

# Educational systems of japan and the assignment

[Education](#)



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Asian parents invest more in educational resources than their white counterparts despite comparable resources" (Aka 150) Another possible reason for the educational differences between Japanese and American students is the amount of emphasis placed on education in the two cultures. Although by and large both Japan and American cultures place importance on education, the way in which it is emphasized may be a point of differentiation. Cross-cultural studies have shown that Japanese parents not only encourage their children to learn from an early age, but they also instill the concept that a good education is the basis for their success in life. In other words, parents play an extremely vital role in promoting academic excellence and the student is in-cultured to believe that anything less than the best in school is a failure not only to themselves, but to their parents.

This type of mentality is captured by Aka in a focus group study when a student responds that, " his brother's success on the track team was not a source of pride for his parents; in fact, they refused to attend his track meets. Only straight As and getting into an Ivy League school would completely satisfy the parents" (Aka 150). Consequently, it is evident that extra-curriculars have secondary, if any, importance to a student's self-efficacy and their parents' approval and therefore putting one's effort into such activities are futile.

As a result of such a cultural emphasis placed on Japanese students to be the best academic students they can be, they inevitably spend significantly more time studying and doing homework than their American counterparts. Thus, American students who already spend less days in the year and less amount

each day concentrating on academic study, also devote less time after school to their homework. This may be due to the fact that American teachers themselves do not stress the importance of homework relative to other educational activities (Chem.. & Stevenson 560).

In other words, American students may not place as much educational value as Japanese students on doing homework if the homework itself is depicted as less important by educators. This may be a plausible reason why some American students choose to fly through their homework without trying to really understand the concepts or why their parents allow them to do homework while watching television.

The student's concentration level is inherently abated if they perceive the extrinsic value of doing. Furthermore, a study of Japanese and American after-school activities, 46% of Japanese fifth-grade students enrolled in after-school classes or private tutoring compared with about 10% of their American counterparts (Chem.. & Stevenson 560). These statistics point to the fact that Japanese students have a culture that is geared much more to academic education than in the United States.

Thus, despite the fact that the student has spent all day in regular school, parents nonetheless choose to send them to additional academic institutions or tutoring services rather than allow them to spend their free time in other non-academic extra curricular activities. However, what they parents may not realize, is that extra-curricular such as sports, music, dance, and others that on their surface seem like unnecessary activities solely for enjoyment, help to make a student more well rounded and socially developed.

There have been numerous studies, for example, linking educational achievement to involvement in music. Consequently, Japanese students may be saturated with academic practice but concurrently are deprived of other enriching activities that may even enhance their academic acuity. There are pros and cons to the strong cultural emphasis on academics placed on children by their parents. On the one hand, parents' interest in their children's lives and success is certainly laudable. For many American students, an increase in parental involvement and encouragement may serve beneficial.

On the other hand, extreme stress and a sense that academic failure means failure in life may not be the healthiest for any student, regardless of culture. Furthermore, such an emphasis may even contribute to reverse or deteriorating effect and cause a "burn out" in the long run. Therefore, although it is important for parents to instill educational values and take interest in their child's education throughout their lives, academics should never be depicted as the sole determinant in a child's success or failure in life. Changes saved UM.

Estimates Home Configure this Site Upload/Manage Files for this Site Login Overview | Teacher and Principal Quality | Instructional Systems System and School Japan Overview As long as there have been international comparisons of national student achievement, Japan has placed at or near the top. The roots of this accomplishment run deep. An island nation, Japan developed over the centuries in isolation from the West, though in most arenas, its achievements compared favorably, not least in their level of literacy. But that did not include technology and finance.

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The result was what the West came to call the “ opening of Japan” to Western commerce by Admiral Perry’s “ black ships” in 1853, followed by the imposition on Japan of trade treaties heavily favoring the Western nations. Perry arrived toward the end of the Outgas Shogun, a period of peace overseen by the Samurai, former warriors who had put away their weapons to become administrators. In 1868, lower level officials rebelled against what they saw as a tired and corrupt government and returned the emperor to the throne in what came to be called the Meijer Restoration.

The young revolutionaries then sent delegations of senior officials to the Western capitals to rewrite the treaties they so resented. What they saw astounded them, and they came away determined to compete with the West on its own terms in both technology and finance. They were also determined to eradicate the corruption they saw in the dying Outgas Shogun by instituting a new era in which merit, and merit alone, would determine who advanced in government, at work and in society generally.

And they recognized that they would fail unless they created an education system that could play a vital role in achieving both of these goals. The teams of Japanese administrators who went to the Western capitals may have been the first global educational benchmarks. They borrowed ideas from England, Germany, France and the United States and fused them into the design of a whole new education system for Japan, heavily influenced by Japanese values. They had a lot to build on. The level of literacy in Japan was already world class.

Perhaps most important, most teachers in Japan were from the Samurai class, which meant that being a teacher in Japan carried very high status. That has remained true from that day to this. Japan is one of the most aggressively meritocracy countries in the world. Access to opportunity is a function of merit, and, for much of what is on offer, merit is determined by one's achievement in school as recorded by performance on exams. That achievement is viewed by Japanese not as the result of inherited and unalterable intelligence, but rather as the result of effort.

If a student fails, that failure is perceived as not only the failure of the student but also of that students' parents (especially the mother) and teachers. The Japanese place a high value on acceptance and support from the group of which one is a part, including one's family and one's school, so young Japanese work very hard to win the approval of their families and their teachers. They take tough courses and work hard in school, partly to win the approval of the people closest to them and partly because they know that that is the only way they will get ahead at work and in society.

The Japanese curriculum is world famous. Young Japanese are often expected to know more about another country's history, economy and geography than the students in that country know. The curriculum in mathematics and science is among the world's most employees can expect to spend their entire careers at one firm. Because that is true, employers expect to provide continuing education and training to their employees wrought their entire career as they change jobs.

So they are less interested in how qualified the young applicant is for their first job than they are in that applicant's "general intelligence," roughly meaning their capacity to learn and to apply what they learn to real world problems as they arise. Because of the meritocracy nature of the system, they judge that based on how the student has performed on his or her exams and the exams are based on the Japanese curriculum, highly detailed documents that are provided by way of closely followed guidance to the schools.

Many observers credit the quality of Japanese education to the quality of the Japanese curriculum, set by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), advised by the Central Council for Education. The curriculum demands mastery of a great deal of information about the discipline (often acquired by rote learning) but it also demands a good deal of problem-solving ability (acquired by very different instructional methods). Hence the ability of Japanese students to do very well both on curriculum-based tests like TIMSS and applications-based tests like PISA.

The Japanese curriculum and Japanese instruction put a lot of emphasis on student mastery of the concepts underlying the disciplines. They want the students to understand why something works the way it does, not just what procedure to follow, so that they can apply what they have learned in unfamiliar contexts. Instruction focuses not on getting the right answer but on understanding why the answer is right. Students in Japanese schools do not skip grades nor are they held back. All students are expected to master the demanding curriculum, going forward.

There is no tracking or streaming in Japanese schools. Homeroom teachers often follow their students through the grades. From the Meijer Restoration forward, teaching has been a desirable occupation in Japan. But this is not just a matter of culture. By law, teachers are the highest paid civil servants in Japan. Beginning teachers are paid about the same as beginning engineers. The result is that there are seven applicants for every open teaching position. Pay alone does not account for this.

As in other top-performing countries, there is a virtuous circle at work here. High pay helps attract highly-qualified applicants, and highly-qualified applicants produce very accomplished students, which induces a grateful nation to pay its cheers well. Japanese teachers are expected to master the subjects they will teach and to get instruction in their craft while preparing to teach. But, once hired, they typically get a full year of what amounts to apprenticeship under the supervision of master teachers who are released from all other duties for this purpose.

The Japanese spend less than many other nations on their schools, but they get more for their money. Their texts are small and published in a very simple and inexpensive format. Their school buildings are very functional but without frills. School administration is kept to a minimum. There are no cafeterias: Japanese students take the meals from the kitchens and serve them to their classmates in their classrooms, and Japanese students are expected to clean both their classrooms and their hallways.

Because, in this meritocracy culture, all Japanese students are funded equitably, have the same curriculum, and face the same expectations, their



are ahead are expected to help those who are behind. One might expect that this would hold the best students back, but the research shows that those who teach learn at least as much as those who are taught in this peer tutoring scheme. Outside the public schools, it is another matter. There is a very active after-school private tutoring and schooling business, propelled by the ambitions of parents for their children.

In November 2004, NEXT announced a new reform plan titled “ Japan! Rise again! ” Among the major proposals included in this plan are the development of a new national assessment system; improving teacher quality through the establishment of professional graduate schools and a teacher qualification renewal system; board of education and school reform; and an overhaul of the funding system for compulsory education, so that local governments will be able to enact accessory educational initiatives without major budgetary concerns.

Since this plan was announced, NEXT has introduced one of its planned initiatives almost every year. In 2007, Japan piloted a National Assessment of Academic Ability in mathematics and Japanese for students in grades 6 and 9. In 2008 and 2009, NEXT published a revised version of the national curriculum for primary through upper secondary school, including special education. This new curriculum places increased emphasis on Japanese, social studies, mathematics, science and foreign languages, with the hope that students will develop “ thinking capacity, decisiveness and expressiveness” alongside content knowledge.

In 2009, NEXT implemented a new system requiring educators to renew education personnel certificates every ten years, contingent on up-to-date professional development and skills. This complemented a 2008 initiative that required prefectures boards of education to provide extra training to struggling teachers. Currently, NEXT is working on revising standards in university teacher training programs, promoting career education and enhancing counseling in schools, and using school evaluations to target areas for improvement in school management. Japan's Education System at a Glance

Video: "Lessons from Japan," CBS News DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC INDICATORS The World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Rank 2014 6 INSTEAD Global Innovation Rank 2014 21 Population Languages Ethnic Makeup Japanese 98.5% Korean 0.5% Chinese 0.4% other 0.6% GAP (app) \$4.729 trillion GAP per capita \$37,100 ingot of GAP Agriculture: 1.1% Industry: 25.6% services: 73.2% Unemployment Youth Unemployment 7.9% Secondary School Completion 93.83% Adults with Tertiary Education Source: CIA World Factbook (September 2014) World Bank Data (September 2014) and COOED Education at a Glance 2014

PISA 2012 Mean Scores by Country for Reading, Mathematics, and Science Japan today Work-life balance more important than ever By Taro Fusion Executive Impact Mar. 09, 2009 – 07: MOA JUST (27) Hose Kimono CEO Work Life Balance Co, Ltd TOKYO "One oft-quoted word that symbolizes the plight of overworked Japanese workers is "Karoshi" (death by overwork). However, as the economic recession results in an increasing number of

companies laying off workers, more people in Japan are starting to realize the futility of not having a private life.

The term “ Work-Life Balance” (WELL) has become an in-vogue expression in the world’s second largest economy. “ The economic downturn is an ideal opportunity for Japanese companies to focus on WELL since it gives everyone a chance to reconsider their traditional working style. Men and women can no longer divide their working lives and private lives Co Ltd in Tokyo. Since being launched in 2006, the company has been offering consultation services to companies on how to achieve WELL for their employees. It also provides a computer system called “ armor” to support employees’ return to the workplace after maternity, child-care, and sick leave.

Kimono joined major cosmetic company Shied in 1999 after graduating from Japan Women’s University. During her college life, she took a year off and worked as a babysitter in the United States where she worked for a woman who was trying to balance child-raising and work. Kimono launched an internal venture project within Shied that supports women returning to work from temporary leave through Internet-based applications connecting them with the company. She was named “ Nikkei Woman of the Year” in 2004. “ At first, I wanted to create a framework to help women balance child raising and work in Japan.

But I later found that mental problems among male workers are much more serious issues in Japanese companies. Work-life balance is important for both men and women,” says Sumo. Kimono thinks work-life balance is an essential issue for efficiency among white collar workers in Japan. “ Unlike

the manufacturing sector, the productivity per hour among Japanese white collar workers is extremely low," she says. " Work-life balance is essential for white collar workers to foster their creativity, especially if they are moving to new types of industries. According to Kimono, the most important issues for achieving a work-life balance in Japan are the " personnel assessment system" and " overtime payment" at companies. " People see the ' merit system' from an achievement-oriented viewpoint. What is actually important is how efficiently people work during normal hours. Even if companies pay overtime, it is not good for employees to become reliant on it because all they end up doing is working even longer hours to achieve target sales. " Kimono tries to convince companies that it is more cost effective to implement a work-life balance than lay off employees amid the current economic downturn. As companies fire employees or reduce salaries, the remaining employees, especially talented ones, start losing their motivation to work and consider finding new jobs. If companies hire new staff, they have to invest time and money in the newcomers. Therefore, downsizing does not always lead to effective cost reduction. " While some companies are still reluctant to adopt the idea of work-life balance, the government is more eager to promote it. Fueling the government's concern is increased health care spending and a future shortage of taxpayers to pay for the pension system as Japan's population ages.

Kimono, who is also a member of several government panels on labor issues, says, " The government is finally starting to see women as important taxpayers for the pension fund and wants them to return to work after maternity and child-care leave as soon as possible. " Kimono claims that, at

the individual level, the majority of men, who are in their 30s, single and have no siblings, need a work-life balance because they will be expected to take care of their baby-boom generation parents and grandparents in the future. But she says that men in their 30s are resisting a work-life balance more than any other generation. They still think working long hours is the normal thing to do for their companies. They even feel more comfortable staying in the office than being at home. In addition, they don't acquire any new skills. Very few young men read to gain knowledge anymore. " While major media report that has been teaching students presentation skills at free seminars, says, " Actually, I think the younger generation is making rational decisions on employment with an eye to having some balance in their lives. Although some company executives call those students ' immature' (about working), talented students know what is most important about work-life balance. Kimono has been raising a 2-year-old son with her husband since the launch of her company. She is confident her son will " find the est.. Job in the best way for him to find the right balance between work and life. " For more information, visit: [www. Work-life-b. Com](http://www.Work-life-b.Com) Top of Form Find articles on specific topics of interest using the search box at the top of the page WHY DO JAPANESE WORK SUCH LONG HOURS? Deck 30, 2011 By Rockwell Kop Managing Principal, Japan Intercultural Consulting Many non-Japanese who work at the foreign subsidiaries of Japanese firms wonder, why do their Japanese colleagues work such long hours.

After putting in a long day, it can feel disconcerting to see your Japanese colleagues still toiling away while you head toward the door. The issue of long Japanese working hours is a complex issue that has many facets to it.

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Part of it has to do with the different expectations of Japanese families about working hours, which is discussed below. Part of it has to do with the expectations of Japanese companies, in which putting in long hours still tends to be viewed as a sign of devotion and hard work rather than of poor time management. In the case of Japanese assigned overseas. The time lag with Japan is also a significant factor. For example, in North America there is an expectation that Japanese will stay in the office late in order to contact the headquarters in Japan by phone during their office hours, because the early evening here is the start of the business day in Japan. Japanese who do are not available for such conversations will be perceived negatively by their counterparts in Japan, which will affect their career future. It is also a common phenomenon for expatriates of any nationality to work longer hours when on international assignments.

This is because an international posting tends to be a make-or-break point in one's career. Also, when far from home, friends, and familiar activities, it's easier to spend a lot of time in the comfortable environment of work rather than extending oneself to deal with the local people and culture. This is particularly true for administration (expatriates who are here without their families) - it's easier to stay at work and get things done than go home to an empty apartment and face one's loneliness head-on.

Another factor affecting working hours is the typical Japanese preference for working schedules. Unlike Americans who often come in early - as early as 7 am in some cases - in order to get their work done, Japanese tend to not be morning people. They usually prefer to get a later start, and then get their work done by staying later in the evening. And few Japanese make personal

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plans on weekday evenings, so it's easy to get caught up in your work and the next thing you know it's 8 p. M.... Finally, there is one other significant difference in American and Japanese work habits.

Americans will typically bring work home with them - for example, head home to have dinner with the family, and then perhaps do some work after dinner. However, Japanese seldom do this. They like to keep their homes as a work-free zone, so if they have work to do they tend to stay late at the office and do it there. The "work from anywhere" ads for laptops that are so common in U. S. (Gaines don't reason telecommuting hasn't yet caught on much in Japan). Another question non-Japanese often have is, why don't Japanese families complain when the husbands work long hours?

In the U. S. , a husband's love for his family is measured by the amount of time he spends with them. Fathers are expected to spend time with their children in the evening, and to have dinner with the family as much as possible. Husbands are expected to help out with household chores (with so many two-income couples, this is essential in order to keep a household running). According to one public opinion poll, the thing that American women want most from their marriage is companionship - which can be thought of as time spent together.

Japanese families tend to have different expectations about the time the husbands and fathers will spend at home. It is considered normal for husbands and fathers to not come home early in the evenings. There is no expectation for the father playing with the children on weekdays. Instead, the weekend is considered sacred family time, and it's rare to find Japanese

working on a Saturday or a Sunday. Although the number of “career women” in Japan is rising, it’s still typical for most Japanese mothers to stay at home.

They take care of all household tasks single-handedly, freeing up their husbands’ time to be devoted nearly 100% to their work. Japanese husbands take their role as breadwinners seriously. Someone who works hard – and that includes staying long hours at the office or entertaining clients in the evening – is viewed as doing the best for their family. So while American husbands are expected to show their love by spending time at home, Japanese husbands show their love by working hard. There are also some possible darker reasons why Japanese husbands work long hours.

In Japanese neighborhoods there seems to be some peer pressure elements, because if the gossips see someone coming home early people will begin to think that he is not successful in his job. Some Japanese men who are unsure how to relate to their families tend to stay at the office later, because it is an environment where they are more certain of how to act. And some Japanese women may prefer that their husbands not spend too much time around the house getting underfoot – there is an old saying in Japan that the best husband is one who is healthy and not around too much.

Some recent social problems in Japan involving alienated and violent youths are causing some Japanese to question the wisdom of fathers spending so little time with their children. And the rapidly falling birthrate in Japan suggests that some Japanese woman may not be thrilled by the prospect of raising children with a father who is only home on weekends. According to

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polls, many younger Japanese would workers prefer shorter working hours and more time with their families. The question is whether Japanese corporate culture will become flexible enough to make this possible. This article originally appeared in Japan Close-Up magazine