and *circular migration,* wherein immigrants move frequently “between two or more places, such as in seasonal labor migration” (p. 186). Reyes (1997, p. 1) noted that, “return migration is an important, but often neglected, component of the immigration process. . . . Aside from community studies and press accounts, relatively little is known about the return migration of recent immigrants or those immigrants’ characteristics.” King (1978) echoes that international migration statistics suffer from lack of accuracy and consistency because many countries fail to record returning migrants or their characteristics. While most countries collect information about *incoming* immigrants, the same record keeping does not apply for returning *citizens*. Differential record keeping exists mainly because return migration is the most difficult element of the migration cycle to quantify (Gmelch, 1980).

Past researchers who examined return migration from Japan define those first-, second-, and third-generation Japanese-Brazilians (e.g., Tsuda, 1999, 2001) and Japanese-Peruvians (e.g., Takenaka, 1999) who went to Japan (the country of their ethnic origin) as a unique sort of migrant laborers, calling them “return migrants” (returning to their country of ethnic origin generations after their ancestors had migrated in the other direction). Despite their ethnic ties to Japan, however, Takenaka (1999, p. 3) noted that a large number of these migrants “. . . [had] no knowledge about Japan.” Tsuda (2003, p. 289) also acknowledged that most of the Japanese-Brazilian return migrants are “no longer culturally Japanese.” That is, while first-generation Japanese-Brazilians returned to “their country or region of origin” (King, 1986, p. 4) or went back to “their homelands” (Gmelch, 1980, p.136), second- and third-generation Japanese descendants (Japanese-Brazilians) did not return to their country of origin but simply traveled to Japan to work as migrant laborers. Therefore, King and Gmelch do not categorically define second- and third-generation Japanese descendants as *return* migrants of Japan. Instead, they classify such individuals as Brazilians who are simply of ethnic Japanese origin. In the present study, Japanese-Brazilian return migrants are defined as those Japanese-Brazilians who have returned to Brazil after years of employment in Japan.

Return Migration Rates

In a study of return migrants between 1908 and 1957, Reyes (1997) documented that 30 percent returned to their countries of origin from the U.S. More specifically, 25 percent of the male immigrants returned to Finland, and 60 percent of the immigrants returned to Italy from the U.S. within a few years. In more recent years, Gmelch (1983) examined return migrants to Ireland and Newfoundland from the U.S., Great Britain, and Canada, and found that 43 percent of the Irish and 54 percent of the Newfoundland siblings returned to their countries of origin. Gmelch (1983, p. 49) predicted that in families where one sibling returns, “there is a strong likelihood that others will do the same.” Aydemir and Robinson (2008) maintained that the overall return migration rate, 30 years after arrival to Canada, was approximately 35 percent among young, working-age, male immigrants. In addition, 60 percent of those who left Canada did so in the first year of arrival. Lindstrom’s (1996) study of Mexican returnees from the U.S. identified that migrants living in a host country for more than 5 years constituted only 10 percent of migrants on their first U.S. trip and 5 percent of repeat migrants. Reyes (1997) posited that only one third of Mexican skilled workers returned in three years, while approximately 40 percent of those unskilled and those unemployed returned after three years. In his study on Korean return migrants from Brazil, Jong-Taick (2007) found that of approximately 50,000 Koreans registered in Brazil in 2005, and about 3,000 Koreans (6 percent) returned to their home from Brazil because their economic conditions in Brazil had deteriorated. Although Williams and Balaz’s (2005, p. 19) study on Slovakian return migrants from the U.K. did not provide return migration rates, they characterized the distinctively temporary nature of return migration. The temporary characteristic of international labor migration was also echoed in Hill’s (1987) work on immigrants’ decisions regarding the duration of their stays abroad.

In examining return migration, researchers have examined various determinants, including migrants' economic opportunities and earnings (or lack thereof) in the host country (Lindstrom, 1996; Shumway and Hall, 1996), migrants' intentions to return (Waldorf, 1995), and the prospect of increased human capital involved in return migration (Williams & Balaz, 2005). However, we still know little about how Japanese-Brazilian migrants decide when to return to Brazil and why they decide to go home. Although a sizable body of literature on out-migration from Brazil to Japan exists, return migration patterns have not yet been explored.

Background of Japanese Immigration to Brazil and Japanese-Brazilian Laborers Returning to Japan

Japanese immigration to Brazil dates to the late 19th century. During the Tokugawa period (1603 to 1867), migration to and from Japan was prohibited (Björklund, 2007). The end of Japan's feudal system generated poverty in its rural areas, which set the stage for Japanese overseas emigration. Japanese immigration to the U.S. began in 1868 and to Hawaii in 1885. However, in 1907, President Roosevelt negotiated the "Gentlemen's Agreement" that called for Japan to issue passports to Japanese arriving to the continental United States only if they were joining a parent, husband, or child (Björklund, 2007, p. 6). This informal agreement, which was never ratified by Congress, ended in 1924. However, in 1924, the U.S. passed the Asian Exclusion Act, as part of the Immigration Act of 1924, which legally prohibited all Asians from migrating to America (Björklund, 2007). In 1938, there were approximately 116,000 Japanese in Hawaii and 116,200 in the U.S. (Björklund, 2007). Because of the heightened hostility toward Japanese immigration in the U.S., the Japanese government signed a treaty with the Brazilian government in 1907, which permitted the Japanese to start entering to Brazil as coffee plantation workers on June 18, 1908, although these workers were often viewed as "inferior substitutes" to European workers (Tsuda, 2001, p.413). Unlike the Japanese emigration to the U.S., emigration to Brazil continued (with only a short period of suspension due to WWII). Between 1908 and 1941, 170,000 Japanese citizens immigrated to Brazil (Björklund, 2007). When the diplomatic relationship between Brazil and Japan resumed after WWII, from 1953 to 1973, approximately 50,000 more Japanese nationals immigrated to Brazil (Goto, 2007).

Approximately 80 years after the first group of Japanese immigrants entered Brazil, the Brazilian economy collapsed during the 1980s, while the Japanese economy continued to grow steadily, generating a number of high-paying factory jobs, all of which involved dirty, difficult, or dangerous work. This shift in the global economy restructured Japanese-Brazilian migration patterns back to Japan when the Japanese government opened its shores to a large number (approximately 150,000) of immigrants from Brazil and Peru in 1990 (Weisman, 1991). This international movement of ethnic Japanese from Brazil and Peru back to Japan was precipitated mainly by the pull of economic opportunity in Japan. For example, well educated, middle-class Japanese-Brazilians could earn five to ten times more in Japan than they could in Brazil (Tsuda, 2003).

For its part, Japan also encouraged this migration by making such a move possible (and appealing). In response to a labor shortage, the Japanese Diet passed the Revised Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Law in 1989 (effective in 1990), which established the then-new category of “long-term resident,” a visa status that permitted up to three years of residence for people of Japanese descent (up to third generation) without Japanese citizenship and a long-term visa (for up to one year) for Japanese descendants’ spouses and children (Yamanaka, 1996). In 2004, there were 286,557 Brazilian nationals living in Japan (Japanese Justice Ministry’s Immigration Bureau, 2005), which constituted approximately 15 percent of all immigrants in Japan (Matuo, 2005). Of those individuals, approximately 144,000 were long-term resident visa holders, while about 82,000 represented their spouses and children (Japanese Justice Ministry’s Immigration Bureau, 2005). The remaining 60,000 people included permanent residents, temporary visitors and workers, students, and diplomats. As Yamanaka (1996) pointed out, however, this new law maintained traditional policies of excluding unskilled foreign workers who did not satisfy the criteria from the Japanese labor market. Therefore, the new law limited migration to select individuals of Japanese descent.

Japanese employers, who experienced difficulty securing Japanese laborers, welcomed and preferred Japanese-Brazilian workers because of their cultural lineage, which allowed the latter to occupy a stratified and socially elevated status compared to other immigrants in Japan (Asakura, Gee, Nakayama, and Niwa, 2008). Despite their employability, however, Japanese Brazilians were viewed as outsiders and occupied a socially subordinate position relative to native Japanese. Asakura et al. (2008, p. 743) stated that, “they [were] often stereotyped as ignorant, dirty, and culturally inferior and seen as failures for emigrating from Japan. Many [were] even seen as double failures (regardless of whether they were first- or later-generation emigrants) for migrating back to Japan as laborers.” In response to such discrimination, Japanese-Brazilians developed “the Brazilian ethnic counter-identity,” which facilitated “their psychological adjustment” and enhanced “a self-consciousness that they [were] not Japanese but *Brazilian foreigners*, allowing them to effectively resist the cultural pressures [that would otherwise be] placed on [them as] Japanese descendants” (Tsuda, 2000, p.58).

During the early 1990s, most migrant laborers traveled to Japan with the objective of working for a few years and returning to Brazil with their savings (Tsuda, 2003). In recent years, however, the Brazilians have begun to settle in Japan, just as the Japanese immigrants did in Brazil during the early 20th century (Goto, 2007). As the number of long-term Brazilian residents in Japan increases, the number of applications for permanent resident visas also rises. Although there were approximately 9,000 permanent residents from Brazil living in

Japan in 2000, the number increased to about 53,000 in 2004 (Goto, 2007). Goto (2007) also estimated that about 80 percent of Brazilian migrant laborers stayed in Japan for more than three years, and 28 percent stayed for more than 10 years. However, Goto (2007) did not examine the characteristics of return migrants who choose to leave Japan or the reasons for their departure. In the present research, we intend to fill this gap in the literature by examining the characteristics of Japanese-Brazilians who have returned to Brazil after a number of years of employment in Japan and their reasons for doing so.

Research on Return Migration: Socio-demographic Characteristics of Return Migrants

Among sociodemographic variables, race/ethnicity, marital status, and sex are important determinants of return migration (Waldorf, 1995). For example, the most culturally dissimilar and least assimilated racial/ethnic groups are migrants whose spouses remain in the country of origin (with the expectation that the migrant spouse will return to the host country spouse). Similarly, Gmelch (1983) also found that migrants who married spouses from their own group were more likely to return to their countries of origin than migrants who did not; both findings indicate that spouses influenced the decision to return. The findings on sex differences for migration produced equivocal results. Waldorf (1994), in a study of return migrants from Germany to Greece, Italy, Spain, Turkey, and Yugoslavia, posited that at the beginning of the sojourn abroad, return migration inclinations tended to be higher for women than for men. Reyes' (1997) findings were the opposite of Waldorf's, showing that women remained longer in the host country than men. For example, forty-five percent of the adult women but only 26 percent of the adult men stayed for longer than 10 years. Reyes (1997) found that short-term Mexican migrants tended to be males in their mid-20s who moved to the U.S. seeking employment, while long-term migrants were better educated and better skilled than those who return.

The data suggests that age is an important factor in return migration. In terms of age, Lindstrom found that an increase in age significantly predicted the likelihood of return to the country of origin (1996). However, Gmelch's (1983) sample showed the opposite results. According to Gmelch, among migrants past the age of 30, there was a steady decline in the number returning. Still, Gmelch also found a sizable group of Irish and Newfoundlander migrants returning home after 60 years of age. Finally, Reyes (1997) found that immigrant children stayed longer than older immigrants in the U.S. and the length of stay was inversely related to age—about 90 percent of the immigrant children remained for longer than 10 years. The level of education of migrants has also been reported to affect return migration patterns (Reyes, 1997). The number of Mexican immigrants with more than a high school education who stayed in the U.S. declined sharply after 5 years of residence in the host country. By 15 years of residence in the U.S. immigrants with more than a high school education outnumbered immigrant individuals with less than an elementary school education. As such, Reyes (1997) argued that immigrants with higher levels of education stayed longer in the U.S. because they may have had better sources of information about the destination country and stronger networks than those registering low levels of education, thus improving their relative potential for success in the new country. In contrast, Lindstrom (1996) found that well-educated Mexican migrants had a greater incentive to spend more time in Mexican labor markets and less time working in the U.S. in contrast to poorly educated migrants. Like Reyes, however, Hunt (2004) posited that university education was the strongest predictor of migration among Mexican emigrants to the U.S., although he also found that layoffs had a strong influence on return migration. Those males who were laid off were 11.5 times more likely than their counterparts to return home (Hunt, 2004).

Having a low-income in the host country was found to have a moderately negative impact on immigrants' return migration, suggesting that higher income earners were less likely to return than low-income earners (Waldorf, 1994). Likewise, Reyes' (1997) finding showed that low-wage earners and unskilled workers were more likely than high-paid and skilled workers to leave the host country. Bohning (1984) also found that successful migrants, as defined by levels of income, were less likely to return than unsuccessful ones. These results showed that the migrants who tended to prefer repatriation might have done so because of unfulfilled expectations (Bohning, 1984; Blejer & Goldber, 1980). By examining employment differences, Reyes (1997) found that those Mexicans who remained in the U.S. were more likely to be those who were employed and who worked in higher paid occupations than those who repatriated.

Business cycles also appear to influence whether or not migrants return home (Aydemir & Robinson, 2008). For example, a poor labor market in the host country may lead to high unemployment for new immigrants, which stimulates return migration (Aydemir & Robinson, 2008). To support this, Aydemir and Robinson showed that immigrants who entered Canada in 1990 (i.e., a recession year in Canada) were approximately 50 percent more likely to leave than those who arrived in 1986. As such, Aydemir and Robinson (2008) and Hiscott (1987) maintain that the out-migration rates were higher for those who arrived during recessionary periods or economic depression. Waldorf and Esparza (1991) also found the increase in return migration during economic downturns to be evidence of the influence of changing economic conditions. Labor force status was a strong predictor of return migration. Likewise, Reyes (1997) found that male immigrants who were unemployed or out of the labor force returned during the first year, and their probability of return remained higher than that of skilled workers. In contrast to these findings, Jones (cited in Waldorf & Esparza, 1991) found that there was little correlation between economic fluctuations and repatriation.

Motivations for Returning to the Country of Origin

The recording and study of return migration is challenging because returnees are less able to articulate their reasons for return than for their original emigration, even though the former was more recent than the latter (King et al., 1985). Gmelch (1980) suggests that in most cases, migrants do not have concrete plans to return home since they migrate on a trial basis, and instead let their decision about whether or not to return and when to do so be guided by the opportunities they encounter in the new country.

In his examination of Algerian return migrants from France, Lawless (1986) argued that migrants' uncertainty as to how and when they plan to return home is associated with both economic and cultural factors in the *home* country. By extension, he asserted, that as a result of such indefinite plans, immigrants are likely take into consideration experiences in the host country that they feel will negatively affect them upon their return. For example, few Algerian migrants had acquired the qualifications in France that would have enabled them to secure jobs in Algeria, and because of this, they expedited their repatriation. In addition, culturally Algerian migrants experienced difficulty with integration into French society, and the longer they remained in France, they more alienated they became from the cultural values and norms of their country of origin (Lawless, 1986), a dilemma which may have prompted some to return.

In another case, Gmelch (1980) and Lawless (1986) also noted that migrants who fully intended their migration to be temporary returned to their country of origin after they had accomplished specific objectives, such as accumulating a sum of money, completing a project (e.g., the construction of a house), saving sufficient capital to invest in a small shop, or retiring in their home country. In his study on first-generation British Hindu Gujaratis, Ramji (2006, p. 650) maintained that these first-generation Gujaratis chose to retire in India, a place where "old people were respected" and a place of "fulfillment" as a way to "find . . . peace." In contrast, Horst (2007, p.77) found that Jamaican retirees preferred to move "back and forth" between the U.S. and Jamaica. In some cases, however, migrants were forced to return home due to other factors, including family circumstances (e.g., the need to look after an ill or elderly parent), their own illness, or because they experienced economic misfortune in the host country (Gmelch, 1980). Other migrants who failed to adapt to the host society returned to the home country seeking a reconnection with a recognizable language, people, and customs, or because they could no longer live separately from close friends and the familiar environment (Gmelch, 1980).

With respect to migrants' decisions to repatriate, Waldorf and Esparza (1991, p. 422) argue that although economic conditions and government policies were the primary external influences, migrants' lack of assimilation into the host society and attachments to the home country were the overriding internal motivators that influenced their decisions to return to their home countries. For example, in his examination of return migrants from West Germany to Greece, Italy, Spain, the former Yugoslavia, and Turkey, Waldorf (1994) observed low assimilation levels and strong attachments during the initial stages abroad; he likewise found that for most immigrants, assimilation levels were high and attachment levels were low after an extended stay in the host country (the exception being in the case of Turks and Yugoslavians, for whom the inclination to return home peaked after 10 years and then declined). Waldorf (1994, p.263) concluded that, "assimilation aid would be most powerful in helping guest workers to make a transition from temporary sojourns to permanent immigrants."

In the case of returnees to Greece, Petras and Kousis (1988) found that separation from family and the desire to raise children in their home country motivated immigrants' return home despite substandard economic conditions in the home country. Italian immigrants also returned home from West Germany due to their attachment to their homeland despite worsening economic conditions and the scarcity of employment opportunities in their country of origin (Waldorf & Esparza, 1991). As Gmelch (1980, 1983) argued, the social and cultural advantages of life in their native society outweighed the economic costs of returning (i.e., the expense of moving and the decline in earning power), although in poor, developing countries, where the home economy cannot offer returnees suitable employment and a comfortable standard of living, the push of economic factors may be equal to the pull of social and cultural familiarity.

In understanding return migration, Gmelch (1983, p.50) classified his subjects' responses into three categories (economic-occupational, patriotic-social and familial-personal), and he further divided each category into two factors: push (e.g., conditions that pushed a person out of the host country) and pull (e.g., motivators to return to the homeland). Overall, pull factors were more important than push factors for Irish and Newfoundlander return migrants (Gmelch, 1983). For both groups, the patriotic-social category of pull factors was most important in their repatriation, followed by the familial-personal and economic-occupational categories. In essence, their attachment, sense of belonging, and identification with the homeland (social pull factors) were even more important than contact with their families (familial/personal pull factors) and their job opportunities at home (economic pull factors). In terms of push factors, for Irish migrants, the patriotic-social category (e.g., feeling like a stranger) was important, while for Newfoundlander migrants, the familial-personal dimension (e.g., I did not like many things) was an important factor.

In terms of push and pull factors, in her examination of Irish return migrants from Great Britain and the U.S., Laoire (2007) found that proximity to parents and spending more time with them while they were still alive were core migration determinants. In contrast, Waldorf's (1995) study on return migrants from Germany to Greece, Italy, Spain, Turkey and Yugoslavia, which examined only push factors, showed that migrants' dissatisfaction with jobs (i.e., economic dimension) was an important predictor of return migration. An additional social component—racial/ethnic prejudice and discrimination—was reported by Gmelch (1983) in the case of Jamaican migrants in Great Britain and Puerto Rican migrants in the U.S. Likewise, Horst (2007), who examined Jamaican return migrants from the United Kingdom, indicated that as immigrants encountered a conservative political climate in the U.K., they learned that they were not accepted and were not considered to be English but Jamaican. These experiences in the host country were push factors that prompted migrants to return to their country of origin.

King (1978) posited that the primary push factors for return migration of Italians from Great Britain were expulsion from the host country through political or social pressures, laws limiting length of stay, substandard housing, lack of economic opportunity (e.g., no promotion and cutbacks on jobs), and failure to adjust. The key pull factors were improvement of job opportunities in the country of origin, strengths of family ties, the accumulation of savings for investment in housing, land, or business, and retirement prospects (King, 1978). Gmelch (1980, p.138), however, noted that migrants such as the Portuguese migrants he studied retained, even after many years away from Portugal, an “ideology of return.” In other words, no matter how settled migrants were, they were open to the possibility that they would one day return home. This may be because, among other things, return migration may be structured by the realization that economic and social expectations may never be accomplished (Blejer and Goldberg, 1980).

The typology of push and pull factors of return migration allows us to understand migrants’ motivation for their repatriation, yet this typology has not been applied to Japanese-Brazilians. Push and pull factors are valuable in understanding return migration between Japan and Brazil, two countries with unique historical ties during the past 100 years.

Methods

The research was conducted in São Paulo, Brazil from July 8, 2008 to August 22, 2008. Both a survey questionnaire and interviews were employed to better understand return migration among Japanese-Brazilian migrant laborers. The primary site for the recruitment of participants was a non-profit organization housed in the Chamber of Commerce and located in the heart of Japantown in São Paulo. This organization, led by the family of one of the local business owners, offered free employment-related services (e.g., resume writing, job listings, etc.) for Japanese-Brazilian migrant returnees twice a month. The first author visited this organization several times, participated in the information sessions, and met volunteer leaders who introduced her to the participants.

Survey Questionnaire

The first author provided a survey questionnaire in Portuguese with a self-addressed stamped envelope for eighty Japanese-Brazilian return migrants at the non-profit organization and secured the sample via volunteer leaders' contacts. Forty-eight questionnaires were returned to her hotel via mail, and out of 48 responses, one questionnaire was excluded because the respondent did not work as a migrant laborer in Japan but instead received educational training in Japan. Thus, the final number of respondents was 47, with a return rate of 59 percent. The survey instrument included questions about sociodemographic variables (i.e., the respondent's age, sex, education, marital status, and length of residence), ability to speak Japanese, self-identity (i.e., Japanese-Brazilian or not), pull factors (i.e., a combination of personal, social, and economic dimensions), and push factors (i.e., a combination of personal, social, and economic dimensions). The objective of the project was not to test hypotheses but to identify determinants of pull and push factors.

Measurement of Variables

Independent variables

Age was measured by asking respondents "How old are you?" and the response category was their age at the time of the interview. Sex was measured by asking respondents "Are you male or female?" and the response categories were recoded as 1 for male and 0 for female. Education level was measured by asking respondents "What is your educational background?" and the response categories were recoded as 1 for elementary school, 2 for middle school, 3 for high school, and 4 for university. Marital status was measured by asking respondents "Are you married?" and the response category was coded as 1 for yes and 0 for no. The respondents' ability to speak Japanese was coded as 1 for great, 2 for o.k., and 3 for poor. Self-identity was measured by asking respondents "What do you consider yourself?" and the response categories were recoded as 1 for Japanese-Brazilian and 0 for non-Japanese-Brazilian.

Dependent variables

Questions for the dependent variables for pull and push factors were derived from Gmelch's (1983) work. As a first step, factor analyses were conducted to examine underlying dimensions of pull and push factors. Unlike Gmelch, who classified responses into three dimensions, including economic-occupational, patriotic-social, and familial-personal, the present analysis yielded four distinct dimensions (i.e., social, personal, economic, and familial components) for pull factors. Secondly, each of the four dimensions of pull and push factors was created by combining two variables shown in the following section. Specifically, each dimension reflected respondents who somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with specific questions.

The *social* dimensions of pull factors included variables such as “Brazil is my homeland” and “I wanted to live with people of my own background.” The *personal* dimensions included variables, such as “I wanted to live near my families and friends in Brazil.” The *economic* dimensions included variables such as “I had a job opportunity in Brazil” and “I wanted to open my own business in Brazil.” The *familial* dimensions included variables such as “My family member in Brazil was ill” and “My parent(s) in Brazil was old.”

Likewise, four distinct dimensions (i.e., social, personal, economic and familial components) helped define push factors. The *social* dimensions of push factors included variables such as “I felt like a stranger in Japan” and “I felt discriminated in Japan.” The *personal* dimensions included variables such as “I did not like many things about Japan” and “I wanted to retire in Brazil.” The *economic* dimensions included variables such as “I did not like my job in Japan” and “My household head did not like his/her job in Japan.” The *familial* dimensions included “Household head wanted to retire in Brazil” and “Household head got ill in Japan.” For the aforementioned variables, likert-scale response categories were used: 1 for strongly agree; 2 for somewhat agree; 3 for somewhat disagree; and 4 for strongly disagree.

Face-to-Face Interviews

A subset of the individuals who responded to the survey questionnaire also agreed to in-person interviews. Others were recruited using the snowball sampling method, in particular, through connections with volunteers at the non-profit organization described above. Interviews were conducted with 20 Japanese-Brazilian return migrants. Interviews were conducted in English, Japanese, or Portuguese at the first author’s hotel or interviewees’ place of employment, and they lasted for approximately 45 minutes to one hour. Although most individuals spoke English or Japanese, several individuals requested a Portuguese-speaking translator, and the translator was provided for them. During the interviews, questions were asked to understand the reasons or motivations for their returning to Brazil.

Findings: Results from the Survey Questionnaire

Socio-demographic Characteristics

According to Table 1, there were 31 (66.0%) males and 16 (34.0%) females who participated. The average age was 40.3 years old. As for the respondents’ educational level, the greatest number of them, 46.8% (N=22) held a college degree followed by the number of those who had a high school diploma (N=17 or 36.2%). There were 24 (51.1%) married respondents and 23 (51.1%) unmarried respondents. As for the respondents' length of residence in Japan, the highest proportion was found in the 0 to 5 years group (46.8% or N=22), which was followed by the 5 to 9.9 years group (40.4% or N=19). No respondents had resided for more than 20 years in Japan. The average number of migrations between Japan and Brazil was 2.7 times.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics

Variable	**Number (percent)**	**Mean (std. deviation)**
Sex	Male 31 (66.0)	
	Female 16 (34.0)	
Age	20-29 14 (29.8)	40.3 years old (13.9)
	30-39 9 (19.1)	
	40-49 12 (25.5)	
	50-59 7 (14.8)	
	60-69 5 (10.7)	
Educational Level	Elementary 3 (6.4)	
	Middle School 5 (10.6)	
	High School 17 (36.2)	
	College 22 (46.8)	
Marital Status	Married 24 (51.1)	
	Unmarried 23 (48.9)	
Length of Residence in Japan	Less than 5 years 22 (46.8)	
	5 to 9.9 years 19 (40.4)	
	10 to 19.9 years 6 (12.8)	
	20 years or longer 0 (0)	
Number of Migratory Movements Between Japan and Brazil	0 time 2 (4.3)	2.7 times (3.4)
	1 time 15 (32.6)	
	2 times 11 (23.9)	
	3 times 10 (21.7)	
	4 times 4 (8.7)	
	5 times 1 (2.2)	
	6 times 1 (2.2)	
	7 times 1 (2.2)	
Age at Arrival in Japan First Time	0 – 9 1 (21.)	27.8 years (12.4)
	10 – 14 1 (2.1)	
	15 – 19 8 (17.0)	

	20 – 24	14 (29.8	
	25 – 29	10 (21.4)	
	30 – 34	4 (8.5)	
	35 – 39	0 (0)	
	40 – 44	3 (6.3)	
	45 – 49	0 (0)	
	50 – 54	4 (8.5)	
	55 – 59	1 (2.1)	
	60 – 64	1 (2.1)	
Who went to Japan First Time?	Alone	23 (48.9)	
	With Others	24 (51.1)	
Employment Status in Brazil Before They Went to Japan First Time	Employed	31 (66.0)	Length of Unemployment
	Not Employed	16 (34.0)	859.1 days (1350.0)
Type of Jobs in Brazil Before They Went to Japan First Time (multiple answers)	Sales	6	
	Service	4	
	Office Work	7	
	Factory Work	1	
	Business Owner	3	
	Other Work	5	
	Housewife	1	
Employment Status in Japan	Employed	45 (97.8)	Length of Unemployment
	Not Employed	1 (2.2)	79 days (117.8)
Type of Jobs in Japan (multiple answers)	Transportation	1	
	Service	7	
	Office Work	4	
	Construction	1	
	Factory	36	
	Business Owner	1	
	Others	2	
	Housewife	1	
Hours Worked Per Week in Japan	Less than 40 hours	1 (2.2)	59.6 hours (13.0)
	40 hours	4 (8.9)	
	41 – 50 hours	4 (8.9)	
	51 – 60 hours	19 (42.2)	
	61 – 70 hours	9 (20.0)	
	71 – 80 hours	8 (17.7)	
Current Employment Status in Brazil	Employed	28 (59.6)	Length of Unemployment
	Not Employed	19 (40.4)	444.4 days (844.0)

Type of Current Jobs in Brazil (multiple answers)	Sales	2	
	Service	4	
	Office Work	10	
	Teacher	1	
	Business Owner	1	
	Other Work	6	
	Housewife	1	
Hours Worked Per Week in Brazil	Less than 40 hours	5 (19.1)	45.2 hours (10.9)
	40 hours	7 (26.9)	
	41 – 50 hours	8 (30.7)	
	51 – 60 hours	5 (19.2)	
	61 – 70 hours	0 (0)	
	71 – 80 hours	1 (3.8)	

Note: Sex = 1 for male and 0 for female; Marital Status =1 for married and 0 for unmarried;

The return migrants’ average age when they arrived in Japan for the first time was 27.8 years old. Twenty-three (48.9%) respondents migrated to Japan alone, while 24 respondents (51.1%) moved there with others (e.g., their parents). Before they went to Japan for the first time, 31 (66.0%) respondents were employed in Brazil, and 16 (34.0%) respondents were not employed. The average length of unemployment was 859.1 days (approximately 2 years and 4 months). Almost all respondents (45 people or 97.8%) who migrated to Japan were employed in Japan. Types of jobs included transportation (N=1), service (N=7), office work (N=4), construction (N=1), factory (N=36), and self-employment/business owner (N=1). The overwhelming number of migrants were employed in factories in Japan. The average number of weekly work hours reported in Japan was 59.6. With respect to the return migrants’ employment status in Brazil at the time of the interviews, 28 (59.6%) of those who returned to Brazil were employed, and 19 (40.4%) respondents were not employed. The length of their unemployment was 444.4 days (approximately 1 year and 2 months). Some of the types of current jobs held by the return migrants in Brazil included sales (N=2), service (N=4), office work (N=10), teaching (N=1), and self-employment/business owner (N=1). The average number of hours worked per week in Brazil was 45.2 hours.

Table 2 shows that twenty-eight (59.6%) respondents identified themselves as Japanese-Brazilians, while 19 respondents (40.4%) identified as “others,” including mixed-race (Mestiço). As for their speaking proficiency in Japanese, 28 (60.8%) respondents indicated that their skills were “excellent,” while 18 (39.1%) respondents stated that their skills were “poor.” For their writing proficiency in Japanese, 18 (38.3%) respondents answered that their skills were “excellent,” while 29 (61.7%) respondents felt that their skills were "poor."

Table 2: Self-Identity and Self-Evaluation of the Japanese Language

Variable	**Number (percent)**	
Self-Identity	Japanese-Brazilian	28 (59.6)
	Other	19 (40.4)
Speaking Abilities	Excellent	2 (4.3)
	O.K.	26 (56.5)
	Poor	18 (39.1)
Writing Abilities	Excellent	2 (4.3)
	O.K.	16 (34.0)
	Poor	29 (61.7)
Reading Abilities	Excellent	1 (2.2)
	O.K.	15 (32.6)
	Poor	20 (65.2)

Note: Self-Identity 1 for Japanese-Brazilians and 0 for Other

Motivation to Return to Brazil

According to Table 3, among pull factors (drawing participants back to Brazil), the most commonly reported response was "Brazil is my homeland," with which 90.5% of the respondents somewhat or strongly agreed. For the second item, "I wanted to live with people of my own background," 62.5% of the respondents somewhat or strongly agreed. For the third item, "I wanted to live near my families and friends in Brazil," all of the respondents somewhat or strongly agreed. For the fourth item, "I like the Brazilian way of life," 64.1% of the respondents somewhat or strongly agreed. For the fifth item, "I had a job opportunity in Brazil," 35.9% of the respondents somewhat or strongly agreed. For the sixth item, "I wanted to open my own business in Brazil," 40% of the respondents somewhat or strongly agreed. For the seventh item, "My family member in Brazil was ill," 20.5% of the respondents somewhat or strongly agreed. For the eighth item, "My parent(s) in Brazil was old," 51.3% of the respondents somewhat or strongly agreed.

Table 3: Motivation (Pull Factors) to Return to Brazil

Pull Factors	**Number (percent)**		**Mean (std. deviation)**
1. Brazil is my homeland.	Strongly Agree	26 (61.9)	1.52 (.80)
	Somewhat Agree	12(28.6)	
	Somewhat Disagree	2 (4.8)	
	Strongly Disagree	2 (4.8)	
2. I wanted to live with people	Strongly Agree	4 (10.0)	2.48 (.93)

of my own background.	Somewhat Agree 21(52.5) Somewhat Disagree 7 (17.5) Strongly Disagree 8 (20.0)	
3. I wanted to live near my family and friends in Brazil.	Strongly Agree 34 (73.9) Somewhat Agree 12 (26.1) Somewhat Disagree 0 (0) Strongly Disagree 0 (0)	1.26 (.44)
4. I like the Brazilian way of life.	Strongly Agree 7 (17.9) Somewhat Agree 18 (46.2) Somewhat Disagree 10(25.6) Strongly Disagree 4 (10.3)	2.28 (.89)
5. I had a job opportunity in Brazil.	Strongly Agree 6 (15.4) Somewhat Agree 8 (20.5) Somewhat Disagree 5 (12.8) Strongly Disagree 20(51.3)	3.00 (1.17)
6. I wanted to open my own business in Brazil.	Strongly Agree 7 (17.5) Somewhat Agree 9 (22.5) Somewhat Disagree 6(15.0) Strongly Disagree 18 (45.0)	2.88 (1.18)
7. My family member in Brazil was ill.	Strongly Agree 6 (15.4) Somewhat Agree 2 (5.1) Somewhat Disagree 4 (10.3) Strongly Disagree 27(69.2)	3.33 (1.13)
8. My parent(s) in Brazil was old.	Strongly Agree 8 (20.5) Somewhat Agree 12 (30.8) Somewhat Disagree 3 (7.7) Strongly Disagree 16 (41.0)	2.69 (1.21)

Note: Response categories: 1= Strongly Agree; 2= Somewhat Agree; 3=Somewhat Disagree; 4=Strongly Disagree

Table 4 presents the findings for push factors (pushing participants away from Japan). For the first factor, “I felt like a stranger in Japan,” 32.5% of the respondents somewhat or strongly agreed. For the second item, “I felt discriminated against in Japan,” 45.0% of the respondents somewhat or strongly agreed. For the third item, “I did not like many things about Japan,” 20.0% of the respondents somewhat or strongly agreed. For the fourth item, “I got ill in Japan,” 15.8% of the respondents somewhat or strongly agreed. For the fifth item, “I did not like my job in Japan,” 20.5% of the respondents somewhat or strongly agreed. For the sixth item, “My household head did not like his/her job in Japan,” 8.6% of the respondents somewhat or strongly agreed. For the seventh item, “Household head wanted to retire in

Brazil," 13.9% of the respondents somewhat or strongly agreed. For the eighth item, "Household head got ill in Japan," 5.6% of the respondents somewhat or strongly agreed.

Table 4: Motivation (Push Factors) to Return to Brazil

Push Factors	**Number (percent)**	**Mean (std. deviation)**
1. I felt like a stranger in Japan.	Strongly Agree 3 (7.5) Somewhat Agree 10(25.0) Somewhat Disagree 11(27.5) Strongly Disagree 16(40.0)	3.00 (.99)
2. I felt discriminated against in Japan.	Strongly Agree 2 (5.0) Somewhat Agree 16 (40.0) Somewhat Disagree 8 (20.0) Strongly Disagree 14(35.0)	2.85 (.98)
3. I did not like many things about Japan.	Strongly Agree 2 (5.0) Somewhat Agree 6 (15.0) Somewhat Disagree 13(32.5) Strongly Disagree 19(47.5)	3.23 (.89)
4. I wanted to retire in Brazil.	Strongly Agree 11 (29.7) Somewhat Agree 7 (18.9) Somewhat Disagree 2 (5.4) Strongly Disagree 17 (45.9)	2.68 (1.33)
5. I did not like my job in Japan.	Strongly Agree 2 (5.1) Somewhat Agree 6 (15.4) Somewhat Disagree 10(25.6) Strongly Disagree 21(53.8)	3.28 (.92)
6. My household head did not like his/her job in Japan.	Strongly Agree 1 (2.9) Somewhat Agree 2 (5.7) Somewhat Disagree 3(8.6) Strongly Disagree 29(82.9)	3.71 (.71)
7.Household head wanted to retire in Brazil.	Strongly Agree 4 (11.1) Somewhat Agree 1 (2.8) Somewhat Disagree 1 (2.8) Strongly Disagree 30 (83.3)	3.58 (1.00)
8. Household head got ill in Japan.	Strongly Agree 1 (2.8) Somewhat Agree 1 (2.8) Somewhat Disagree 1 (2.8) Strongly Disagree 33 (91.7)	3.83 (.61)

Note: Response categories: 1= Strongly Agree; 2= Somewhat Agree; 3=Somewhat Disagree; 4=Strongly Disagree

Tables 5 and 6 indicate the percentages that represented respondents who answered "somewhat agree" or "strongly agree" to both questions of each dimension of pull and push factors in their decisions to return to Brazil. The results showed that pull factors were more important motivators for repatriation than push factors. For example, for pull factors, the percentages ranged from 10.5% (citing familial reasons) to 64.1% (citing personal reasons) for returning to Brazil. In contrast, for push factors, percentages ranged from 5.0% (citing economic reasons in Japan) to 30% (specifying social reasons in Japan) for their departure from Japan. Regarding both push and pull factors, familial and economic dimensions were not as strong motivations as personal and social dimensions.

Table 5: Pull Factors of Return Migration

Variable	**Percentage**[1]
1. Pull Factor (Social)	60.0%
Brazil is my homeland.	70.5%
I wanted to live with people of my own background.	62.5%
2. Pull Factor (Personal)	64.1%
I wanted to live near my family and friends in Brazil.	100%
I like the Brazilian way of life.	61.4%
3. Pull Factor (Economic)	17.9%
I had a job opportunity in Brazil.	35.9%
I wanted to open my own business in Brazil.	40.0%
4. Pull Factor (Familial)	10.5%
My family member in Brazil was ill.	20.5%
My parent(s) in Brazil was old.	51.3%

Note: Factor Analysis was conducted to form each factor.

[1] The percentages represent respondents who answered "somewhat agree" or "strongly agree" to ***both questions*** of each dimension of pull factor in their decision to return to Brazil.

Table 6: Push Factors of Return Migration

Variable	**Percentage**[1]
1. Push Factor (Social)	30.0%
I felt like a stranger in Japan.	32.5%
I felt discriminated against in Japan.	45.0%
2. Push Factor (Personal)	10.8%
I did not like many things about Japan.	20.0%
I wanted to retire in Brazil.	48.6%
3. Push Factor (Economic)	5.0%

I did not like my job in Japan.	20.5%
My household head did not like his/her job In Japan.	8.6%
4. Push Factor (Familial)	5.6%
Household head wanted to retire in Brazil.	13.9%
Household head got ill in Japan.	5.6%

Note: Factor Analysis was conducted to form each factor.

[1] The percentages represent respondents who answered “somewhat agree” or “strongly agree” to ***both questions*** of each dimension of push factor in their decision to return to Brazil.

Among pull factors, the personal category had the highest percentage (64.1%), which was followed by social (60%), economic (17.9%), and familial (10.5%) dimensions. That is, for Japanese-Brazilian return migrants, personal reasons (e.g., I wanted to live near my family in Brazil) were the most important motivations for their decision to return. Among push factors, the social category had the highest percentage (30%), which was followed by personal (10.8%), familial (5.6%), and economic (5%) dimensions. That is, for Japanese-Brazilian return migrants, social reasons (e.g., I felt like a stranger in Japan) were the most important precursors for their decisions to return.

Finally, when correlations among all variables were examined (results not shown here), it was found that five independent variables, including educational level, age, age at first arrival in Japan, whether or not they went to Japan alone and length of residency, were associated with pull and push factors. Among the five variables, respondents’ educational level was related to the personal dimension of pull factors (r=.483, p<.01). Less educated respondents were more likely than educated ones to claim personal reasons (e.g., I like the Brazilian way of life) as their motivation to return to Brazil.

The remaining four variables, including age, age at first arrival in Japan, and whether or not they went to Japan alone were linked to the personal dimension of push factors. As age increased, people tended to report personal reasons as the motivation to return (r=-.333, p<.05). As the age of the respondents increased when they first arrived in Japan for the first time, personal reasons were also noted as the motivation to return (r=-.370, p<.05). If respondents went to Japan alone, they were likely to state that personal reasons were their motivation to return to Brazil (r=-.364, p<.05). The last variable, length of residency, was associated with the social dimension of push factors. That is, those whose residency was shorter declared social reasons (e.g., I felt like a stranger in Japan) as the motivation for their return (r=.374, p<.05). However, there were no statistically significant relationships between independent variables (such as sex, marital status, the number of movements between Japan and Brazil, self-identity and speaking proficiency in Japanese) and pull and push factors.

Discussion

The results of the survey completed by Japanese-Brazilian return migrants showed significant relationships between the independent variables (such as age, educational level, age at their first arrival in Japan, whether or not they arrived in Japan alone, and length of residence) and pull and push factors. In particular, migrants who stayed for a shorter time in Japan reported feelings of alienation such as "I felt like a stranger in Japan." As Waldorf (1994) discussed in her work on assimilation and attachment of return migrants, migrants' length of residency structures the decision to return to their country of origin. Indeed, the results of this analysis show that the longer Japanese-Brazilian migrant laborers resided in Japan, the less likely they were to feel alienated in the foreign land, contributing to their assimilation to the host country.

Although Waldorf (1994) predicted a positive relationship between the length of residency and assimilation to the host society, Jong-Taick (2007) maintained that in comparison to Korean-Brazilians, most Japanese-Brazilian migrant laborers planned to return to Brazil after accumulating sufficient savings because they experienced estrangement in Japan. Jong-Taick (2007, p.180) stated that, ". . . because of [Japanese-Brazilian laborers'] strong attachment to Brazilian culture and customs and because of their ethnic identities as Japanese-Brazilians despite their indistinguishable physical appearances . . . in Japan, Japanese-Brazilians . . . are frequently discriminated against because they do not communicate well in Japanese . . . in many cases, Japanese return migrants from Brazil are portrayed as foreigners [in Japan] and are greeted [there] with hostility."

Alternatively, there were no significant relationships between sex, marital status, number of movements between Japan and Brazil, self-identity and speaking proficiency in Japanese, and pull and push factors. These findings did not support past studies such as Waldorf (1994, 1995), who found significant correlations associated with sex and marital status. Further examination of the correlations among variables reveals that married individuals voiced that opening a business was one of the motives for their repatriation (business dimension of pull factors) ($r=-.322$, $p<.05$), while unmarried people stated that their parent's age was one of the reasons for their return to Brazil (familial dimension of pull factors) ($r=.355$, $p<.05$). Those who were unable to speak Japanese proficiently reported that the reasons for their departure originated from feeling like strangers in Japan (social dimension of push factors) ($r=-.32$, $p<.05$) and that they disliked many things in Japan (personal dimension of push factors) ($r=-.322$, $p<.043$). There were no specific motivational differences that emerged in terms of respondents' sexes, the number of trips between Brazil and Japan, and their self-identity as Japanese-Brazilians.

The present survey results are consistent with those of Gmelch (1983), who found that pull factors were more important than push factors in the case of Irish and

Newfoundlander return migrants from the U.S., Great Britain and Canada. Unlike Waldorf's (1995) return migrants from Greece, Italy, Spain, Turkey and Yugoslavia from Germany, however, economic dimensions of push and pull factors were weaker determinants for Japanese-Brazilian migrants returning from Japan. In addition to the survey results, the qualitative interviews offered a more nuanced interpretation of respondents' motivations to return home, suggesting that the use of one methodological strategy may not capture the complex nature of return migration. For example, the interview results revealed that Japanese-Brazilian return migrants' separation from their families and their desire to raise their children in their home country were strong motivators, just as Petras and Kousis's (1988) Greek returnees described.

For example, a 36-year-old female respondent who lived in Japan for 15 years reported about her family in Brazil, "I came back to Brazil because my maternal grandmother was ill." And a 58-year old female respondent who resided in Japan for 10 years echoed her sentiment, "I came back to Brazil because my mother had a heart attack and I wanted to spend time with her." Another respondent, a 44-year-old male, stated that after he had lived in Japan for 12 years, he came back to Brazil, because "my parents were getting older." The family dimension was elaborated via participants' comments suggesting that family illnesses or concerns for their parents becoming elderly, as well as a strong sense of responsibility to care for their parents or relatives were at the heart of return migration decision-making. Respondents often reinforced the idea of the family (familial pull factor) as a cornerstone of their decisions to return to Brazil. For example, a 62-year-old male respondent stated:

I have a pharmacy degree, but did not make enough money as the pharmacist. So, I went to Japan alone to save money to pay for my kids' education in Brazil. One son is in the medical school and another one is in the pharmacy school . . . I worked at the pachinko parlor in Japan and saved money. As soon as I made enough money, I planned to go back home . . . after I stayed for 5 years, my wife became ill in Brazil and came back home to take care of her. But she passed away three months after I arrived in Brazil.

A 44-year-old male who stayed for 6.5 years in Japan echoed the following concerns about his children, saying, "I originally planned to come back to Brazil when my children reached the elementary school ages." Another 44-year-old male interviewee who had resided in Japan for 9 years also mirrored the following sentiment about his children: I and my wife wanted to come back to Brazil. We wanted our children to have a formal education in Brazil and hoped that they would identify with the Brazilian culture . . . We hoped that they could reconnect with their grandparents here.

A 54 year-old male respondent who stayed for 4 years stated, "I was lonely in Japan . . . I wanted to be with my wife and children. So, I came back to Brazil." The aforementioned responses underscore the ways in which Japanese-Brazilians value culture. Parents hoped to generate enough capital to fund their children's educations in Brazil, not Japan. In addition, for parents, the importance of their children learning and being immersed in Brazilian culture was emphasized. Parents planned to return to Brazil (familial pull factors) not only to live with their children but also to instill in them Brazilian cultural values once their goals in Japan had materialized (e.g., making generous sums of money to support a child's education), and reestablish familial ties (e.g., having children connect with grandparents). One cannot ignore how often respondents mentioned their parents and children as the primary factors that guided their decision to return to Brazil.

As described above, in the interviews, Japanese-Brazilian returnees emphasized the importance of their families and articulated familial reasons for their return to Brazil. Unlike societies that value individualism and individual accomplishments, Brazil places importance on "*família*," which signifies the unity beyond the boundary of the nuclear family and includes grandparents, uncles, aunts, nieces, nephews, and cousins. Having been raised in Brazilian society, these migrant workers were not only expected to send remittances to their family members, but they also had obligations to satisfy their family's emotional needs (e.g., by visiting family) and social needs (e.g., by helping out family members). As such, they were expected to visit their families frequently, for example, particularly in the case of their parents' and grandparents' illness. Although many migrant workers around the world operate under a similar cultural framework, Japanese-Brazilians routinely expressed their sense of obligation to their *família*.

On the other hand, like Waldorf's (1995) Greek, Italian, Spanish, Turkish, and Yugoslavian return migrants, many Japanese-Brazilian returnees also often returned to Brazil because they were dissatisfied with their employment conditions and low probability of being gainfully employed, another reason for their repatriation (push factor). For example, a 40-year-old female interviewee who remained in Japan for 10 years stated:

After I got divorced in Japan, I could not financially maintain myself and my daughter . . . It was too expensive to live there. I came back home. My sister and her husband are still in Japan. I live with my daughter, father, stepmother, and sister. I opened this coffee shop with my savings. I do not want to go back to work in Japan, because I did not like other Brazilians [in Japan].

Another 46-year-old male respondent, who lived in Japan for 4.5 years, stated of the working conditions in Japan: "I was working for 14 hours in the factory. I was tired for such a life mentally and physically." Likewise, a 45-year-old male who resided for 4.5 years indicated, "I was too tired of my work and did not have fun in Japan . . . that's why I came back home."

The interviewees stressed that they were physically exhausted from working for 12 to 14 hours a day in factories, that they felt disconnected from their peers in the work environment, and that if they had the opportunity, they would return to Brazil (even though the money they earned in Japan was generous). Despite the original goal to earn money and send remittances to their families in Brazil, some of them returned sooner than originally planned, after they accomplished certain original goals or objectives. In their research, Petras and Kousis (1988) also found that Greek immigrants who planned to work abroad for a limited duration returned home sooner than originally planned in order to reestablish themselves at home with their accumulated savings.

As Table 1 presents, Japanese-Brazilian return migrants' employment status did not recover in Brazil after they returned to Brazil. After their return to Brazil, 60 percent of returnees were employed, and 40 percent were not employed, their length of unemployment having lasted about 1 year and 2 months at the time of the interviews. The return migrants had to face the reality that economic conditions in Brazil were sometimes worse than they had anticipated prior to their departure from Japan. Furthermore, a slight reduction in employment status may have been associated with the fact that as unskilled or semi-skilled workers in Japan, they returned to Brazil with skills that were incompatible with occupations in their country of origin (e.g., knowing how to operate specific machinery largely unavailable in Brazil). Although the contribution of semi-skilled labor by returning migrants may serve as a vitalizing force in some countries, McLean and Kousis (in Petras & Kousis, 1986) argued that a gain in occupational opportunities through return migration is unlikely and is not usually guaranteed to return migrants. Because a large proportion of migrants were employed in unskilled jobs when they were away, their accumulated skills did not necessarily complement those needed in the home economy (in Petras & Kousis, 1986).

In the case of Japanese-Brazilian returnees, the overwhelming majority of them worked as factory workers in Japan, and none were employed in factories in Brazil, since unskilled factory jobs were largely unavailable in Brazil (see Table 1). Furthermore, like Turkish (Gmelch, 1980) and Sri Lankan (Athukorala, 1990) return migrants, Japanese-Brazilian returnees' dream was to be independent and self-employed, which involved setting up small businesses such as restaurants, coffee shops, or video stores, instead of returning to assembly line factory jobs. However, Athukorala (1990, p. 333) noted that, ". . . the skills needed to run a business may bear little relationship to the skills acquired abroad." Like the sample of Athukorala's study, a significant proportion of Japanese-Brazilian return migrants (40 percent) were not employed at the time of the study.

As illustrated in the next section, some respondents voiced personal reasons for returning to Brazil, such as the contradictions between Japanese and Brazilian culture. For example, a 46-year-old male respondent who lived in Japan for 4.5 years stated, "I did not learn anything from the Japanese culture . . . because I did not understand the language; I could not do what I wanted to do in Japan." A 40-year-old female interviewee who stayed in Japan for 10 years mentioned that she "did not like [her] fellow Japanese-Brazilians who were in Japan. They lacked morality and sometimes committed adultery."A 27-year-old male respondent who resided for 6 years commented:

> I got ill in Japan. I got a cancer. I wanted to go back to Brazil to treat my illness. But my Japanese doctor told me to stay in Japan. . . . My doctor

> told me that Brazil does not have good medicine. . . . I did not like the way my doctor treated me. Because of this, I came back to Brazil. . . . I am free from a cancer now.

Another respondent, a 35-year-old female who stayed for 4 years, stated the following:

> I went to Japan with my husband. I suffered depression in Japan and came back to Brazil. . . . I could not get along well with other Japanese-Brazilians in Japan. . . . I came back and went to therapy to treat my depression. I am fine now.

The data above suggest that Japanese-Brazilians had a difficult time acclimating to Japanese culture. Despite their shared lineage, Japanese-Brazilians expressed difficulty with speaking proficiency, discomfort with certain practices (e.g., adultery), the undervaluing of Brazil by Japanese (e.g., doctors who claimed that Japanese medicine was superior), and overall feelings of estrangement even from other Japanese-Brazilians in Japan. The examination of Japanese-Brazilian return migrants reveals a pattern similar to that of European samples documented by Gmelch (1983): overall, pull factors were cited more frequently than push factors as cause for return to the home country. In other words, personal and social motivations were shown to be stronger reasons for return migration than were economic and familial dimensions when quantitative survey methods are employed. In contrast, personal and economic reasons were found to emerge as important motivational themes in the qualitative interviews. Considering the difficulty understanding the motivations for the repatriation of immigrants, multiple methods of triangulating results of return migration are suggested.

Limitation of the Study

Returning to Brazil is often associated with positive outcomes such as reuniting with one’s family and enjoying the accumulation of wealth gathered while abroad. However, negative consequences are not uncommon outcomes of return migration. For example, Gmelch (1980) stated that return migrants often felt obliged to share their wealth with less well-off family members; they were ill prepared for their return; they encountered envy and suspicion among their less prosperous neighbors; and they were expected to pay higher prices for services than other Brazilians by local merchants. Some of the Japanese-Brazilian return migrants were reluctant to disclose their migration experiences because they were aware of shocking misfortunes experienced by other return migrants, including robberies, extortion, kidnappings, and even murders. Because of their concern for their own safety, they often did not want to identify themselves as former migrant laborers to anyone, including their own extended family members. Even return migrants who became the victims of crimes were less likely to report the incidents with government officials. Thus, there are no accurate reports as to how many returnees were the victims of these crimes.

A second limitation involves the limited availability of statistics tracking the movement of return migrants. Without accurate statistics about emigrants' international movement trends, it is difficult for researchers to estimate the number of return migrants accurately and consistently. Furthermore, return migrants' reluctance to disclose as return migrants prevents local governments from providing suitable employment and educational services for them and their children.

While the first author was completing the data collection in Brazil in the summer of 2008, she became aware that a great number of Japanese-Brazilians had lost their jobs in Japan and began to return to Brazil in 2008. Articles such as "Japan to Immigrants: Thanks, But You Can Go Home" captured the sentiment of unwelcome toward Japanese-Brazilians (Masters, 2009). Time World reported that the Japanese government launched a program to pay $3,000 to each jobless person of Japanese descent and $2,000 to each of their family members to return to their country of origin (Masters, 2009). Some Japanese-Brazilians felt unwelcome by these policies and practices and decided to return to Brazil "until Japan's economic and employment conditions stabilized." However, 2008 marked the beginning of the global recession, and as such, no interviewees had plans to return to Japan at the time of this study. Although none of our interviewees mentioned that they had returned to Brazil because of unemployment in Japan, the economic recession in Japan and the subsequent termination of various job sectors appears to have facilitated Japanese-Brazilians' departure from Japan. Still, our study did not capture such a massive exodus of these laborers at the time of the study. We speculate that the economic recession may have had an impact on the interviewees' decisions to return to Brazil from Japan, but we could not discuss the extent of such impact in this paper.

Conclusion

As illustrated in the findings of this study, Japanese-Brazilians were employed in Japan's secondary labor market (e.g., manufacturing factory work). In such secondary labor markets, Japanese-Brazilians had to compete with Japanese women and children, and were therefore subjected to a marginalized position (Higuchi & Tanno, 2003; Higuchi, 2006). Higuchi and Tanno (2003) argued, "Brazil-Japan migration has been and will be propelled by factors that are less dependent on human and social capital and more dependent on institutional contexts" because they depend on "market-mediated" migration systems (p.45). This market driven labor market, although beyond the scope of our study, becomes important for understanding push factors for Japanese-Brazilians in future research.

The Japanese government's efforts to address Japanese-Brazilians' working conditions have been minimal. Recently, the fourth Basic Plan for Immigration Control, which was formulated in 2010, was proposed to build a society in which Japanese nationals and foreign nationals would be able to live and work together harmoniously (Japanese Ministry of Justice, 2010). However, the government's initiatives have only centered on the unemployment and employment of foreign residents (e.g., "just-in-time delivery of labor") and not on Japanese foreign nationals such as Japanese-Brazilians (Higuchi & Tanno, 2003). We call for attention to the equitable and just treatment of foreign-born workers (e.g., Japanese-Brazilians) in all spheres of their lives. Our study documents that working conditions are but only one of the factors directly affecting the lives of Japanese-Brazilians in Japan. Furthermore, irrespective of their length of stay, Japanese-Brazilians continue to face legal and political challenges while in Japan, including but not limited to restricted political participation and limited protection in the workplace, since the government defines them only as foreigners (Phillips, 2007).

This study sought to understand why Japanese-Brazilian immigrants leave Japan, a country often characterized as an economic superpower, and return to their country of origin. There is a misconception that immigrants who move to a prosperous country are easily incorporated into the host country economy, easily assimilate to an ethnically similar infrastructure, and have few reasons to return to the economically modest country. The results from this paper reveal, however, that "making it" in a prosperous country is difficult for immigrants—that there are cultural, occupational, and social barriers that prevent immigrants from making meaningful contributions in the new country. Therefore, many immigrants return to the economically modest country to reconnect with families, seek out previously left opportunities, and reestablish their cultural networks. This study offers an important contribution to studies of immigration by documenting Japanese-Brazilians' push and pull factors that structure their migration to the country of origin.

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