

JAPANESE AND U.S. MOTHERS' CONCERNS AND EXPERTS' ADVICE: CONTENT
ANALYSES OF MOTHERS' QUESTIONS ON ONLINE MESSAGE BOARDS AND
EXPERTS' ADVICE IN PARENTING MAGAZINES

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CONTENT ANALYSES OF MOTHERS' QUESTIONS ON ONLINE MESSAGE
BOARDS AND EXPERTS' ADVICE IN PARENTING MAGAZINES

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Japanese and U.S. Mothers' Concerns and Experts' Advice: Content Analyses of
Mothers' Questions on Online Message Boards and
Experts' Advice in Parenting Magazines

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ABSTRACT

A total of 241 messages posted in 2007 by mothers of 0- to 2-year-olds on two U.S. and two Japanese parenting magazine websites were content analyzed. All messages pertained to one or more of six domains of childrearing: feeding/eating, toilet-training, sleep, development, discipline, and mother-child relationships. Every issue of the four U.S. and four Japanese best selling parenting magazines published in the years 2005 and 2006 were also content analyzed to examine advice given to parents in the six domains. The results suggested that mothers' childrearing concerns and the advice by experts in the two countries were similar in some areas but differed markedly in others, such as within the sleep domain. The similarities suggest some globalization of childrearing practices in that both countries are importing advice from other cultures. In particular, I found that in Japan, the promotion of autonomy is infused with Japanese traditional parenting ideologies and social circumstances

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In Japan, developmental researchers have recently increased their efforts to examine the childrearing experiences of mothers (e.g., Kashiwagi, 2003). This is due in part to growing rates of child abuse and childrearing stress in present day Japanese families. A national report indicated that the number of counseling cases involving child abuse increased from 1,101 in 1990 to 37,323 in 2006 (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, 2007a). Due to the increasing identification of child abuse by mothers, the high prevalence of corporal punishment in Japanese society has also been of concern.

It is important to note that the increase in child abuse in Japan is found in the “ordinary family” (Shinada, 2004). Before 1990, the trend was for child abuse to be associated with parental financial struggles or marital discord. Since 1990, however, rates of abuse have increased in other family types, especially in those who are isolated and have no support systems. While several explanations have been offered to explain the increased rate in child abuse among these Japanese families (Tatsuno, 2001), maternal stress or anxiety seems to be a common and major underlying factor (Sukoyama Family 21, 2000). In the 1980s, the term “*ikujifuan*” (childrearing anxiety), defined as anxiety related to the childrearing experience (Makino, 2005), was introduced in Japanese society. *Ikujifuan* is an accumulated emotional condition of maternal tiredness, frustration, anxiety, and concerns, which often results in negative spillover such as child abuse (Nishimura et al, 1999). A recent survey by the Japan Private Child Care Association (2006) with a sample of 3,303 mothers of young children (age 0-6) living in the Tokyo metropolitan areas demonstrate prevailing “*ikujifuan*” among Japanese

mothers. Using the Child Rearing Anxiety Scale (Makino, 1982), the researchers found that about a half of the mothers showed a moderate to strong degree of “*ikufuan*,” which included frustration related to the child (55.6%), confusion related to childrearing (44.8%), and perception of childrearing as meaningless (42.7%).

Researchers seem to be unable to identify obvious reasons or causes of Japanese childrearing anxiety (Makino, personal communication, December 21, 2007). Yet, previous studies on childrearing anxiety are consistent in showing that childrearing anxiety is negatively associated with husbands’ level of participation in childrearing (Fukaya et al., 1997; Japan Private Child Care Association, 2006; Makino, 2005). In addition, it has been found that Japanese stay-at-home mothers experience higher childrearing anxiety than mothers who work outside of the home. The finding suggests that the more time the mother spends with her child without social support, the more she experiences childrearing anxiety (Fukaya et al., 1997).

Some scholars have hypothesized that the stress or anxiety among contemporary Japanese mothers may be associated with experts’ advice to promote child autonomy and assertiveness. Increasingly, this advice follows from Western child development theory that has become influential in Japan (Sakagami, 2005). For instance, Erikson’s theory (Erikson, 1963) has been cited in published advice suggesting that the child’s skill in saying “no” during the “terrible twos” is a positive sign because it provides opportunities for the child to build self-esteem and autonomy. However, the concept of child negativism and the “terrible twos” did not exist in Japan until the postwar period because of the Japanese traditional view of children as innocent (Sakagami, 2005). These opposing viewpoints may cause internal conflict and confusion in Japanese mothers who

do not know whether they should cultivate Western-influenced social values of autonomy and assertiveness or Japanese cultural values of compliance and self-inhibition (Sakagami, 2005; Ujiie, 1997).

A sizable number of American experts advise parents to emphasize the fostering of independence and autonomy in children (Tsuneyoshi & Boocock, 1997). For example, in a style that is often recommended, authoritative parenting, parents provide warm nurturance and guide their children's behaviors firmly and consistently by setting limits and giving reasons for those limits. At the same time, parents encourage verbal give and take with their children (Baumrind, 1989), thus permitting children to assert themselves. In the United States, parents adopting this style tend to expect some conflict between parent and child and to consider this to be natural. This conflict is viewed as an opportunity to foster the child's autonomy and self-assertiveness (Rothbaum, Pott, Azuma, Miyake, & Weisz, 2000).

Differences between Japanese and U.S. mothers in their understanding of and comfort with children's autonomy and/or independence are likely to result in differences in their parenting concerns. On the other hand, because Japanese experts' advice has been influenced by Western developmental theory, it may be quite possible to find similar expert advice in both countries. A third possibility is that, because the developmental model of autonomy and related practical recommendations for parents were formulated in the Western context, some Japanese experts may reinterpret them to make sense of them to the Japanese audience.

The present study focuses on both parental concerns and the advice given to parents by childrearing "experts" in present-day Japan and the U.S. The study will compare (a)

the childrearing concerns expressed by Japanese and U.S. mothers on online message boards, and (b) the childrearing advice suggested by Japanese and U.S. experts in parenting magazines.

Generational, Social, and Cultural Influences on Maternal Stress and Parenting in Japan

Intergenerational studies show that contemporary Japanese mothers of young children feel less confident of their skills in childrearing and their love toward their children (Ishikawa, Kawamura, Kumasawa, & Nakazawa, 1997 as cited in Kawana, 2003), are more frustrated with childrearing (Kato, 2001 as cited in Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare, n.d.; Ohinata, 1998), perceive more role restrictions (Ohinata, 1998), and have less positive feelings toward childrearing (Ohinata, 1998) than mothers of past generations. Cross-cultural also studies point to lower parental self-efficacy among Japanese mothers as compared to mothers in other industrial nations. In several studies, Japanese mothers responded that childrearing is less enjoyable (Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecomm, 1979, 1995), and saw themselves as less competent or satisfied in their parenting (Bornstein et al., 1998; Bornstein & Cote, 2004) than mothers in other industrialized nations.

Most previous research on Japanese mothering has tried to determine how post World War II social changes have affected their experience of childrearing. Because of the trend toward low fertility, many of today's mothers of young children were raised in families with few siblings. Moreover, babysitting is an uncommon experience for Japanese youngsters (Vogel, 1996). Therefore, parents of young children today may become parents without having knowledge of and experience with child care (Kato, as cited in Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare, 2003).

In addition, social networks are not as strong as they once were. Decreased involvement with extended family members has produced lonely mothers who are not surrounded by a network of relatives for child care help and advice. As is often pointed out in cross-cultural studies, Japanese husbands do not compensate for the loss of extended kin; in general, they provide very little support in comparison to husbands in other industrial countries (Davis & Greenstein, 2004, Makino, 2005; NHK, 1995). Limited support from husbands has been found to be a significant source of maternal stress (Kashiwagi & Wakamatsu, 1994; Kazui, 1997) and anxiety (Makino, personal communication, December 20, 2007).

Moreover, although friends have become a significant source of social support in the current nuclear family environment (Shwalb, Kawai, Shoji, & Tsunetsugu, 1995), women report that these relationships often involve unwanted pressure to conform with friends' standards and that this in itself has become a major source of maternal stress (Kawana, 2003; Motoyama, 1998).

Japanese Childrearing Beliefs and Styles as Possible Sources of Stress

Although existing research informs us that generational, cultural, and social changes in Japan have contributed to our understanding of the increase in childrearing stress and anxiety among Japanese mothers, limited investigation has been conducted to explore how Japanese childrearing beliefs and styles in particular affect maternal stress and anxiety. There are two beliefs that are typical of Japanese childrearing that may be particularly prominent sources of maternal stress and anxiety: belief that mothers and children should be very, very close, and belief that parents should give highest priority to the wishes and needs of their children.

Highly close mother-child relationships. In the past few decades, in the context of raising children without adequate social support, Japanese mother-child relationships seem to have become closer and more tightly attached than ever before. Because of the decreasing numbers of children in Japanese households, mothers are able to spend more time per child than before, which seems to promote highly close mother-child relationships. These relationships involve not only physical, but also psychological closeness. Japanese mothers are said to see their children as extensions of themselves (Bornstein, Tai., & Tamis-Lemonda, 1991; Funabashi & Tsutsumi, 1992 cited by Sakagami, 2005). This kind of closeness tends to strengthen mutual dependence between the mother and child. That intense closeness could be a factor in maternal stress or anxiety is suggested by many calls to Japanese child abuse hotlines describing the burden felt by mothers from over-attached relationships with their children (Kanazawa, 1993). Moreover, when mothers encounter frustration (e.g., during the terrible twos) and the intertwined relationship starts to deteriorate, Japanese mothers may suffer negative feelings (e.g., hatefulness) toward their children (Funabashi & Tsutsumi).

The close Japanese mother and child relationship has frequently been accounted for by a culturally indigenous concept called *amae*, introduced by Doi (2002). Doi explained that the noun *amae* means helplessness or the desire to be loved; this usually happens when there are special interpersonal expectations that exist between people. It involves such actions as begging, pleading, or acting selfishly. It can be viewed positively or negatively, depending on the social context. It has a negative connotation when it implies excessive optimism. For example, a person acts clingy and helpless and expects another to indulge him or her or do it out of obligation; however, it is often an inappropriate

request. From the Japanese perspective, maturity means that a person knows when, how, and to whom to be *amaeru* (dependent on) or not. Whereas, from an American perspective, maturity represents independence (Hara & Minagawa, 1996), *amae* is valued and accepted in interpersonal relationships at all ages in Japan (Behren, 2004; Makino, 2005), particularly in mother-child relationships where *amae* fosters a sense of oneness between them (Doi, 2002; Makino, 2005).

The Japanese child's *amae* or dependence on the mother is further developed in a model proposed by Rothbaum and his colleagues (2000). They hypothesized different paths of development in Japan and the United States: symbiotic harmony and generative tension, respectively. They describe the Japanese path as involving accommodation, or adapting the self to fit the needs of others. By contrast, the American path is described as involving individuation characterized by a continual tug between the desire for proximity with relational partners and the desire for separation and exploration of the surrounding world. In the U.S. separations are alternated with reunions in order to foster the child's autonomy. Rothbaum et al. hypothesized that the tendencies shaped by early intimate relationships are replicated in later stages to create distinct paths in the two countries.

According to this model of symbiotic harmony, during infancy, Japanese mothers tend to assure the infant a near-constant union. Rothbaum et al. (2000) indicated that this proximal relationship with mothers becomes a foundation for Japanese children's willingness to behave according to others' expectations without confrontations or contests of will. The importance of the early proximal mother-child relationship for later child development has been repeatedly emphasized by Japanese experts in their use of the Japanese-English word "skin-ship" (physical contact). According to Tanaka (1992, as

cited in Arichi, 2000), the term “skin-ship” was originally imported from Western child developmental theory about 40 years ago. It’s original meaning in the U.S. was a mother’s right to enjoy physical touch and sensation with her baby. This was reinterpreted in Japan as the importance of frequent physical contact with the baby, which in turn promoted highly close mother-child relationships in Japan.

Other scholars, however, argue that Rothbaum et al. (2000) failed to explain the fact that Japanese mothers actually use directive and coercive discipline such as corporal punishment, mostly during the terrible twos (Sakagami, 2005). As in U.S. mother-child relationships, when toddlers start expressing their own wills and challenge parental authority, many Japanese mothers experience confusion and conflict. This may be more stressful for Japanese mothers than for American mothers because of the tighter nature of the Japanese mother-child relationship. While American mothers may be more likely to consider parent-child conflicts to be opportunities for promoting the child’s autonomy (Rothbaum et al., 2000), Japanese mothers may respond to the child’s negativism with frustration and bewilderment (Ujiie, 1997). Further studies are needed to shed light on to the degree to which this complex aspect of closely attached mother-child relationships contributes to tension between Japanese mothers and children.

Giving highest priority to children’s needs or desire – a child-centered parenting style. Child-centered¹ parenting is defined in this paper as a parenting style that gives highest priority to the child’s perspective or needs (Sakagami, 2005; Tsuneyoshi & Boocock, 1997). For example, a child-centered mother will prioritize her child’s desire

¹ The term child-centered is a translation of *kodomo chushin*, which does not necessary imply low-control by parents or teachers. It could, but does not necessarily, include the style known as indulgence (high in warmth and low limits or demands), as operationally defined by Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, & Dornbusch, (1991).

for her attention even if she is very busy. A similar parenting style exists in the United States, in which parents demonstrate affection toward their children and exercise only limited control (Baumrind, 1989). This kind of parenting style may require a great amount of time and energy from mothers, which in turn may result in increased maternal stress and exhaustion (Sakagami, 2005; Shinada, 2004).

Many scholars agree that historically, the inherent nature of children has been viewed as good in Japan (Yamamura, 1986). Children are viewed as innocent and pure up to the age 7. "*Nanatsumade wa kami no uchi*" ("Before 7, among the gods") is a frequently quoted saying by Japanese scholars. This proverb is commonly interpreted to mean that children are pure and innocent before the age of 7; therefore, they should not be punished (Chen, 1996).² This view is often contrasted with the Western Calvinist views that children are fundamentally corrupt and in need of strict discipline from an early age. Although the view of children as pure and innocent also exists in Western countries, the Japanese concept of this view differs in that it also implies the worthlessness of their parents (Yamamura, 1986). This belief in adult inferiority, mostly based on perceived lack of purity and virtue, may cause mothers to be permissive and child-oriented.

Some researchers have conducted intensive content analyses of the literature regarding Japanese childrearing styles (Shibano, 1995; Sato, 1978). It appears that many scholars agree that the essential component of Japanese traditional childrearing involves guiding children by means of an understanding of the child's nature at each stage of his or her development. In other words, respect for child development and initiative is central. Parents are urged to follow the child's pace. Yet historical accounts indicate that

² Another possible interpretation is that parents prepare themselves to cope with the death of the children during historical periods of high child mortality or the practice of infanticide in some regions.

a wide range of childrearing styles has existed in Japan based on social status, the gender of the child, and the social time (Ariichi, 2000). For example, during the pre-WWII era, childrearing had a clear purpose to raise children who would be obedient to national and parental power under the Japanese Emperor System (Sato, 1978). After the war, under the New Constitution and democracy, the Japanese people moved from prioritizing absolute obedience to the emperor to advocacy for rule by the people. As a result, the goal of childrearing became ambiguous. Sato described Japanese parents as lacking straightforward, universal childrearing goals and therefore seeing no need to firmly discipline their children. This may be the reason they are often characterized as lenient and indulgent.

The increasing influence of Western progressive pedagogy in Japan appears to have strengthened the tendency to adopt a child-centered parenting style. The progressive movement led by the educator John Dewey was introduced in Japan during the *Taisho* era (1911-1925), and later reintroduced in the 1970s (Shibano, 1995). Dewey's pedagogy was interpreted as allowing maximum freedom and autonomy, and letting children choose their behavior or make decisions within the given context of learning (Shinada, 2004). Japanese early childhood education at home and in school settings has been strongly influenced by this interpretation of the progressive education approach. Because Japanese childrearing tradition was already child-oriented, the introduction of the progressive education movement has resulted in an ultra child-centered approach with great sacrifice on the parent's side (Shinada, 2004).

Previous cross-cultural studies comparing Japanese and U.S. parenting reported that Japanese mothers were more likely than their U.S. counterparts to avoid directive and

coercive approaches in conflict situations with their young children (e.g., Azuma, 2004). For example, Azuma found that Japanese mothers tended to gradually loosen up their demands and eventually compromise with their children and preferred to offer instructions in a sensitive and non-imposing manner (Kobayashi, 2001). Not all studies, however, show this pattern. Examining a sample of Japanese mothers of 3- to 6-year-olds who attend preschools, Yamada (2004) found that Japanese mothers used not only permissive strategies (e.g., use of acceptance), but also various resolution strategies such as reasoning and power assertion, depending on how they interpreted their children's behavior in conflict situations. Three other studies of Japanese mothers with children under 3 also indicated that mothers use directive and coercive approaches with their children, especially when the mothers encountered noncompliant behavior (Hagiwara & Iwai, 1998; Sakagami, 2005; Ujiie, 1997).

These findings regarding Japanese maternal use of power may be explained in terms of two conflicting values, promotion of the child's ego development and cultivation of the child's obedience. Ujiie (1997) interviewed Japanese middle-class mothers ($N = 95$) to investigate the meaning they gave to 2- to 3-year-olds' negative and self-assertive behaviors. The findings showed that the majority of mothers (75%) chose inhibitory self-regulation (e.g., not to make trouble with others, to be obedient) as their primary childrearing goals. At the same time, the majority of mothers believed that self-assertion (85.7%) and negativism (69%) had positive meanings for their children's development as signs of ego development. Importantly, however, the mothers seemed to feel pressured to accept this positive interpretation of child negativism, especially children's noncompliant behavior. As suggested by self-report data indicating that the majority of the mothers

(70%) ended up using power-assertive control (e.g., physical punishment), fragile adherence to this positive interpretation of child negativism may have led the mothers to feel irritated or frustrated when actually confronted with their children's self-assertion or negativism. Likewise, Sakagami's (2005) study of mother's reactions to child negativism found that they were unable to inhibit their own anger and bewilderment during the peak of negativism, which in turn brought guilt and a lack of confidence in their parenting. Stress arising from tension between traditional childrearing beliefs and parenting experts' advice promoting Western-style child-centered approaches may be at the root of some mothers' use of coercive and power-assertive control strategies during struggles with children's noncompliant behavior.

Taken together studies on Japanese and U.S. childrearing suggest that there may be some important differences, as well as some growing similarities, in the childrearing concerns of mothers in the two countries. Mothers' postings to on-line message boards may provide a window on their concerns. The first goal of the proposed research was therefore to compare U.S. and Japanese mothers' concerns as expressed in parenting magazine online message boards in 2007. Most Japanese and U.S. parenting magazines operate websites that include message boards, a place for mothers to exchange childrearing-related ideas and concerns. According to a recent survey by Dentsu (2000), about 70% of today's Japanese mothers of 0- to 2-year-olds view online childrearing information at least once a week. To my knowledge, there are no comparable studies examining the frequency of U.S. parents going online to get childrearing information. However, according to a recent survey conducted by Pew Internet & American Life Project, parents with children under 18 are more likely to have used the Internet (70%)

than non-parents (53%) (Allen & Rainie, 2002). Parents go online to get a variety of information to improve personal or family lives. It would seem reasonable to infer that some of that information would relate to childrearing.

Contemporary Parenting Magazines

Along with the social change of increasing numbers of urban nuclear family households, consumption of parenting magazines in Japan has dramatically risen (Tendo, 2004; Shwalb et al., 1995) and has influenced childrearing norms and standards for Japanese mothers (Shinada, 2004). U.S. parents also frequently get childrearing resources from media, such as books and magazines. For example, a recent study of the Commonwealth Fund Survey of Parents with Young Children ($n = 2,017$) indicated that a majority of parents (71%) have used media sources such as books, magazines, newspapers, television, and videos to obtain information about childrearing (Fuligni & Brooks-Gunn, 2002). In addition, a recent study of infant feeding showed the significant effects of mass media on U.S. women's decisions around breastfeeding (Foss & Southwell, 2006). When the frequency of hand feeding (e.g., infant formula, cereal/solid food, hand feeding equipment) advertisement increased in *Parents* magazine, breastfeeding rates generally decreased the following year.

The advice found in Japanese childrearing magazines tends to be child-centered, pressuring mothers to promptly and consistently meet the needs of their children, and repeatedly focusing on the importance of cultivating closely attached relationships with their children (Ishiguro, 2004; Shinada, 2004). The suggestions provided by childrearing experts therefore may increase maternal stress and anxiety.

Because previous literature indicates that Western pedagogy and theories have

significantly influenced the advice given to Japanese parents, the second purpose of this study is was compare the childrearing strategies suggested in recent parenting magazines in Japan and the United States. Because Japanese experts' advice has been influenced by Western developmental theory, it may be quite possible to find similar expert advice in both countries. On the other hand, it is also possible that, because the developmental model of autonomy and related practical recommendations for parents were formulated in the Western context, some Japanese experts may reinterpret them to make sense to the Japanese audience. According to cultural change theory, Japanese experts' advice might have changed over time as they introduced strategies originally formulated in the West but now revised to be more adaptive to the Japanese context (Harkness, Super, & Keefer, 1992 cited by Halgunseth, Ispa, & Rudy, 2006). This investigation will provide insight into the ways in which Western theories have been assimilated by Japanese childrearing professionals into Japanese traditional childrearing strategies. Content analysis will be utilized to analyze and compare the advice directed to parents in a sample of U.S. and Japanese parenting magazines from 2005 to 2006.

Although numerous studies have been conducted to compare Japanese and U.S. childrearing styles (e.g., Azuma, 2004), there seem to be no previous cross-cultural content analyses of childrearing styles as depicted in parenting magazines in these nations. Kakinuma (1998) conducted a content analysis of Japanese and U.S. parenting magazines to compare the frequency and content of letters from readers quoted in magazines; however, that study did not compare the childrearing styles promoted by experts. The closest study was a content analysis conducted by Tsuneyoshi and Boocock (1997), who compared childrearing beliefs through examination of contemporary

parenting books from five countries: Japan, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and China. Tsuneyoshi and Boocock found that childrearing advice was fairly consistent among the five countries. The experts seemed to offer advice based on what they called “scientific” evidence rather than advice influenced by socio-cultural viewpoints. For example, parenting books in the five countries were similar in their recommendations that mother breast-feed rather than formula-feed because of the health benefits for mother and child and the cultivation of mother-child interaction and closeness.

The target ages of the children focused on in parenting magazines and online message boards for the current analyses are birth to 2 years. The choice of this age group is based on a well-known Japanese belief, “the myth of the 3-year-old” (*3 saiji shinwa*), which means that a child should be raised by his or her own mother until 3 years of age. Previous studies suggest that mothers of children who are under 3 years of age perceived more maternal difficulties and anxiety when compared with mothers of children who were above 3 years of age (Fukaya et al., 1997; Kazui, 1997). The exploratory and descriptive content analyses to be conducted for this study thus addressed the following research questions.

Research questions.

1. According to recent parenting magazine online message boards in Japan and the U.S., what do mothers of young children (age 0-2) want to know about regarding feeding/eating, sleep, development, discipline, toilet-training, and the mother-child relationship?

2. In recent parenting magazines in Japan and the U.S., what is the specific advice given to parents of 0- to 2-year-olds who have concerns within the following domains: feeding/eating, sleep, development, discipline, toilet-training, and the mother-child relationship.
3. To what extent and how do mothers' concerns expressed in message board postings in Japan and the U.S. reflect the concepts of autonomy, assertiveness, individuality, and independence in each of the domains?
4. To what extent and how does expert advice in parenting magazines in Japan and the U.S. reflect the concepts of autonomy, assertiveness, individuality, and independence in each of the domains?
5. To what extent do mothers' concerns in message board postings in each of the domains in Japan and the U.S. relate to promotion of children's closeness to the mother?
6. To what extent does expert advice in parenting magazines in Japan and the U.S. relate to promotion of closeness to the mother in each of the domains?
7. To what extent do mothers' concerns in message board postings in Japan and the U.S. relate to promotion of a child-centered approach to childrearing in each of the domains?
8. To what extent does expert advice in parenting magazines in Japan and the U.S. relate to promotion of a child-centered approach to childrearing in each of the domains?

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

Data Sources

Online message boards. Two U.S. and two Japanese online message boards maintained by popular parenting magazines in each country were used for this study. The U.S. message boards are operated by *Parents* and *American Baby*. The Japanese message boards are operated by *Baby-Mo* and *Ohayo Akacyan*. These parenting magazines are rated as among the four most-sold in each country by *Amazon.com* and *Amazon.co.jp* (Appendix A). In addition, *Magazines for Libraries* and *Zasshi Shinbun Shoukatarogue* (a catalogue of magazines and newspapers) indicates that these magazines provide childrearing advice to parents of young children, particularly those ages 2 and under,³ and are targeted to a general audience (i.e., they are not affiliated with religious or ethnic groups or aimed at parents of special needs or gifted children).

Message boards operated by the other two most-sold U.S. parenting magazines (*Parenting*, and *Scholastic Parent & Child*) and the other two most-sold Japanese parenting magazines (*NHK Sukusuku Kosodate*, and *Kotsuko Kurabu*) were not included in the study because the publishers did not operate websites with message boards for their readers or did not respond to requests for permission to use message boards for research purposes.

³ With the exception of *American Baby*, all U.S. magazines also target parents of school-age children.

The message boards I used are organized according to the age of the child (e.g., raising babies, raising toddlers, raising preschoolers). The postings of mothers⁴ of 0- to 2-year-olds were chosen as the sample for this study. If the child's age was not clear, I excluded that message from the sample.

When a mother posted messages more than once, as long as they were in different domains, I included all of them in my sample. For example, if a mother had a posting about feeding and another one about sleeping, I kept both. If she posted more than once within a domain, then I chose the first posting. Following this rule, I downloaded the first 20 internet postings per age group (babies, ones, and twos) from each website. I thus obtained a total of 240 messages posted in 2007 on four different websites.⁵ The unit of analysis was a posting that reflected a mother's concern related to childrearing; it did not include responses to the mother.

U.S. mothers' usernames and demographic information (e.g., gender of poster, age of poster, age of child (ren), sex of child(ren)) were retrieved with their postings. Fifty-one U.S. mothers provided such demographic information (42.5%), while 69 did not (57.5%). Within the postings that included demographic information, all of the posters were females (100%) and the average age of the posters was 26.84. As for siblings, 42.62% of the U.S. posters' children had sibling(s), while 57.38% of them did not.

⁴ I assumed that a majority or all of the posters were mothers. The posters' usernames frequently included words such as "mommy" "mom" or the poster's first name. In addition, about half of the posters in the U.S. online message boards posted their biographical information including their gender. According to this information, all of them were females.

⁵ While I was retrieving postings from the U.S. online message boards, American Baby.com and Parents.com closed their old message board sites and created a new forum, which is a collaboration of three parenting magazines: American Baby.com, Parents, com, and Familyfun.com. Therefore, the numbers of the postings from each U.S. website were a little inconsistent, 56 postings from Parents.com and 64 postings from American Baby.com, respectively.

None of the postings on the Japanese online message boards contained demographic information, and information about sex, presence of siblings could only sometimes be discerned from the content of the postings. Whereas the sex of the U.S. posters' children could be clearly identified by the pronoun that the mothers used to write about their children (e.g., "he," "she"), this was not the case in the Japanese postings because the Japanese language does not use pronouns. The sex of the child was therefore only identifiable when the poster referred to her child as "son" or "daughter." Eighty-eight percent of the Japanese mothers indicated the sex of their children in their postings.

Parenting magazines. As indicated above, magazine sales rankings from *Amazon.com* and *Amazon.co.jp* were used as criteria for selecting the top four most popular parenting magazines in the two countries: *Parents*, *American Baby*, *Parenting*, and *Scholastic Parent & Child*, from the United States and *Baby-Mo (Baby and Mother)*, *Ohayo Akacyan (Good Morning, Baby)*, *NHK Sukusuku Kosodate (Japan Broadcast Publishing Raising Healthy Children)*, and *Kotsuko Kurabu (Chick Club)* from Japan (Appendix A). *Magazines for Libraries* and *Zasshi Shinbun Shoukatarogue* describe these magazines as providing advice to parents of young children, particularly those with infants and toddlers (birth to age 2 years) and as targeting a general audience (i.e., they are not affiliated with religious or ethnic groups or targeted to parents of special needs or gifted children). Every issue of the four U.S. parenting magazines and the four Japanese parenting magazines published in the year 2005 and 2006 was included in the sample (for a total of 181 magazines - 85 from the U.S and 96 from Japan).⁶

⁶ With the exception of *Scholastic Parent & Child* (6-8 issues a year) and *Parenting* (11 issues a year), all magazines are published monthly.

The U.S. and Japanese magazine articles were written by professionals or editors who collected information from professionals. The majority of the articles in the U.S. parenting magazines were written by editors or freelance writers who based their advice on research they had read in articles or books. Those in *Scholastic Parent & Child*, however, were written by child development experts (see Table 1). As for Japanese parenting magazines, editors first consulted with childrearing experts (e.g., professors, pediatricians, nutritionists) and then wrote articles to disseminate knowledge in a way that appealed to readers (Komiya, personal communication, December 22, 2007). The information about the professional's name and occupation were retrieved with the articles. The parenting magazine editors repeatedly used some of the same professionals for advice in a particular area. Within the sample, 101 professionals' names appeared in the magazine articles only one time, while 41 professionals' names appeared more than one time. See Table 1 for the professions of the experts who wrote the magazine articles analyzed for the current study. U.S. and Japanese parenting articles provide brief demographic information about authors and/or experts. Although some of the articles were written by parenting magazine editors or freelance writers, I use the term "expert" to describe all of the authors.

Table 1

Numbers (and Percentages) of Professions of U.S. and Japanese Experts in Parenting Magazine

Magazine	Professor	Medical professional	Psychiatrist/ Psychologist	Nutritionist	Others ^a	Total
<i>Scholastics</i>	7 (53.9%)	0	3 (23.1%)	0	3 (23.1%)	13
<i>American Baby</i>	0	2 (100.0%)	0	0	0	2
<i>Parenting</i>	0	3 (100.0%)	0	0	0	3
<i>Parents</i>	0	2 (100.0%)	0	0	0	2
<i>Ohayo Akacyan</i>	16 (39.0%)	19 (46.3%)	2 (4.9%)	2 (4.9%)	2 (4.9%)	41
<i>NHK Sukusuku</i>	6 (42.9%)	5 (35.7%)	1 (7.1%)	2 (14.3%)	0	14
<i>Kosodate</i>						
<i>Kotsuko Kurabu</i>	22 (64.7%)	5 (14.7%)	2 (5.9%)	2 (5.9%)	3 (8.8%)	34
<i>Baby-mo</i>	10 (30.3%)	11 (33.3%)	3 (9.1%)	3 (9.1%)	6 (18.2%)	33
<i>Total</i>	61 (43.0%)	47 (33.1%)	11 (7.8%)	9 (6.3%)	14 (9.9%)	142

^aOthers include child care providers, speech therapists, parent educators, teachers, etc.

The unit of analysis for parenting magazines was an article in its entirety. To be included in the study, articles had to address mothers' concerns related to 0- to 2-year-olds and focus on one or more of the following six domains: feeding/eating, toilet-training, sleep, development, discipline, and/or the mother-child relationships. If an article communicated information related to developmental milestones or

developmentally appropriate activities or products but not parental concerns, it was excluded from the sample. Most of the articles provided information in only one domain. Articles that covered information that fit into more than one domain, were coded into multiple domains. For example, a Japanese article entitled “When are the difficulty and harshness of childrearing supposed to end?” was coded into three domains - sleep, development, and mother-child relationships. However, general question-and-answer (Q & A) columns were excluded from this study.

Ethnographic Content Analysis Techniques

To analyze the questions mothers asked on online message boards and the expert advice given in magazine articles, I used an ethnographic content analysis (ECA) method (Altheide, 1987, 1996). Conventional or quantitative content analysis provides a way of obtaining data to measure the frequency of occurrence of certain issues, words, themes or messages in documents. ECA intends to improve on this enumerative approach by applying the ethnographic tradition, particularly grounded theory as developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967). Altheide and Grimes (2005) explained that in ECA, “the researcher immerses him or herself in numerous documents, reads them interactively – moving from one point in a document to a related point in another document, then searching still another source – until major themes and discourse emerge through comparison” (p. 625). The strength of ECA is in its reliance on “tracking discourse,” or following certain issues, words, or themes across different contexts. Therefore, ECA was considered a suitable analytic tool for the current study. In the following paragraphs, I describe my analysis techniques as I applied them to my research questions.

Research Question 1: Analysis of online message boards. A preliminary stage of analysis involved reading every posting and placing it into one of six domains. For each posting, I summarized the idea with a few descriptive examples. For example, here is a posting from American Baby.com (2007).

My DS⁷ is 2 1/2 (Oct. '04) & we started underwear during the day & pull-ups for naps & night time around the 16th of March. On March 23 he refused his pull-ups so he has been in underwear since then. He has done extremely well & had only a few accidents. He only used the potty seat a few times because he would rather used the big toilet & stand up. My problem is early last week he started trying to pee in stuff that should not be peed in (i.e. the tray on his brother's leapstart table, a cup, basket or just whatever). Has anyone else ever had this problem? If so, what did you do to stop him from doing it?

This online posting was assigned to the domain of toilet-training and then key themes such as “toilet-training nightmare (pees in stuff that should not be peed in)” were noted along with demographic information concerning the child.

Secondly, data from each domain were analyzed inductively with open coding, which involved a process of developing categories of themes emerging from the data. Passages with similar meanings were grouped together and labels were developed to represent these meaning.

Research Question 2: Analysis of parenting magazines. Every article giving expert advice was read and placed in one or more of the six domains. While 92% of the articles were placed in one domain, 8% of the articles were placed in multiple domains. Almost

⁷ DS is an abbreviated term for Dear Son. Instead of a child's name, parents often use DS (Dear Son) or DD (Dear Daughter) on message boards.

none of the U.S. articles were placed in multiple domains (.4%), while 15.1% of the Japanese articles were. Then I made a list of the advice that was presented in each article with a few descriptive examples. For example, in an article entitled “How to promote and deal with your child’s self-assertiveness: 1- to 3-year-olds” from *Kotsuko kurabu* (2006), I noted multiple pieces of advice, such as (1) When your child insists on doing things that he or she is not capable of doing, let the child know how much you understand the child’s wishes and assist the child without being noticed so that he or she is able to feel the sense of accomplishment; (2) When your child insists that she or he wants to eat a snack right before dinner time, distract the child’s thinking by inviting her or him to play with you; and (3) When your child throws tantrums, just *mimamoru*⁸. When he or she starts calming down, hold him or her for a while.

Data from each domain were analyzed with open coding, as described in the analysis of online message boards. For example, in the article regarding the promotion of child self-assertiveness (*Kotsuko Kurabu*, June 2006), “setting a rule” “offering support without being noticed” “empathetic understanding,” “distracting,” and “*mimamoru*” were commonly identified themes of experts’ advice for parents who face conflicts or stressful situations with their children.

Research Questions 3 - 8: Analyses concerning the themes of autonomy, closeness and child-centeredness. I read each online message and magazine article thoroughly, summarized the information, identified its themes (e.g., autonomy, assertiveness, individuality, independence, closeness, and/or child-centeredness) noted how they were defined or the meaning given to them, and noted the childrearing process the mother was

⁸ *Mimamoru* is a Japanese indigenous term, which literally means watch and protect. *Mimamoru* is a commonly used non-intervening technique in Japanese education and childrearing.

concerned about or the expert advocated. For example, a posting by a Japanese mother - “My 4-month-old demands that I hold her all day long. If I put her down, she will burst into tears. I don’t know what to do. I don’t want anyone to think I’m abusing her” was coded as reflecting a concern related to the theme of child-centeredness. The childrearing processes noted were constant holding of the baby while feeling frustrated by the baby’s demands, and fear of being misunderstood by others as being abusive: The message concurrently provided information about beliefs about closeness.

Secondly, within each domain I compared and contrasted the meanings that Japanese and U.S. mothers and experts gave to the concepts of autonomy, assertiveness, individuality, independence, closeness, and child-centeredness, and the childrearing processes that they associated with each of these concepts. I also determined if some themes were more likely to be present in some domains (e.g., toilet-training, sleep) than in others, and whether or not this type of domain specificity differed between the two countries.

Reliability

Intercoder reliability for parenting magazines was calculated using a randomly selected subsample of 9.1% of the items from the U.S. magazine articles (a total of 241 articles) and of 14.5% of the items from Japanese magazine articles (a total of 152 articles).⁹ A total of 42 articles (22 articles from U.S. samples; 20 articles from Japanese samples) were evaluated for reliability. Intercoder reliability for online message boards was calculated using the whole sample from the U.S. postings (a total of 120 postings)

⁹ The discrepancy between the percentages of the U.S. and the Japanese subsamples was due to the difference in the numbers of articles that met the criteria for inclusion, although the numbers of the magazines were comparable (85 magazines from the U.S and 96 magazines from Japan) between the two countries.

and a randomly selected subsample of 24.8% of the items from Japanese online postings (a total of 121 postings).¹⁰ A total of 156 postings (126 postings from U.S. samples¹¹; 30 postings from Japanese samples) were evaluated for reliability.

I coded all of the Japanese and U.S. postings and articles. A U.S. faculty member also read the postings and articles in the U.S. reliability samples, and another Japanese graduate student also read the Japanese postings and articles in the Japanese reliability samples. Each coder independently analyzed all of the articles and postings. Periodically, the raters met to compare the themes. I then compared my assessments with those of the other two coders.

The reliability of the coding of the postings was calculated in two ways –complete and moderate agreement. Complete agreement occurred when the coders completely agreed about the domain(s) that a posting belonged to (e.g., Person A = Sleep, Person B = Sleep). If the coders partially agreed about the domain(s) (e.g., Person A = Sleep and Discipline, Person B = Sleep; Person A = Sleep and Discipline, Person B = Sleep and Development), agreement was considered moderate. An intercoder reliability rate of 89% for moderate agreement (79% for complete agreement) was achieved for the U.S. postings, while an intercoder reliability rate of 87% for moderate agreement (63% for complete agreement) was achieved for the Japanese postings. The main reason for the disagreement is that one Japanese coder considered child disobedience to reflect the development of ego or identity, and therefore categorized it under the development

¹⁰ The U.S. faculty member was willing to code all of the postings, while that was not the case for the Japanese graduate student.

¹¹ The reason these subsamples (126) were larger than the sample (120) was that author later dropped six postings that were used for intercoder reliability. Some postings did not seem to meet the criteria for analyses and some mothers posted multiple times within the same domain.

domain, while another Japanese coder placed it under the discipline domain. The majority of the coding disagreements regarding the postings were solved through discussion.

The reliability of the coding for parenting articles was also calculated in two ways – moderate and complete agreement. If the coders completely agreed about the main themes in an article (e.g., autonomy, independence, closeness, and child-centeredness: Person A = autonomy, Person B = autonomy), agreement was considered complete. If the coders partially agreed about the domain (e.g., Person A = autonomy and child-centeredness, Person B = autonomy; Person A = autonomy and child-centeredness, Person B = autonomy and closeness), agreement was considered moderate. An intercoder reliability rate of 87% for moderate agreement (73% for complete agreement) was achieved for the U.S. articles, while an intercoder reliability rate of 90% for moderate agreement (65% for complete agreement) was achieved for the Japanese articles. Most of the coding disagreements about the categories fitting the parenting articles were solved through discussion between the raters.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The preliminary stage of analysis, involving reading every posting and placing it into one or more of six domains resulted in a majority of the postings being placed in one domain, and about one fifth of the postings being placed in multiple domains. Table 2 indicates that the domains of most concern to mothers in both countries were about feeding/eating. The next most frequent postings for the U.S. mothers were about sleep, and for the Japanese mothers, about development.

Table 2

Numbers (and Percentages) of U.S. and Japanese Postings by Domain

Domain	U.S.	Japan
Discipline	23 (16.20%)	29 (18.95%)
Development	19 (13.38%)	31 (20.26%)
Feeding/Eating	50 (35.21%)	47 (30.71%)
Sleep	29 (20.42%)	22 (14.38%)
Mother-Child Relationship	7 (4.93%)	12 (7.84%)
Toilet-Training	14 (9.86%)	12 (7.84%)
<i>Total</i>	142	153

Of all the U.S. message board postings, 54.9% pertained to male children. In contrast, Japanese mothers' postings were slightly more likely to concern their female children (57.8%). The Japanese pattern may reflect the trend for Japanese parents to prefer to have girls (72.7%) over boys (27.3%) if they could choose (National Institute of

Population of Social Security Research, 2002). When a similar study was conducted in 1972, a majority of the parents chose boys (52.1%), while fewer chose girls (19.2%) and some indicated “I don’t know or either is fine” (28.7%). Kashiwagi (2003) explained that the increasing preference for girls in Japan may reveal changing attitudes toward gender since women started working outside of the home. Kashiwagi further indicated that Japanese women’s life course changes due to increasing longevity may have influenced their views toward raising children. Japanese mothers started considering daughters as future investments who will bring psychological value (e.g., going shopping together, keeping them company, providing care) to their lives in the long run. Thus, the Japanese mothers may have posted more concerns related to their girls than to their boys because of higher expectations for their daughters than for their sons.

As for the U.S. mothers, a recent study of parents of 1- and 2-year-old children discovered a finding similar to the current one. Briggs-Gowan, Carter, and Skuban (2001) found U.S. mothers to be more concerned about their male children than about their female children. Using a representative sample of 1- and 2-year-olds with healthy births ($n = 1,280$), the authors indicated that parents demonstrated greater worry about boys than girls. Parents also gave boys lower socio-emotional competence ratings than girls.

Table 3 shows the characteristics of the children the U.S. and Japanese mothers were concerned about in relation to domain group. Overall, the number of girls and boys for each country per domain group was similar. The age distributions of the posters’ children were also similar between the two countries. For example, concerns related to feeding/eating and sleep were mostly about infants in both countries. They were less frequent in the postings about 1-year-olds. These concerns were much less common in

regards to 2-year-olds in both countries. In contrast, in both countries, concerns related to discipline and toilet-training were found for 2-year-olds and some 1-year-olds, but infrequently in regards to infants.

Table 3

Number of U.S. and Japanese Postings Pertaining to Girls and Boys, and by Child Age by Domain

Domain	Sex of Child						Age of Child in Years							
	Girl			Boy			Unknown ^a		Baby ^b		One		Two	
	US	Japan	Total	US	Japan	Total	US	Japan	US	Japan	US	Japan	US	Japan
Feeding/eating	22	20	42	29	19	48	0	8	24	21	17	18	10	8
Development	7	13	20	11	12	23	1	6	7	13	9	9	3	9
Discipline	14	15	29	9	12	21	0	2	0	1	9	13	14	15
Sleep	11	13	24	18	7	25	0	3	12	11	9	9	8	3
Mother-child relationship	4	8	12	3	4	7	0	0	1	5	2	4	4	3
Toilet-training	6	9	15	8	3	11	0	0	1	0	3	1	10	11
<i>Total</i>	64	78	142	78	57	135	1	19	45	51	49	54	49	49

^aChildren whose sex was not evident from the posting were coded as “unknown.”

^bChildren under 12 months.

Below I describe my findings in relation to each of my eight research questions. The research questions are italicized.

Research Question 1: According to recent parenting magazine online message boards in Japan and the U.S., what do mothers of young children (age 0-2) want to know about regarding feeding/eating, sleep, development, discipline, toilet-training, and the mother-child relationship?

The results of the analyses of the U.S. and Japanese postings in each domain are indicated in Tables 4 - 9. In each table, the number of postings in each category is shown. Some postings were sorted into multiple subcategories. For example, in the category of “Punishment” a poster talked about “physical” and “verbal” punishment so the posting was placed in the two subcategories. Therefore, the sum of the number of postings in each subcategory might be greater than the number of postings in a category. In this paper, I only discuss categories that have more than 5 postings from at least one country.

The percentages of the postings were calculated in relation to the total number of postings within a domain within a country. For example, there were 50 postings in the Feeding/Eating domain from the U.S. sample. Nine postings were about “what to feed.” Therefore, the percentage of this subcategory was $9/50 * 100 = 18.0$.

A summary or quote (translated for the Japanese sample) of each posting in each domain is indicated in Appendix B. All of the Japanese postings were translated by the author for the purpose of comparing them with the U.S. postings. Sex of the child was color-coded (red as girl, blue as boy, and black as unknown). Age of the child was indicated after each item in parentheses.

Online Postings: Feeding/Eating

The frequencies and percentages of U.S. and Japanese postings in each domain are indicated in Table 4. The main themes that emerged in the Eating/Feeding domain were labeled: Concern with Nutrition, Weaning, Independent Eating, Concern with Manners, and Tradition. Most of the U.S. and Japanese mothers' concerns were about nutrition. Under the category "Concern with Nutrition," mothers of both countries expressed concerns regarding "what to feed." The mothers asked for ideas for meals, snacks or drinks appropriate for the particular ages of their children. In addition, both the U.S. and Japanese mothers expressed concerns regarding "feeding schedule." These were the mothers of infants- age 3 weeks to 5 months (Appendix B1). Many of these mothers mentioned that their children always wanted to eat so they ended up feeding frequently.

There seemed to be some cross-cultural differences related to mothers' concerns associated with nutrition. The U.S. mothers seemed to worry about "when to start" and "how much to feed," which was not the case for the Japanese mothers. For instance, the U.S. mothers' postings were about when to start particular food items (e.g., yogurt, peanut butter, rice cereal, stage 3 foods, meat). On the other hand, the Japanese mothers seemed to be especially concerned about their children not eating enough than the U.S. mothers. For instance, one Japanese mother wrote that, "He doesn't eat much at home. I have to chase him around to feed him" (2 years 7 months old boy). The Japanese mothers' concern about their children not eating enough was also found in a large scale survey by the Japan Private Child Care Association (2006) in a sample of 3,303 mothers of young children (age 0-6). In this study, the most prevailing concerns for Japanese mothers were (1) not knowing how to reprimand children after they had misbehaved

(34.1%), (2) children not listening to their mothers (22.7%), and (3) children eating too much or too little or being a picky eater (21.2%).

Some of the U.S. and Japanese mothers' concerns were about helping their children to eat and drink independently ("Independent eating"). A majority of these concerns were about children around age 1 to 2 (Appendix B1). Around that time, mothers started wondering about strategies that would help their children feed themselves, drink out of a sippy cup or sit still at the table while eating.

Questions about weaning from the breast were common among mothers of both countries. Among mothers who posted concerns on this topic, eight out of nine Japanese mothers and two out of three U.S. mothers talked about their 1-year-olds (Appendix B1). The mothers considered various factors that affected their weaning decision, factors related to the child (i.e., "My child needs breast-milk to go to sleep"; "My child refuses to take any liquids but breast-milk so she is dehydrated"; "I'm worried about his cavities") and factors related to the mother (i.e., "I'm losing my milk supply"; "I can't do housework"). The U.S. and Japanese mothers' dilemma regarding whether or not to stop breastfeeding may reflect the American Academy of Pediatrics' policy statement that, "It is recommended that breastfeeding continue for at least 12 months, and thereafter for as long as mutually desired" (American Academy of Pediatric Work Group on Breastfeeding, 1997, p. 1037). Japanese pediatricians often quoted this statement in their advice related to breastfeeding and expressed the opinion that weaning should be flexible and that the decision should be made by mother and child. Because there is no clear timeline for weaning recommended by U.S. and Japanese pediatricians, the mothers may post questions to consult with fellow mothers in the process of decision-making.

Table 4

Numbers (and Percentages) of U.S. and Japanese Postings in Each Category and Subcategory in the Feeding/Eating Domain

Category	Number (and Percentage) of Postings	
	U.S.	Japan
Concern with Nutrition	36 (72.0%)	32 (68.1%)
What to feed	9 (18.0%)	6 (12.8%)
How much to feed	6 (12.0%)	0
When to start	10 (20.0%)	2 (4.3%)
Picky eater	4 (8.0%)	4 (8.5%)
Refusing to drink	1 (2.0%)	5 (10.6%)
Small eater	0	7 (14.9%)
Big eater	3 (6.0%)	1 (2.1%)
Feeding schedule	3 (8.0%)	6 (12.8%)
Is my milk a problem?	2 (4.0%)	3 (6.4%)
Others	3 (6.0%)	2 (4.3%)
Weaning	6 (12.0%)	9 (19.1%)
Attachment to breast-milk	3 (6.0%)	5 (10.6%)
Others	3 (6.0%)	4 (8.5%)
Independent Eating	6 (12.0%)	6 (12.8%)
Bottle attachment	0	3 (6.4%)

Feed himself	6 (12.0%)	3 (6.4%)
Concern with Manners	2 (4.0%)	3 (6.4%)
Tradition	0	3 (6.4%)
Others	3 (6.0%)	0

Online Postings: Sleep.

Frequencies and percentages of U.S. and Japanese postings in the Sleep domain are indicated in Table 5. The main themes that emerged from the Sleep domain were labeled: Independence, Sleep Trouble, Nap Trouble, Schedule, and Safety and Health. Many of the U.S. mother’s concerns were related to helping their children become independent sleepers (“Independence”). Concerns related to independence were found among mothers of children from infants to 2-year-olds for both boys and girls (Appendix B2).

Three Japanese mothers worried about the use of breast-milk as a strategy for putting children to sleep, while this type of concern was not found among the U.S. sample. The Japanese childrearing practice of co-sleeping often involves the use of nursing as a sleep strategy. However, this childrearing practice may create a concern for Japanese mothers when children are unable to sleep without breast-feeding. One Japanese mother of a 1 year and 8 month old child wrote “My daughter can’t go to sleep without breast-feeding. How can I help her to sleep without it? If I don’t give it, she pulls my clothes to look for my breast. Sleeping beside her doesn’t seem to help.”

Putting children down for naps or waking them up from naps (“Nap Trouble”) was a concern for both U.S. and Japanese mothers of infants to 2-year-olds, but mostly in

regards to boys (Appendix B2). One Japanese mother expressed her concerns regarding naps in this manner:

My son refuses to take naps even if he shows signs of sleepiness. When I invite him to sleep by saying things such as ‘Sleepy, aren’t you? Let’s go to sleep together,’ his response is ‘no!’” Every weekend, I need to put him in our car and drive around in order to put him sleep. However, he seems to take a nap at his day care” (1 year 10 months).

Putting children to sleep by driving them around is a common strategy for Japanese mothers. Because Japanese houses and apartments are typically built close together, mothers need to be sensitive about not making too much noise for their neighbors, which in turn makes it impossible to let children cry themselves to sleep.

Table 5

Numbers (and Percentages) of U.S. and Japanese Postings in Each Category and Subcategory in the Sleep Domain

Category	Number (and Percentage) of Postings	
	U.S.	Japan
Independence	11 (37.9%)	0
Don’t sleep through the night	4 (13.8%)	0
Sleep alone	7 (24.1%)	0

Sleep Trouble		12 (41.4%)	11 (50.0%)
	Crying at night	2 (6.9%)	3 (13.6%)
	Wake up frequently at night	5 (17.2%)	3 (13.6%)
	Need breast-milk	0	2 (9.1%)
	Others	5 (17.2%)	1 (4.5%)
	Trouble going to sleep/bed	7 (24.1%)	5 (22.7%)
	Need breast-milk	0	3 (13.6%)
	Others	7 (24.1%)	2 (9.1%)
Nap Trouble		6 (20.7%)	4 (18.2%)
Schedule		3 (10.3%)	3 (13.6%)
Safety and Health		3 (10.3%)	4 (18.2%)
Others		3 (10.3%)	0

Online Postings: Development

Frequencies and percentages of U.S. and Japanese postings in the Development domain are indicated in Table 6. The main themes that emerged from the Development domain were labeled: Physical, Language, Socioemotional, Cognitive, and Concerns Related to the 1.5-Year-Old Screening. Many of the U.S. and Japanese mothers' concerns were related to their children's physical developmental ("Physical"). There seemed to be no differences by the sex or age of the children mothers were concerned about (Appendix B3).

Mothers from both countries worried about their children's delay in motor development such as sitting independently, walking independently, or lifting their heads up. The Japanese mothers, however, were particularly concerned about their children's weight and appearance, while none of the U.S. mothers expressed this concern. Five Japanese mothers were worried about their children being too fat. For instance, a mother of a 7 month old girl expressed her concerns in this way, "People always say things to my child like 'You're really fat!' 'chubby cheeks.' I don't think that she is drinking or eating too much. I'm really concerned because my child is a girl." The Japanese mothers were also worried about their children having a big head, a big stomach, or being too small. One possible explanation could involve the interdependency of Japanese society. Living in an interdependent culture, people may feel pressure not to stand out and to fit in, while this is not as much the case in the U.S. where the self is constructed by expressing unique attributes (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

The mothers of both countries seemed to be equally worried about language delays ("Language"). In both countries, this concern was expressed by mothers of male children four times more than by mothers of female children (Appendix B3).

Postings in the area of socio-emotional development were found in both U.S. and Japan ("Socio-emotional"). Child's finger sucking, screaming or fussing was a source of maternal concern related to their children's emotional development. Children fighting over the same toy seemed to be a common concern for Japanese mothers. One mother wrote, "My daughter bursts into tears when other children take her toys. When this happens, I try to comfort her and distract her with other things. She gets really upset if someone forcefully takes her toy away. I get upset too but don't want to have a bad

relationship with the mother of the child” (2.5 years old, Girl). Child conflict could be a source of stress specific to Japanese mothers because of the pressure to maintain harmony and conformity with other mothers in one’s social group.

Another noticeable finding was the number of Japanese postings expressing concerns related to the 1.5-year-old screening. It is highly recommended (almost mandatory) for Japanese parents to bring their children to a local health center for screening when they turn 6 months and 1.5 years. If a mother does not visit the health center for screening and a public nurse suspects a problem, she may visit the mother at home. The intention of this screening system is to identify problems (in the mother or in the child) at an early stage so that the family will be able to hook up with local resources and intervention programs. According to the postings from the Japanese mothers, they were nervous about their children’s diagnosis during these visits (i.e., “I think that they will say something negative about my child at the screening.”) or they worried about their children because of comments that they received during the visit (e.g., “I was told that my child’s teeth will stick out if she continues to suck her fingers during the screening.”)

Table 6

Numbers (and Percentages) of U.S. and Japanese Postings in Each Category and Subcategory in the Development Domain

Category			Number (and Percentage) of Postings	
			U.S.	Japan
Physical			8 (42.0%)	14 (45.2%)
	Weight and appearance		0	10 (32.3%)
		Is my child too fat?	0	5 (16.1%)
		Is my child too small?	0	2 (6.5%)
		Others	0	3 (9.7%)
	Motor development		6 (31.6%)	3 (9.7%)
	Others		2 (10.5%)	1 (3.2%)
Language			5 (26.3%)	5 (16.1%)
Socio-emotional			5 (26.3%)	10 (32.3%)
	Fighting over the same toy		0	3 (9.7%)
	Finger sucking		0	2 (6.5%)
	Screaming/Fussy		2 (10.5%)	2 (6.5%)

Others	3 (15.8%)	3 (9.7%)
Cognitive	2 (10.5%)	0
Concern Related to the 1.5-Year Screening	0	6 (19.4%)
Others	0	2 (6.5%)

Online Postings: Discipline.

Frequencies and percentages of U.S. and Japanese postings in the Discipline domain are indicated in Table 7. The main themes that emerged from the Discipline domain were labeled: Disobedient, Hurting, Dangerous Behavior, and Punishment. The majority of the Japanese and many of the U.S. mothers' concerns in this domain were about their children's disobedience. Under the category of "Disobedience," mothers were worried about their children refusing to listen, refusing to brush their teeth, refusing to wear hats or shoes, or throwing tantrums. There seemed to be no age or sex differences among the children of the mothers who posted these concerns (Appendix B4). Seven Japanese mothers described their children's disobedience in relation to their children going through a "no no phase" or "terrible twos" (24.1%), whereas only three U.S. mothers did so (13.0%).

Japanese mothers' concerns regarding the terrible twos may reflect a current trend in Japanese parenting books and magazines to describe children's negativism as due to the emerging ego. Japanese child development experts explain that the child's skill in saying "no" during the terrible twos is an important sign that parents should anticipate

(Sakagam, 2005; Ujiie, 1997). It is noteworthy, however, that Ujiie's study suggests that Japanese parents may feel pressured to accept this constructive meaning of child negativism when they encounter noncompliant behavior.

Recall Ujiie's study (1997) that indicated that mothers' lack of real acceptance of the constructive meaning of negativism may have been behind their use of physical or verbal punishment. In the current study, seven Japanese mothers confessed that they used punishment (e.g., spanking, yelling), while only one of the U.S. mothers did. In fact, two U.S. mothers wrote that they were against spanking their children. Among the Japanese mothers, half (4 out of 7 postings) used punishment related to their children's terrible twos. Here is an example from a mother of a 2-year-old boy. As revealed by this mother, some also expressed regret for spanking or yelling at their children.

I'm in the middle of "terrible twos" childrearing. Especially right before my period (PMS), I tend to shout at him. Even with small things, they gradually touch my nerve. So, I start saying something like "I don't care" "You do your way" "Go away and reflect your behavior" "Forget about your meal." Then I feel so guilty when I see my son's really depressed and sad face.

Yet, according to data on corporal punishment by a nationally representative sample of 991 U.S. parents in 1995, most U.S. parents use corporal punishment (Straus & Stewart, 1999). The percentage of parents using any type of corporal punishment was 35% for infants and reached a peak of 94% at age 3 and 4. One possible reason for the discrepancy between the current findings and those of Straus and Stewart involves the correlation between parental SES (socioeconomic status) and use of corporal punishment in the U.S. In the U.S., low SES parents are more likely to use corporal punishment than

high SES (Straus & Stewart). Low SES parents may not have access to the internet and thus may not have been included in my sample of on-line message board postings. In contrast, Japanese high SES parents may be just as likely to use corporal punishment as low SES parents. To my knowledge, there have been no Japanese studies that compared the use of corporal punishment between the different socioeconomic groups.

However, a cross-cultural study on parental styles provided evidence indicating that Japanese high SES mothers do actually use higher rates of physical punishment than their U.S. counterparts (Power, Kobabyashi-Winata, & Kelley, 1992). Drawing data from middle to upper-middle class mothers of 3- to 6-year-old children from Japan ($n = 164$) and the United States ($n = 118$), the results indicated that Japanese mothers were significantly more likely than U.S. mothers to report using physical punishment when the situation involved confrontation related to maternal authority.

The most frequent reason for discipline among the U.S. mothers involved concern that their children would hurt others. This type of concern was also found in the Japanese postings, but far less frequently. This concern was expressed by U.S. and Japanese mothers of both 1- and 2-year-olds and in regards to both boys and girls (Appendix B4). The U.S. mothers worried about their children biting, hitting, or other hurtful behavior (e.g., “My child throws toys when he gets angry.” “My child is mean to my husband.”) more than their Japanese counterparts. Yet, three Japanese mothers worried about their children hurting themselves (e.g., banging their heads), while none of the U.S. mothers mentioned this concern.

Table 7

Numbers (and Percentages) of U.S. and Japanese Postings in Each Category and Subcategory in the Discipline Domain

Category	Number (and Percentage) of Postings	
	U.S.	Japan
Disobedient	13 (56.5%)	20 (69.0%)
Terrible twos	3 (13.0%)	7 (24.1%)
Tantrum	1 (4.3%)	2 (6.9%)
Refusing to listen	6 (26.1%)	2 (6.9%)
Refusing to put on hats or shoes	0	3 (10.3%)
Refusing to brushing teeth	1 (4.3%)	2 (6.9%)
Others	4 (17.4%)	5 (17.2%)
Hurting	13 (56.5%)	8 (27.6%)
Hurting others	13 (56.5%)	6 (20.7%)
Biting	5 (21.7%)	2 (6.9%)
Hitting	4 (17.4%)	2 (6.9%)
Others	5 (21.7%)	3 (10.3%)
Hurting self	0	3 (10.3%)

Punishment		3 (13.0%)	7 (24.1%)
	Physical	3 (13.0%)	5 (17.2%)
	Verbal	0	3 (10.3%)
Dangerous		4 (17.4%)	2 (6.9%)
Behavior			
Others		3 (13.0%)	3 (10.3%)

Online Postings: Toilet-training

Frequencies and percentages U.S. and Japanese postings in Toilet-training domain are indicated in Table 8. The main themes that emerged from this domain were “Strategies,” “Readiness,” “Regression,” and “Training Nightmare.” Both the U.S. and Japanese mothers posted questions or concerns regarding toilet-training strategies. Mothers asked advice about how to start toilet-training, how to help their children urinate or have a bowel movement in the toilet, and how to schedule toilet time. They also expressed concerns about their children refusing to do it in the toilet or go to the bathroom. In addition, some U.S. and Japanese mothers seemed to be concerned about whether or not their children were ready for toilet-training (“Readiness”). All toilet-training postings by Japanese mothers and most by the U.S. mothers focused on children who were around age 2 (Appendix B5).

Table 8

Numbers (and Percentages) of U.S. and Japanese Postings in Each Category and Subcategory in the Toilet-training Domain

Category	Number (and Percentage) of Postings	
	U.S.	Japan
Strategies	8 (57.1%)	9 (75.0%)
How to start toilet-training	5 (35.7%)	3 (25.0%)
Doesn't urinate in the toilet	0	2 (16.7%)
Can't have a bowel movement in the toilet	0	2 (16.7%)
Schedule	0	2 (16.7%)
Refusing to do it in the toilet or go to the bathroom	2 (14.3%)	1 (8.3%)
Other	1 (7.1%)	0
Readiness	5 (35.7%)	2 (16.7%)
Regression	2 (14.3%)	1 (8.3%)
Training nightmare	2 (14.3%)	0
Other	0	2 (16.7%)

Online postings: Mother-Child Relationship.

Frequencies and percentages of U.S. and Japanese postings in the Mother-Child Relationship domain are indicated in Table 9. The main themes that emerged in the Mother-Child Relationship domain were labeled: Attachment Issues and Closeness. Both the U.S. and Japanese mothers' concerns were related to their children's attachment issues. There seemed to be no age or sex differences among the children of the mothers who posted concerns related to attachment (Appendix B6). The mothers were worried about their children's separation anxiety and stranger anxiety. One U.S. mother wrote "I lay him in his bed he screams bloody murder the second I leave the room. I know it's probably an attachment thing but I can't handle it!" (Age 2, Boy). In addition, children's strong preference for mothers over fathers sometimes caused problems for mothers in both countries. One Japanese mother wrote, "This summer we have a company trip and my boss asked me to come with them. Of course I would like to go, but I'm really worried whether my daughter is able to sleep with my husband" (2 years 1 month, Girl).

Childrearing practices that promote closeness between mother and child seemed to cause dilemmas for some Japanese mothers but not much for the U.S. mothers. Japanese mothers wrote about ambivalent feelings toward "*amaeru*" and whether or not they should let their children be attached to them in this sense, especially when their children were about to go to child care or when the mother was expecting a new baby. Another dilemma involving mother-child closeness concerned skin-ship. Because skin-ship is highly valued in Japanese childrearing, mothers may feel pressure to hold the child constantly to maintain close contact.

Table 9

Numbers (and Percentages) of U.S. and Japanese Postings in Each Category and Subcategory in the Mother-Child Relationship Domain

Category	Number (and Percentage) of Postings	
	U.S.	Japan
Attachment issues	6 (85.7%)	7 (57.8%)
Closeness	0	4 (33.1%)
Concern related to <i>amaeru</i>	0	2 (16.7%)
Concern related to skin-ship	0	3 (24.8%)
Other	0	1 (8.3%)

Online Postings: Across the Domains

In addition to themes that specifically related to each domain, there were several themes that emerged across the domains. The main themes that emerged were labeled: Stress/Anxiety/Exhaustion, Self-blame, Is My Child Normal? Advice, and Comparison. The percentage of the postings for each theme was calculated as the number of postings for each theme relative to the total number of the postings within a country (U.S. 120 postings; Japan 121 postings). For example, there were 12 postings about anxiety or worry from the Japanese sample and thus the percentage was $12/121 * 100 = 9.9$. Table 10 shows the number and percentage of the themes that emerged across domains.

Overall, the percentage of postings in each category were very similar between the two countries. The only cross-cultural differences were found in Self-blame and Comparison.

Stress/anxiety/exhaustion. Both the U.S. and Japanese mothers expressed stress, frustration, anxiety, and exhaustion. Among those, 10.8% of the U.S. mothers and 6.6% of the Japanese mothers mentioned stress or frustration related to childrearing. The U.S. mothers wrote messages such as “I’m so sick of the constant crying!!”; “HELP Tantrums from Hell!!!”; and “Not only is it a nightmare to clean but sometimes it is nauseating to watch! Some help here please!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!”

Five percent of U.S. mothers and 9.9% of Japanese mothers mentioned that they were worried about their children’s development and behavior (e.g., developmentally behind, not eating or drinking well) and their childrearing skill (e.g., unable to keep up with constant nursing). One concern a Japanese mother wrote about was “I wonder whether my child will really start eating? I’m concerned and feel like I’ll have a nervous breakdown.” Childrearing exhaustion was also mentioned by both the U.S. and Japanese mothers. In particular, lack of sleep because of the child’s sleep pattern was a source of exhaustion.

There seemed to not be much difference between the two countries in the number of postings expressing maternal stress, anxiety, or exhaustion. This result is incongruent with previous parenting studies that depict the negative childrearing experience of Japanese mothers (e.g., Kashiwagi, 2003). A possible reason could be that both the U.S. and Japanese mothers posted online messages when they were in a negative mood due to childrearing stress or exhaustion. Further studies are needed to examine whether childrearing stress, anxiety, or exhaustion levels differ between the two countries.

Self-blame. Many of the Japanese mothers' postings indicated that they blamed themselves. This type of concern was also found in the U.S. postings, but to a smaller extent. The Japanese mothers mentioned that (1) they felt guilty about being frustrated ; (2) they regretted harsh punishment; (3) they felt bad about what they did not do or do well to help their children's development ("Did I do wrong?"); (4) they felt guilty about their children's excessive weight gain because their sweets intake might have affected the child through nursing ("Because of what I eat?"); (5) they assumed that the child's negative behavior was associated with their own personality, and (6) they wanted someone to reprimand them or to give ruthlessly honest opinions (self-punishment).

This finding was consistent with the results of a cross-national study, conducted by the U.S. National Institution of Child Health and Human Development, which analyzed cultural differences in mothers' self-perceptions of their parenting (evaluation of their competence, satisfaction, investment, and role balance in parenting), and attributions for lack of success in parenting in seven nations: Argentina, Belgium, France, Israel, Italy, Japan, and the United States (Bornstein et al., 1998). The mothers had 20-month-olds and came from a wide range of socioeconomic statuses. After controlling for potential cross-cultural differences in social desirability, they found that Japanese mothers were the least likely to report feeling competent and satisfied in their parenting and the least likely to feel balanced in their multiple roles. In addition, mothers in Japan attributed parenting successes to child behavior more than mothers in the U.S., and attributed parenting failures to child behavior less than American mothers. These findings may suggest that Japanese mothers are likely to blame themselves or their lack of effort in regard to their parenting failures.

Is my child normal? Many of the U.S. and Japanese mothers expressed concerns related to their children in terms of “Is my child normal?” The mothers asked the message board readers about whether or not their children were off track, or whether or not they needed to consult experts. For instance, one Japanese mother posted “Are children typically able to speak more than 4 words? If so, is my son delayed? What about your children?” Developmental delay seemed to be the common concern for both the U.S. and Japanese mothers. Online message boards could be a strategy for mothers to obtain informal diagnoses or advice in a less threatening way rather than consulting with experts.

Advice. Many of the U.S. and Japanese postings indicated that they received child care advice from family, friends, or experts. The mothers received advice from books, magazines, or websites, family members, friends, doctors or hospitals, and public nurses. In both countries, the largest portion of advice came from medical professionals. While the U.S. mothers were getting advice solely from pediatricians, the Japanese mothers were getting advice from doctors, hospitals, and public nurses.

Interestingly, many of the posters talked about childrearing advice from others in order to get a second opinion or because they did not agree with what they had been told. In other words, some advice from family, friends or experts created confusion or questions regarding the right thing to do. For example, one U.S. mother wrote “my DH (Dear Husband) says timeouts probably don’t work for her and maybe spanking would teach her faster. I’ve never spanked her and don’t really know if it only teaches her violence.”

Comparison. Many of the U.S. mothers' postings talked about their children in comparison with other child(ren). This type of comparison was also found in the Japanese postings, but a smaller numbers. In particular, the U.S. mothers compared their children with their siblings; in this case all were older children. For instance, one mother wrote, "With DD#1 (Dear Daughter) I didn't go through the whole toilet-training thing, ... she was completely trained in 3 days." In contrast, only one Japanese mother compared her child with her older child. The difference can be resolved by taking into consideration Japan's total fertility rate of 1.2, compared with rate of 2.1 in the U.S (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008). Consequently, the Japanese mothers may not have any other children to compare to.

Table 10

Numbers (and Percentages) of U.S. and Japanese Postings in Each Category and Subcategory Across the Domains

Category		Number (and Percentage) of Postings	
		U.S.	Japan
Stress/Anxiety/		23 (19.2%)	25 (20.7%)
Exhaustion	Stress /frustration	13 (10.8%)	8 (6.6%)
	Anxiety/worry	6 (5.0%)	12 (9.9%)
	Exhaustion	4 (3.3%)	6 (5.0%)
	Depression	0	2 (1.7%)

Self-blame	9 (7.5%)	21 (17.4%)
Feeling guilty about being frustrated	0	4 (3.3%)
Regretting harsh punishment	0	6 (5.0%)
Did I do wrong?	7 (5.8%)	4 (3.3%)
Because of what I eat?	0	3 (2.5%)
My personality's fault?	1 (.8%)	3 (2.5%)
Self-punishment	0	3 (2.5%)
Other	1 (.8%)	1 (.8%)
Is My Child Normal?	12 (10.0%)	11 (9.1%)
Development	6 (5.0%)	6 (5.0%)
Others	7 (5.8%)	5 (4.1%)
Advice	24 (20.0%)	23 (19.0%)
Books/magazines/websites	1 (.8%)	4 (3.3%)
Husband	3 (2.5%)	2 (1.7%)
Family	7 (5.8%)	4 (3.3%)
Friends	1 (.8%)	2 (1.7%)
Doctors/hospitals	11 (9.2%)	5 (4.1%)
Public nurses	0	4 (3.3%)
Others	1 (.8%)	3 (2.5%)
Comparison	11 (9.2%)	4 (3.3%)
Sibling	8 (6.7%)	1 (.8%)
Others	3 (2.5%)	3 (2.5%)

Research Question 2: In recent parenting magazines in Japan and the U.S., what is the specific advice given to parents of 0- to 2-year-olds who have concerns within the following domains: feeding/eating, sleep, development, discipline, toilet-training, and the mother-child relationship?

Table 11 indicates the domains that were frequently the focus of articles in the U.S. magazines. The most frequent were Discipline in the U.S. magazines, and in the Japanese magazines, Feeding/Eating, and Discipline. This finding regarding the issues of main concern in Japanese magazines coincides with a recent survey of Japanese mothers of young children by the Japan Private Child Care Association (2006). The results indicated that the two main childrearing concerns of mothers were discipline and eating.

Table 11

Numbers (and Percentages) of U.S. and Japanese Parenting Magazine Articles by Domain

Domain	U.S.	Japan
Discipline	69 (29.23%)	41 (22.16%)
Development	45 (19.07%)	39 (21.08%)
Feeding/Eating	37 (15.68%)	52 (28.10%)
Sleep	38 (16.10%)	21 (11.35%)
Mother-Child Relationship	37 (15.68%)	26 (14.05%)
Toilet-Training	10 (4.24%)	6 (3.24%)
<i>Total</i>	236	185

Parenting magazine articles from each domain were analyzed inductively with open coding, as described above in the section on the procedure used for analysis of online message boards. Frequencies and percentages of U.S. and Japanese articles in each domain are indicated in Tables 12 - 17. The numbers in the tables show the sum of articles in each category and (in parentheses) the percentage of all articles in a given domain (in a given country) that belonged to that category. For example, there were 52 articles in the Feeding/Eating domain from the Japanese sample. Seven articles gave advice regarding “Distraction.” Therefore, the percentage of this category was $7/52 * 100 = 13.5$. As in the case of online message boards, some articles were placed in more than one category and/or subcategory.

Parenting Magazine Articles: Feeding/Eating

Frequencies and percentages of U.S. and Japanese articles in the Feeding/Eating domain are indicated in Table 12. The main themes that emerged from experts’ advice in this domain were labeled: Control, Distraction, Role Model, Importance of Communication, Consistency, and Sensitivity to Mother. Both the U.S. and Japanese experts suggested that the mother take control (“Control”), setting clear limits to their children’s feeding or eating and being consistent in feeding (“Consistency”). They also gave advice that was sensitive to the experience of mothers (“Sensitivity to Mother”), often suggesting that mothers not worry about childrearing, prioritize their own needs over childrens’, give themselves a break, and get support from other members of the family.

There seemed to be a cross-cultural difference in what experts believed was an important eating goal for 0- to 2-year-olds. Many Japanese experts and some U.S. experts

advised mothers to be role models for their children (“Role Model”). However, while all of the U.S. experts’ suggestions were about the parent being a good role model for healthy eating habits, the Japanese experts’ suggested that parents should demonstrate that eating is fun, that foods are tasty (i.e., “Even if the food is new to your child, if he sees you enjoy eating it, it will provoke him to wonder, ‘Should I try it?’”) (“Kotsuko Kurabu nendai no syokuiku wa “tanosiku taberukoto,” 2006, p. 28), or that parents should explicitly show children how to eat.

It appeared that the U.S. experts encouraged healthy and nutritious eating habits from very young ages, which may not be an important childrearing goal for the Japanese experts. Instead, the Japanese experts seemed to value cultivating a positive disposition toward eating in the early years. For example, the theme “Importance of Communication,” which was only found in the Japanese sample, suggested that meal time should be fun and a time for communication between parent and child.

The U.S. experts’ advice regarding healthy eating habits also emphasized “Persistence.” The U.S. experts recommended that the parents should be persistent when introducing new foods, while none of the Japanese experts mentioned this. Each U.S. expert gave very specific numbers about how many times it might take until children will accept the new food or taste (e.g., “10 to 15 introductions” (Picker, 2005, p. 75), “8 to 9 tries” (Porretta, 2005, p. 56) , “ten times or more” (Taylor, 2005, p. 176), “as many as 15 times” (Christopher, 2006, p. 160), “as many as ten exposures” (McCarthy, 2005, p. 151)). In addition, the U.S. experts suggested controlling their children’s healthy eating habits through setting limits (i.e., “Separate meals and snacks by at least two hours”

(Christopher, 2006, p. 160)) more than their Japanese counterparts did. It is possible that the Japanese experts view this type of childrearing practice as intrusive.

The above cultural-difference could be explained by the increasing awareness of child obesity in the U.S. For example, one U.S. parenting article introduced the fact that the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) now recommends that pediatricians check a child's body mass index (BMI) as early as at age 2. Japan is known to have fewer problems with obesity and much less fat intake (Hawks, Madanat, Merrill, Groudy, & Miyagawa, 2003). Responding to the increase in obesity in the U.S., the experts may be consciously or unconsciously attempting to promote healthy eating habits from the early years.

However, there are also concerns regarding increases in child obesity and unbalanced diets in Japanese society. For example, recently the Japanese government started a project to improve the mental and physical health of children by providing them a balanced diet, appropriate exercise, and sufficient sleep (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science & Technology, n.d.). This project is mostly targeted toward school-age children's unhealthy eating habits such the pattern of skipping breakfast. It is consistent with the present finding that Japanese experts wrote more frequently on the topic of keeping schedules for meals and snack time ("Keep a consistent daily routine") than did the U.S. experts.

The Japanese experts frequently provided advice regarding weaning, which was uncommon among their U.S. counterparts. They provided specific advice for mothers. One type of advice was "Set limits"; mothers were told that once they decide to wean, they should stick with it, even if the child cries. The experts also suggested the technique

of “Distraction,” which was only found in the Japanese sample. It was recommended that parents can do such things as take the children outside to distract their attention from feeding. Lastly, the Japanese experts indicated that mothers don’t have to feel guilty about weaning or switching to bottle-feeding to meet their own needs (e.g., tiredness, physical burden).

Many Japanese experts and some U.S. experts gave suggestions in response to maternal concerns as to whether or not a child was getting enough nutrition from nursing (“Is my child getting enough nutrition?”). Most experts seemed to be reassuring mothers by expressing that (1) as long as the child’s weight is increasing along the typical growth curve, he or she is getting enough nutrition (16 articles); (2) as long as the child continues to have the same number of bowel movements and wet diapers, he or she is getting enough nutrition (3 articles).

The Japanese experts encouraged mothers to seek social support, especially from husbands. Such advice was not common in the U.S articles. This advice came in forms such as, “In order to produce plenty of breast milk, moms should not accumulate stress. When the dad participates in childrearing, it will reduce mom’s stress and childrearing anxiety” (“Bonyū miruku rinyūshoku,” 2005, p. 26); “Sometimes you should go out while your husband takes care of your baby” (“Bonyū gairai e yōkoso,” 2006, p.94). Previous cross-cultural studies of fathers show that Japanese fathers demonstrate the least involvement in household tasks when compared to fathers of other nations (Davis & Greenstein, 2004, NHK, 1995). In addition, a U.S.-Japan comparative study of father involvement in childrearing found that more Japanese fathers delegated childrearing responsibilities to mothers than their U.S. counterparts, 46.8% and 28.7% of the

households respectively (Japan Women Social Education Association, 1995 as cited in Koshiha, n.d.). Thus, the Japanese experts may have been likely to promote husband participation in childrearing in their advice because it is more of an issue there; such advice may not be as necessary for U.S. husbands.

Table 12

Numbers (and Percentages) of U.S. and Japanese Articles in Each Category and Subcategory in the Feeding/Eating Domain

Category		Number (and Percentage) of Articles	
		U.S.	Japan
Control	Set limits	15 (40.5%)	17 (32.7%)
	Eating habits	7 (18.9%)	1 (1.9%)
	Meal-time manners	4 (10.8%)	5 (9.6%)
	Weaning/Regulating milk intake	0	5 (9.6%)
	Limit milk intake	2 (5.4%)	4 (7.7%)
	Turn off TV during meal	0	3 (5.8%)
	Other	2 (5.4%)	2 (3.8%)
Distraction		0	7 (13.5%)
Role Model		6 (16.2%)	13 (25.0%)
Importance of Communication		0	7 (13.5%)

Consistency		13 (35.1%)	14 (26.9%)
	Persistence	9 (24.3%)	0
	Keep consistent daily routine	4 (10.8%)	14 (26.9%)
Sensitivity to		15 (40.5%)	28 (53.8%)
Mother	Don't worry	12 (32.4%)	22 (42.3%)
	Is my child getting enough nutrition?	4 (10.8%)	17 (32.7%)
	Small or picky eater	4 (10.8%)	8 (15.4%)
	Others	4 (10.8%)	2 (3.8%)
	Give yourself a break	6 (16.2%)	16 (30.8%)
	Don't feel guilty about weaning	1 (2.7%)	11 (21.2%)
	Use baby foods/Don't be a short-order cook	4 (10.8%)	3 (5.8%)
	Others	1 (2.7%)	4 (7.7%)
	Importance of social support	1 (2.7%)	12 (23.1%)
	Support from husband	1 (2.7%)	8 (15.4%)
	Support from parents	0	3 (5.8%)
	Others	0	4 (7.7%)

Parenting Magazine Articles: Sleep

Frequencies and percentages of U.S. and Japanese articles pertaining to “Sleep” are indicated in Table 13. The main themes that emerged from experts’ advice in this domain were labeled: Control, Consistency, Sensitivity to Mother, Sleep is Important, and SIDS. Both the U.S. and Japanese experts suggested that parents should control children’s sleep (“Control”). While the U.S. experts advised “a schedule approach” and “a self-soothing approach,” all Japanese experts’ advised “a schedule approach.” The scheduled approach was also found in both the U.S. and Japanese samples in the category of “Consistency.”

A scheduled approach is focused on sticking to eating, waking, play, and sleeping routines or schedules, which in turn help children’s sleep cycles. When giving advice that mothers establish a schedule (“Keeping consistent schedule or routine”), some of the U.S. and Japanese experts added that parents should start only after a child is around 3 - 5 months old. The experts from both countries explained that a scheduling approach is beneficial for both mothers and children because it encourages children’s healthy development while allowing free time and rest for mothers.

It appeared that the experts’ advice to keep a schedule for children seemed to be associated with the recent studies of children’s sleep in both countries. As for the Japanese, for example, a cross-cultural survey conducted by Pampers showed that about a half (46.8%) of Japanese children (0-36 months) go to bed after 10:00 pm, whereas only 16% of French and German, 25% of British, and 27% of Swedish 0-36-month-olds go to bed beyond that hour (P & G Pampers Japan Baby Research Institute, 2004). Because delayed bed time also lessens child appetite and energy in the morning, the Japanese

experts were attempting to educate parents on the importance of setting a daily schedule from an early age.

Several U.S. experts also expressed concerns regarding U.S. children's lack of sleep based on a study of the 2004 Sleep in America poll conducted by the National Sleep Foundation. According to the findings, the U.S. children are not getting enough sleep. However, many parents seemed not to be aware of the problems resulting from children's lack of sleep. The U.S. experts appear to have taken this problem to heart as one that needs to be addressed. Their articles attempted to educate parents about the need for young children to sleep, 14-18 hours for infants, and 13 hours for toddlers.

Both the U.S. and Japanese experts attempted to educate parents about the importance of sleep ("Importance of Sleep"). They explained that a lack of sleep may (1) affect a child's academic skills and development negatively, (2) reduce a child's growth hormones, (3) increase a child's behavioral problems, and (4) cause a child's grouchiness. The U.S. experts also highlighted sleep safety in order to ward off the danger of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

The self-soothing approach involves teaching children the skill of falling asleep without help from parents. It is usually done by putting the child to bed while he or she is still awake and refraining from picking him or her up every time he or she cries. This approach is supported by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). However, none of the Japanese experts suggested a self-soothing approach in which parents teach children techniques for sleeping by themselves. Given the Japanese emphasis on interdependence and the concomitant childrearing practice of co-sleeping, this approach may not be practical in Japan.

Table 13

Numbers (and Percentages) of U.S. and Japanese Articles in Each Category and Subcategory in the Sleep Domain

Category	Number and (Percentage of) Articles	
	U.S.	Japan
Control	23 (60.5%)	16 (76.2%)
A schedule approach	12 (31.6%)	16 (76.2%)
A self-soothing approach	12 (31.6%)	0
Consistency	26 (68.4%)	19 (90.5%)
Keep consistent daily schedule or routine		
Sensitivity to Mother	8 (21.1%)	15 (71.4%)
Don't worry/Take it easy	2 (5.3%)	7 (33.3%)
Give yourself a break	6 (15.8%)	7 (33.3%)
Social supports	0	3 (14.3%)
Sleep is Important	7 (18.4%)	4 (19.0%)
SIDS	4 (10.5%)	0

Parenting Magazine Articles: Development

Frequencies and percentages of U.S. and Japanese articles pertaining to Development are indicated in Table 14. The main themes that emerged from experts' advice in this domain were labeled: Control, Distraction, Reasoning, Praise, Consistency, Role Model,

Scaffolding, Non-Verbal Communication, Importance of Communication, Importance of Trust, Crying/Colic, and Sensitivity to Mother.

Both the U.S. and Japanese experts indicated the importance of exercising control as their children's new skills emerged ("Control"). For example, one U.S. expert advised "Now that your little one has started exploring. It's your responsibility to firmly but gently tell him no when he gets too close to an electrical outlet or won't stop harassing the dog" (Felsenthal, 2005, p. 176). Once children become mobile, mothers concerns related to safety surfaced. Two U.S. experts and four Japanese experts suggested that parents should set limits related to dangerous behavior. For example, one Japanese expert mentioned, "As for mischief that relates to life or death, you shouldn't make it vague. Say 'no' firmly" ("Isaitsute, mamano yukoto dokomade wakatsuteiruno?" 2006, p. 27)

Some of the U.S. and Japanese experts' advice was about "Scaffolding." They suggested that parents should scaffold children's physical environment (i.e., "Another way to help her start moving is to get down on the floor with her regularly and put toys just out of her reach" (Felsenthal, 2005, p. 176)), language (i.e., If he points to a bird and says "buh," you can reply by commenting, "Yes, that's a bird. Birds fly in the sky." (Sears, 2005, p. 139)), and self-help skills (i.e., "Have step stools around the house so your child can wash her hands by herself or make dinner with you" (Klaff, 2005, p. 178)).

About half of the U.S. and Japanese experts' advice was sensitive to the experience of mothers. They advised mothers not to worry about their children's physical, language, and emotional development ("Don't worry"). The experts also gave advice to mothers to give themselves a break ("Give yourself a break") and ask for assistance from husbands, friends, or relatives, especially when children cry a lot.

Crying seemed to be a common parenting concern among mothers of both countries. Both country's experts emphasized that every baby cries and that it is the only way the baby can communicate (i.e., "it's important to remember that your baby has only one means of letting you know that he is distressed – by crying" (Honig, 2006, p. 54)). The only cross-cultural difference found here was that the word "colic" is often translated as "evening crying" in Japan, because it is in the evening that babies tend to cry very hard. Accordingly, Japanese experts sometimes explained the reason for colic is that mothers become really busy cooking dinner and are unable to pay attention their babies. In the U.S. parenting magazines, however, colic is often explained as due to a digestive problem.

There are several categories, which were only or mainly found in the Japanese sample – "Praise," "Consistency," "Role Model," "Non-Verbal Communication," "Importance of Communication," and "Importance of Trust." Most of this advice was about promoting children's language development. For example, in the category "Role Model," all of the advice was about communication or language. Experts emphasized that children learn language (e.g., proper language, intonation, rhythm, meaning of words), and appropriate communication (facial expression, tone of voice, greeting) by watching or listening to their parents. Advice in the category "Consistency" included comments by several Japanese experts that if parents want their children's language to develop, first they need to establish a stable daily schedule for eating and sleeping, instead of just teaching vocabulary.

Furthermore, according to the Japanese experts, children's desire to communicate precedes the acquisition of language. In advice categorized as "Importance of

Communication,” the experts emphasized the importance of the child’s experience of pleasure in communication, such as in “Parents tend to look at the amount of a child’s vocabulary. However, you should nurture your child’s feelings of ‘I want to communicate’” (“Komyunikēsyon chikara wo sodateru kotobakake,” 2006, p.23).

The U.S. experts also emphasized the importance of communication as a precursor to language development. For example, one U.S. expert wrote “At this age, your infant’s main form of communication is crying...What’s impressive isn’t so much the strength and stamina of her vocal cords but her ability to use different cries for different request” (Feit, 2005, p. 117). Thus, the U.S. experts also believed that children’s language developed as a function of adults’ responses to their efforts to communicate. However, one thing that could be distinct in the U.S. experts’ advice was the encouragement of mothers to talk to children using a great variety of words. This cultural difference is consistent with the previous cross-cultural finding that U.S. mothers’ speech is information-oriented, while Japanese mothers’ speech is affection-oriented (e.g., babyish, onomatopoeia) (Bornstein, Tal., et al., 1992).

Japanese experts advised parents to use clear facial expressions, gestures, and intonations when communicating with children (“Non-Verbal Communication”), so that children would be likely get clear messages from mothers. This kind of advice was only found in the Japanese articles. Being raised in Japanese society where direct expression of emotion is often prohibited, some mothers may feel awkward exaggerating their communication style, while this may not be the case for U.S. mothers. In fact, Japanese mothers sometimes expressed a struggle regarding how to communicate with their children. This was found in Japanese experts’ advice, such as in “Don’t feel pressure

about how to talk to your child.... Do it naturally” (“1saitsute, mamano yukoto dokomade wakatsuteiruno?” 2006, p.26) (“Don’t try too hard”: 3 articles). These types of comments also suggest Japanese mothers’ lack of knowledge and confidence regarding child care. Unlike the case in Western countries, babysitting is an uncommon experience for Japanese youth, so Japanese mothers often become parents without an experience with child care (Vogel, 1996).

Table 14

Numbers (and Percentages) of U.S. and Japanese Articles in Each Category and Subcategory in the Development Domain

Category		Number (and Percentage) of Articles	
		U.S.	Japan
Control		6 (13.3%)	10 (25.6%)
	Set limits	6 (13.3%)	5 (12.8%)
	Reprimand	0	5 (12.8%)
Distraction		5 (11.1%)	3 (7.7%)
Praise		1 (2.2%)	12 (30.8%)
Reasoning		0	3 (7.7%)
Consistency	Consistency over time	1 (2.2%)	7 (17.9%)
Role Model	Communication and language	1 (2.2%)	10 (25.6%)

Scaffolding		9 (20.0%)	9 (23.1%)
Non-Verbal		0	7 (17.9%)
Communication			
Importance of		1 (2.2%)	8 (20.5%)
Communication			
Importance of Trust		0	3 (7.7%)
Crying/Colic		8 (17.8%)	8 (20.5%)
Sensitivity to		20 (44.4%)	19 (48.7%)
Mother	Don't worry	16 (35.6%)	15 (38.5%)
	Language	1 (2.2%)	5 (12.8%)
	Development		
	Physical	9 (20.0%)	4 (10.3%)
	Development		
	Emotional	4 (8.9%)	1 (2.6%)
	Development		
	Others	2 (4.4%)	6 (15.4%)
	Give yourself a	4 (8.9%)	6 (15.4%)
	break		
	Don't try too hard	2 (4.4%)	4 (10.3%)
	Take a break	3 (6.7%)	2 (5.1%)
	Social support	8 (17.8%)	3 (7.7%)

Parenting Magazine Articles: Discipline

Frequencies and percentages of U.S. and Japanese articles in the Discipline domain are indicated in Table 15. The main themes that emerged from experts' advice in this domain were labeled: Control, Distraction, Ignoring, Reasoning, Role Model, Do Not Use Harsh Punishment, Praise, Consistency, Stay Calm, Gentleness, Importance of Trust, Non-Verbal Communication, Importance of Repetition, Sensitivity to Mother, and Politeness as Social Goal. Some of the categories from the U.S. and Japanese experts were similar. They both gave suggestions to control their children's behavior ("Control"), refrain from harsh punishment, praise, be consistent ("Consistency") and promote politeness in childrearing ("Politeness As Social Goal").

Under the category of "Control," both the U.S. and Japanese experts advised parents to set limits, set rules, and be firm in relation to children's dangerous behavior (i.e., "As for life or death types of mischief, you should say no with a strong tone. It will stop that behavior even though the child may not understand" ("Akacyan no itazura pawā ōendan," 2006, p. 77), children's eating habits (i.e., "You should put food away if your child starts playing with his food" ("Bēbī wo homerukoto shikarukoto," 2006, p.76), and children's inappropriate social behavior (i.e., "Calmly tell your toddler 'no hitting'" (Beam, p.161). Interestingly, while seven U.S. articles mentioned being firm regarding children's hitting and biting, none of the Japanese articles included this advice. This difference coincides with the analyses of online postings from mothers, which indicated that hurting others was the most frequent concern regarding discipline for the U.S. mothers (56.5%) but for the Japanese mothers, far less frequent (20.7%).

One of the possible reasons for this cultural difference has to do with the fact that hitting and biting by children typically emerges when they are around peers. Instead of going to child care programs, more Japanese than American toddlers stay home with their mothers (Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare, 2007b; U.S. Census Bureau, 2005). So, such problems may be less likely to occur in Japan.

Use of time-out, establishing consequences, and moving children from problem situations were strategies of controlling children's behavior suggested only by the U.S. experts. Time-out, for example, may be viewed by Japanese mothers as harsh punishment because, due to the close nature of mother-child relationships, it may be very difficult for children to be removed from their mothers for a certain period of time. Probably for the same reason, very few Japanese experts suggested ignoring a child's undesirable behavior ("Ignore"), while some U.S. experts suggested this strategy. Ignoring or walking away from a child may also violate the physical and psychological closeness between Japanese mother and child.

The Japanese parenting magazine experts often gave specific instructions concerning when and how to reprimand children ("Reprimand"), while none of the U.S. experts even mentioned the term "reprimand." In Japanese, the literal meaning of "*shikaru*" (reprimand) is to accuse someone of undesirable behavior and to firmly reprimand. Reprimanding is often suggested as a child rearing strategy for stopping undesirable behavior (e.g., dangerous behavior, making loud noises in public, destroying something valuable) (Petit enfant, 2005). Because of the negative connotation of the word "shikaru," parents frequently expressed concerns about using the strategy of reprimanding. As I previously mentioned, "how to reprimand children" was a top concern for today's

Japanese mothers of young children (Japan Private Child Care Association, 2006). In my study, the title of six Japanese articles was about effective ways to reprimand (e.g., “About praising and reprimanding baby” (“Bēbī wo homerukoto shikarukoto,” 2006) “Do you reprimand your baby?” (“Anata wa akacyan wo shikarimasuka?” 2005))

The Japanese experts made it clear that reprimanding is different from getting angry at the child. The experts suggested that reprimanding should (1) only be used when it is necessary (e.g., danger) and not too frequently, (2) be directed toward the child’s behavior, not his personality (i.e., “You should reprimand your child’s action, not your child’s personality. It will lower his self-image” (“Nobinobi sodatrutsute dōiukoto?” 2006, p.145), and (3) be accompanied with reasons why the child’s behavior is wrong. The Japanese experts also gave very specific instructions for how to reprimand a child: (a) brief and simple, (b) with lower tone of voice (stay calm), (c) with scary or serious face, and (d) looking into the child’s eyes.

Many Japanese and some U.S. experts suggested reasoning as an effective strategy for disciplining children (“Reasoning”). Previous studies have found that Japanese mothers frequently use affect-oriented reasoning. The current study indicated that reasoning that appeals to feelings (“Affect-oriented”) was recommended by experts in both countries. For example, eight U.S. experts explained that it is important to develop a sense of empathy or sensitivity to others by using reasoning that appeals to the feelings of others (i.e., “Appeal to your child’s growing sense of empathy” (Fox, 2006, p.61)). This was incongruent with the previous studies that suggested that Japanese mothers were likely to use affect-oriented reasoning significantly more than were their U.S.

counterparts (Azuma, 2004; Rothbaum et al., 2000). Reasons for this contradictory result may need to be addressed in future studies.

Another difference between the advice from the U.S. and Japanese experts is attitude toward consistency in discipline. While all of the U.S. experts wrote that consistency among family members is important, the Japanese experts seemed to have diverse perspectives regarding consistency. For example, some Japanese experts believed that some agreement among family members on discipline is necessary: it will prevent children from becoming confused and help them make decisions. Other Japanese experts, however, believed that it was not necessary, because children need to be exposed to people who have different ideas. (Exceptions concerns situations related to danger or that cause trouble to others.) For example, one expert gave the following advice:

It is OK that the wife and husband have different opinions about discipline. Discipline ideas are deeply influenced by your family of origin. Instead of forcing congruence, you need to respect and understand each other's policies. It will be a good social practice for your child once he starts interacting with people of various opinions ("Kodomono kokoroni pitsutari to todoku tutaekata no tsubo," 2006, p.24)

This finding seems to reflect cultural differences in self as independently constructed verses interdependently constructed (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), who contrasted childrearing beliefs in individualistic and collectivistic countries. According to this dichotomy, Japanese children need to learn to adjust to the expectations of others in social relationships. In other words, they must incorporate others' points of view into their own. In contrast, U.S. children need to learn to influence events in their surroundings by expressing their own needs, rights, and capacities. Japanese experts'

advice that discipline should be sometimes flexible may reflect the Japanese socialization goal of being able to accommodate to the views of others.

In the current study, harsh punishment was a topic for magazine articles in both countries –“The bottom lines” (Lorenzi, 2006) and “Spanking: Which side of the fence are you on?” (2005) from the U.S. sample and “Is it necessary to spank children to discipline?” (“Shitsuke ni tatakukoto wa hitsuyō nano?” 2006); “Is it really wrong to spank a child?” (“Kodomo wo tatakunotsute hontōni ikenaino?” 2005) from the Japanese sample. Although the experts admitted that there were various views and research findings about the use of harsh punishment; in general, they were against using it as a childrearing strategy. The Japanese experts particularly talked about the undesirable outcomes of harsh punishment such as fear, pain, anger, and disgrace. They also said that it could ruin parent-child relationships. The experts in both countries recommended that parents look for alternative strategies to control child behavior.

Lastly, the U.S. experts gave advice to parents to stay calm (“Stay Calm”) and be gentle (“Gentleness”) when disciplining children, while none of the Japanese experts mentioned these. On the other hand, the Japanese experts gave advice to use non-verbal communication (“Non-Verbal Communication”), to keep repeating the same advice until the child got it (“Importance of Repetition”), and to build trust with the child (“Importance of Trust). None of these were found in the U.S. sample.

Table 15

Numbers (and Percentages) of U.S. and Japanese Articles in Each Category and Subcategory in the Discipline Domain

Category		Number (and Percentage) of Articles	
		U.S.	Japan
Control		37 (53.6%)	29 (70.7%)
	Set limits	7 (10.1%)	14 (34.1%)
	Set rules	8 (11.6%)	9 (22.0%)
	Be firm/Say “no”	18 (26.1%)	10 (24.4%)
	Time-out	8 (11.6%)	0
	Establish consequences	9 (13.0%)	0
	Move child from the situation	4 (5.8%)	0
	Reprimand	0	15 (36.6%)
Distraction		30 (43.5%)	26 (63.4%)
Ignoring		8 (11.6%)	1 (2.4%)
Reasoning		19 (27.5%)	19 (46.3%)
	Information-oriented	11 (15.9%)	15 (36.6%)
	Affect-oriented	8 (11.6%)	4 (9.8%)
Role Model		10 (14.5%)	14 (34.1%)

Do Not Use Harsh		16 (23.2%)	10 (24.4%)
Punishment			
Praise		17 (24.6%)	20 (48.8%)
Consistency		17 (24.6%)	12 (29.3%)
	Consistency over time	13 (18.8%)	6 (14.6%)
	Consistency between	Yes	0
	mother and child	No	0
	Consistency among	Yes	4 (5.8%)
	family members	No	0
Stay Calm		14 (20.3%)	0
Gentleness		4 (5.8%)	0
Importance of Trust		0	6 (14.6%)
Non-Verbal		0	12 (29.3%)
Communication			
Importance of		0	16 (39.0%)
Repetition			
Sensitivity to		7 (10.1%)	15 (36.6%)
Mother	Give yourself a break	1 (1.4%)	10 (24.4%)
	Social support	4 (5.8%)	11 (26.8%)
	Don't worry	2 (2.9%)	4 (9.8%)
Politeness As Social		6 (8.7%)	5 (12.2%)
Goal			

Parenting Magazines Articles: Toilet-training

Frequencies and percentages of U.S. and Japanese articles on Toilet-training are indicated in Table 16. The main themes that emerged from experts' advice in this domain were labeled: Control, Role Model, Consistency, Praise/Reward, Sensitivity to Mother, Readiness, and Foster a Positive Attitude Toward Elimination and Diaper Change. Although the numbers of the articles per categories or subcategories in this domain were quite small, there seemed to be some cross-cultural differences.

One topic that was specific to the U.S. parenting magazines was about Elimination Communication (EC) or infant toilet-training (33.3%). EC is explained as communicating with a baby about the elimination process by using timing, signals, cues, and intuition. This practice is said to help babies become aware of their own bodies, which subsequently helps them become diaper free. The two U.S. parenting magazines entitled their articles about this new approach, "Can a 6-month-old be potty trained?" (DiFilippo, 2006) and "Potty training for babies" (Aborn, 2006). Another article, "Potty success" (McCarthy, 2006), also introduced this approach in addition to general toilet training advice. The experts in these three articles seemed to agree in their views against EC, claiming that it was (a) time consuming, (b) had the potential for parent tension and frustration (especially if it didn't work out), and (c) developmentally inappropriate.

Both the U.S. and Japanese experts seemed to disagree with early toilet-training; instead, they suggested that parents should look for readiness signs ("She'll show signs when she's ready to start using the potty –both physically and mentally" (Sears, 2005, p. 138)). According to the experts from both countries, there are signs that parents should look for (e.g., "Be at least somewhat bothered by being (or have some sense that he is)

wet or soiled” (McCarthy, 2006, p.78)). One U.S. and two Japanese articles quoted the American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines for toilet training, *the AAP’s Guide to Toilet Training* (Wolraich & Tippins, 2003), which provided readiness signs such as necessary motor skills and socioemotional maturity.

One notable characteristic of the Japanese experts’ advice was fostering a positive attitude toward elimination and diaper change such as in “When your child pees, say ‘You pee!’ Feels good.’ It will teach your child the meaning of excretion” (“Hitoride dekitawa itsukara?” 2005, p.82). As discussed in the analyses of parenting articles in the Feeding/Eating domain, promoting a positive disposition may be an important childrearing goal in Japan. In this case, the experts may believe that promoting a positive disposition toward elimination may cultivate children’s interests in toilet-training.

Table 16

Numbers (and Percentages) of U.S. and Japanese Articles in Each Category and Subcategory in the Toilet-training Domain

Category		Number (and Percentage) of Articles	
		U.S.	Japan
Control	Set limits	0	2 (33.3%)
Role Model		1 (10.0%)	3 (50.0%)
Consistency		0	4 (66.7%)
Praise/Reward		2 (20.0%)	2 (33.3%)
Sensitivity to Mother	Don’t worry	2 (20.0%)	2 (33.3%)

Readiness	6 (60.0%)	5 (83.3%)
Look for signs	4 (40.0%)	5 (83.3%)
Against infant toilet training	3 (30.0%)	0
Foster a Positive Attitude Toward Elimination and Diaper Change	0	4 (66.7%)

Parenting Magazines Articles: Mother-Child Relationship

Frequencies and percentages of U.S. and Japanese articles in the Mother-Child Relationship are indicated in Table 17. The main themes that emerged from experts' advice in this domain were labeled: Control, Distraction, Role Model, Consistency, Sensitivity to Mother, and Building Trust as a Childrearing Goal. Although, the numbers of articles per category or subcategory in this domain were quite small, some cross-cultural differences seemed to emerge.

In the category of "Control," for example, 26.9% of the Japanese experts suggested that mothers do not always have to respond or even sometimes need to delay their response to children's constant demands for holding, while only 2.7% of the U.S. articles included this type of advice. Some typical advice from the Japanese experts was the following:

It is important to accept your baby's feelings by holding her when she cries.

However, it sometimes becomes a physical burden to the mother. If you suffer with tendonitis or back pain or feel depressed, that won't do any good for the child. If your

child cries and you're unable to hold her, you can tell her 'I'll be there soon' and hold her tight afterward ("Nakiyamase nekashituke sensyukun," 2005, p. 88).

In addition, three Japanese parenting articles indicated that mothers don't need to force themselves to hold babies ("Give yourself a break"). This cross-cultural difference may reveal Japanese mothers' struggles about balancing closeness with their children with having breaks from them. Some Japanese experts seemed to believe that mothers should not always respond to a child's demands to be held all the time, but not much for the U.S. mothers.

Another theme that only emerged in the Japanese articles was that mothers should be role models for their children ("Role Model") in order for them to learn socially desirable behaviors (e.g., greeting, waiting, smiling, being gentle). Although the U.S. experts note the importance of modeling appropriate behavior to children in other domains (Feeding/Eating, Discipline), the Japanese experts gave this type of advice more than the U.S. experts. This pattern may originate from the Japanese traditional childrearing strategy of modeling proper behavior (Shibano, 1995; Kojima, 1986).

Many Japanese experts' advice was sensitive to the experience of mothers ("Sensitivity to Mother"). This advice was also found in the U.S. magazines, but to a smaller degree. For example, some of the U.S. experts wrote about bonding, such as "While there's no correlation between how fast you bond and how 'good' a mom you are, women who take longer often feel guilty or worried about it, and feel they have nowhere to turn" (Spencer, 2005, p. 126) "don't worry. Your delayed bonding response isn't going to irreparably harm your baby" (Morirarty, 2006, p. 71), and "Cuddly as babies look, not all of them love to snuggle... But don't worry, there are plenty of ways to feel close"

(Miles, 2005, p. 252). However, none of the Japanese experts gave advice related to difficulty in bonding. Although difficulties with bonding exist in Japan, this concern may not be as serious or may manifest itself in different ways.

The Japanese experts, instead, gave suggestions that attempted to address mother's negative feelings toward childrearing. For example, in the subcategory of "Don't worry," the experts told mothers not to worry about their childrearing skills, such as in "You should consider childrearing from a long term perspective. Don't force yourself. Sometimes it goes well. Sometimes it doesn't" ("Tanoshī ikuji no susume," 2005, p.31); "Childrearing is mutual interaction. First, it can be awkward. Then mothers will learn how to parent;" "You don't need to be worried about being perfect from the beginning" ("Akacyan no nō to kokoro wo sodateru 50 no hinto," 2005, p.18). Moreover, in the subcategory of "Give yourself a break," the experts told mothers not to blame themselves such as in "Don't blame yourself for the way you raised your child. Think that it is due to your child's personality" ("Akacyan no kokoro no hattatsu wo mimamoru hinto," 2006, p. 28).

The Japanese experts further advised mothers to seek support so that they could take a break ("Social Support"). They also explained that the amount of social support sometimes determines their childrearing experience, for example, "Whether mother is getting support from others will sometimes determine how easy it is to raise a child" ("Sodateyasui akacyan' ni amaete imasenka?" 2005, p.122), "According to developmental psychological research, babies have innate temperaments..... Whether you label child as "easy to raise" or "difficult to raise" or enjoy the child's temperament will be determined by how much support a mother gets" ("Ikujitsute "iiko" dukuri jya

nain desu!," p. 151). As found in previous cross-national studies, Japanese mothers are more likely to blame themselves or their lack of effort in regard to their parenting failure compared to mothers of other nations (Bornstein et al., 1998). Therefore, the Japanese experts' advice may be geared toward giving comfort and encouragement to mothers.

Table 17

Numbers (and Percentages) of U.S. and Japanese Articles in Each Category and Subcategory in the Mother-Child Relationship Domain

Category		Number (and Percentage) of Articles	
		U.S.	Japan
Control	Set limits/Don't give in	1 (2.7%)	7 (26.9%)
Distraction		1 (2.7%)	5 (19.2%)
Role Model		0	6 (23.1%)
Consistency	Keep consistent daily routine	5 (13.5%)	1 (3.8%)
Sensitivity to Mother		6 (16.2%)	12 (46.2%)
	Don't worry/Take it easy	4 (10.8%)	5 (19.2%)
	Give yourself a break	3 (8.1%)	6 (23.1%)
	Social supports	0	5 (19.2%)
Building Trust as a Childrearing Goal		0	6 (23.1%)

Research Question 3. To what extent and how do mothers' concerns expressed in message board postings in Japan and the U.S. reflect the concepts of autonomy, assertiveness, individuality, and independence in each of the domains?

Table 18 indicates the numbers and percentages of the U.S. and Japanese mother's concerns related to the concepts of autonomy, assertiveness, individuality, and independence. They are categorized by domain. The percentage of postings pertaining to each topic was calculated as the number of postings per topic relative to the total number of postings within a country (U.S.: 120 postings; Japan: 121 postings). Although the terms *autonomy* and *independence* are often used interchangeably, in the current paper, autonomy refers to the emotional status that a child strives for relative to caregivers in order to form his or her own identity. Expressions of will are often involved. Independence is defined the action of a child attempting to do something by himself or herself without seeking assistance from caregivers

Independence

Concerns related to Independence were found among the U.S. postings (16.7%) more than among the Japanese postings (5.0%). For the U.S. mothers, these concerns were mostly about helping children become independent eaters and sleepers. For the Japanese mothers, they were only found in the domain of eating. While some U.S. mothers indicated that they wanted children to sleep through the night, none of the Japanese mothers wrote about this. Another notable cross-cultural finding in the Sleep domain was that seven U.S. mothers posted concerns about how to get children to sleep alone, while this was not found at all in the Japanese sample.

Autonomy and Assertiveness

The topics of autonomy and assertiveness were mostly found in the Japanese sample and in the domains of Discipline and Development. As previously mentioned in the section on findings related to research question 1, the Japanese mothers expressed concerns related to terrible twos more than the U.S. mothers. Although the U.S. mothers also experience terrible twos, the Japanese mothers' frequent use of the term "terrible twos" may reflect a current trend in Japanese parenting books and magazines to describe children's negativism as due to the emerging ego. Perhaps this explanation appears more in Japanese than in U.S. parenting books and magazines.

Similarly, three Japanese mothers but no U.S. mothers used the term "ego" to describe children's behavior. The difference may indicate a trend in Japanese parenting magazines and books to cover the topic of ego development. One of the mothers described her daughter's behavior in her posting entitled "She says 'I want to do by myself!' but she *amaeru*":

Recently her ego has emerged and she wants to do everything by herself. I understand this is a part of her development and I have to accept it. She refused to hold my hands outside and she insisted to go down stairs by herself... When I told her, she started crying while saying "Hold me! Hold me!" and refused to ride her stroller. Then I ended up holding her and pushing her stroller at the same time. It made me really frustrated because I have a big tummy (She is pregnant with her second child).

This posting showed two types of ambivalent feelings of, (a) whether to accept the child's emerging ego or control the child's behavior, (b) whether to cultivate independence or dependency. According to Ujiie (1997) who examined the meaning of 2-

to 3-year-olds' negative and self-assertive behavior, a majority of Japanese mothers feel pressure to accept the constructive meaning of child negativism, especially when they encounter a child's noncompliant behavior. This dilemma and associated stress were also found in the current study. When Japanese mothers hear of the importance of promoting children's autonomy, ego and assertiveness from the experts, they may translate this into advice to let children do whatever they want to do. Thus, when children's behavior is unacceptable (e.g., dangerous, hurting others) or contradicts the needs of the mother, mothers may experience stress and anxiety.

Because the Japanese mother and child relationship is based on the culturally indigenous concept of *amae*, Japanese mothers socialize children by creating interdependent relationships with them. Advice originating from Western child development theory that promotes independence has become influential in Japan though. As a result mothers may be conflicted, not knowing whether they should cultivate the Western-influenced social value of independence or the Japanese-traditional social value of dependency. In the postings, the mothers seemed to struggle with making decisions of, for example, whether or not to hold a crying child.

Individuality is another concept that was introduced to Japan from Western child development theory. The concerns related to individuality were mostly found in Development and Discipline. There was a slight cultural difference here. The Japanese mothers posted concerns related to individuality more than the U.S. mothers. Japanese mothers' use of the term individuality may reflect the fact that they repeatedly hear of the importance of acknowledging individual difference from the experts. This may not be so much the case in the U.S. because the idea of promoting individuality already exists in

U.S. society and is more taken-for-granted. The Japanese mothers expressed concerns related to individuality such as in, “Although I know that each baby is different, I’m a little worried about it”; “Because my child is growing at his own pace, I should just let it go. Yet, I get impatient when I see other children who speak really well.” In these postings the Japanese mothers demonstrated concerns regarding whether or not they should worry about their children’s development or just accept it as an individual difference.

Table 18

Numbers (and Percentages) of U.S. and Japanese Postings in the Autonomy, Assertiveness, Individuality, and Independence Domains

Category	Number (and Percentage) of Articles			
	U.S.	Japan		
Independence	20 (16.7%)	6 (5.0%)		
	Sleep	11 (9.2%)	0	
	Feeding/Eating	6 (5.0%)	6 (5.0%)	
	Others	3 (2.5%)	0	
Autonomy		4 (3.3%)	11 (9.1%)	
	Terrible twos	Discipline	3 (2.5%)	7 (5.8%)
	Emerging ego	Development	0	3 (2.5%)
		Discipline	0	3 (2.5%)

Assertiveness		0	2 (1.7%)
	Discipline	0	1 (.8%)
	Development	0	1 (.8%)
Individuality	Individual difference	1 (.8%)	5 (4.1%)
	Development	0	2 (1.7%)
	Discipline	0	2 (1.7%)
	Others	1	1 (.8%)

Research Question 4. To what extent and how does expert advice in parenting magazines in Japan and the U.S. reflect the concepts of autonomy, assertiveness, individuality, and independence in each of the domains?

Table 19 shows the numbers of articles that the U.S. and Japanese experts published related to the topics of autonomy, assertiveness, independence, and individuality. The total number of articles for each topic was calculated and is indicated under the U.S. total and the Japan total. The percentage of this number was also calculated in regard to the sum of articles per topic relative to the total numbers of articles in each country (U.S. 236; Japan 185). Overall, the U.S. and Japanese percentages of autonomy and independence were about the same (“Autonomy” U.S. 15.3%, Japan 16.2%; “Independence” U.S. 27.1%, Japan 29.2%). The Japanese experts gave more advice on the topics of Assertiveness (7.6%) and Individuality (33.5%), compared to U.S. experts (0.0%, 16.9%, respectively). Among the six domains, the topics of autonomy, assertiveness, independence, and individuality were mostly found in Discipline for both countries.

Autonomy

Both the U.S. and Japanese experts explained that egocentrism (e.g., saying “no”) is a sign of normal development and marks the emergence of children’s declaration of independence; while children would like to do many things by themselves, they are often incapable, and express their frustration with temper tantrums, aggressive behavior or defiance. Both countries’ experts encouraged mothers to see the positive side of ego development. For example, one U.S. expert wrote “Egocentrism helps him cope with anxieties and fuels the explorations he needs to learn language, how to walk, and how to form relationships” (Poole, 2006, p. 62). One Japanese expert associated temper tantrums with brain development, as in “One of the frequent temper tantrum periods is between the ages of 0 to 3.... This is the time when brain grows suddenly” (“Ikujitsute “iiko” dukuri jya nain desu!” 2005, p.153).

The experts from both countries discussed offering choices as an effective strategy because being allowed to choose (a) provides a fun experience for children (i.e., “You might also take your child shopping and have him pick out a fruit or vegetable of the week – a new food for the family to explore (Colino, 2006, p. 126)), (b) provide motivation for children (i.e., “As for a child who is not interested in eating, let him choose what to eat. This satisfaction may become his motivation to eat” (“Komyunikēsyon chikara wo sodateru kotobakake,” 2006, p.28)), (c) builds children’s confidence to do more things on their own (i.e., “Let your child make simple choices as part of his daily routine. When you hand over just a little bit of control, you boost your toddler’s confidence in his own abilities” (Crow, 2005, p. 184)) and (d) gives children some control (i.e., “Take your child shopping and let her pick out the potty chair she likes

best” (Lamb, 2005, p.24); “Offering choices is an effective strategy. Even when your child cries, if you say “You don’t like it. So, which one do you want?” your child would be more willing to participate in the task (e.g., changing his clothes) as initiative is granted. (“Over 1sai no donmai! Ikuji sōdan kyōshitsu,” 2005, p.157)). However, the advice to offer choices was given by U.S. experts much more than by their Japanese counterparts. In particular, the U.S. experts were much more likely to introduce choices as an effective means of dealing with mother-child conflict (13 out of 31 articles). This explanation was only found in two articles in the Japanese sample. For example, U.S. experts suggested that parents designate children as decision makers over some unimportant matters when facing their disobedience (e.g., resisting brushing teeth, throwing a tantrum, refusing to eat, refusing to share toys with friends). The experts explained that this will help satisfy children through a feeling of having some control, which is necessary at this stage in child development. For example, one U.S. expert suggested “One option is to give your child some control. Say ‘If you don’t want to share this toy, that’s okay. We’ll put it away while your friend is here, but you’ll have to share these other toys’” (Tucker, 2006, p. 48). Maybe this kind of childrearing strategy is thought to foster negotiation skills, a goal of socialization in the U.S. For example, one of the U.S. parenting articles was entitled, “Choose your battles: How to end power struggles with your child – so you *both* win” (Satran, 2006). As proposed by Rothbaum et al’s model (2000) of generative tension, by making conflict functional, U.S. parents can promote the child’s autonomy as well as a close relationship between parent and child.

On the other hand, the Japanese experts, but not the U.S. experts, discussed the importance of mischief. In a Japanese dictionary (*Daijirin*, 1995) , mischief is defined as

(a) a play that may cause troubles or make things inconvenient for others and (b) play with objects that were not originally meant to be toys. For example, an informal survey conducted by Baby-mo indicated that babies' top five mischievous behaviors were (a) taking tissues out from tissue boxes, (b) tearing newspapers into pieces, (c) licking a cell phone or remote controller, (d) opening drawers, and (e) taking items out of wallets ("Itazura kakushigei taikai!!", 2006, p.134).

According to the Japanese experts, mischief is a sign of children's curiosity; thus, it is evidence of children's intellectual development. They also taught that mischief fosters children's autonomy, assertiveness, independency, confidence, and satisfaction. The experts gave advice that mothers should not control children's mischief unless it bothers others or causes danger (i.e., "Mischief is a natural behavior based in children's curiosity... Don't reprimand him or her just for the sake of your own convenience such as avoiding messes or taking too much of your time" ("Dame' ikenai' no kokoronni todoku tsutaekata," 2006, p.22). The Japanese experts seemed to discuss mischief from the children's perspective but not much from the parents' perspective (i.e., "Mischief is an expression of autonomy and curiosity. As long as it doesn't cause danger or harm to others, let your child do mischief as much as he wants" ("Nobinobi sodatrutsute dōiukoto?" 2006, p.143); "A baby's mischief comes from his curiosity. He doesn't know what is right or wrong. He doesn't have malintension" ("Akacyan no kokoro ni todoku "homekata" "shikarikata," 2006, p.82)).

Assertiveness

Expert advice related to assertiveness was found only in the Japanese sample. The Japanese experts explained assertiveness as a sign of development, ego, or growth. The

Japanese experts generally encouraged mothers to accept, understand, and be pleased with children's assertiveness (i.e., "You should be pleased because your child is finally able to say no" ("Bēbī wo homerukoto shikarukoto," 2006, p.75)). Therefore, they advised mothers not to control children's assertiveness, instead let children (a) do it as much as is acceptable, (b) make choices, and (c) express their feelings.

At the same time, however, a few experts also discussed the importance of parents exercising control by setting down rules or encouraging children to listen to others. One expert advised as follows:

Communication starts with expressing one's own desires. It is a premise that the child has to be able to "assert self." The child is unable to improve communication skills unless he or she is able to assert "I want this" or "I don't want to." If such feelings are suppressed from early years, the child tends to control his own feelings and learns to act in a way that is "convenient" for his or her parents. In order to improve communication skills, it is important to assert your own will as well as listen to other opinions. Then the child will learn how to find a solution from disagreement ("Kenka no cyūsai, dōshitemasu?" 2006, p. 16).

This advice seemed to conflict with Rothbaum et al's claim that Japanese children are discouraged from expressing their verbal assertiveness, or that Japanese parents value children's compliance more than U.S. parents do (2000). The current study demonstrated that some Japanese experts have begun advising parents to encourage children to assert their desires verbally to help children learn how to effectively communicate. It is important to add that this view also implies a child-centered perspective of not suppressing children's wishes based on parental standards.

Independence

Childrearing advice that promoted independence was found in both countries across the domains except in the Japanese Sleeping and Toilet-training domains. More Japanese experts gave advice that promoted independence in the domain of Feeding/Eating and Discipline than the U.S. experts. For example, the Japanese experts gave various types of practical advice on how to help children eat by themselves, especially about letting children make a mess. Only one U.S. article containing advice to let children make messes in the process of fostering independence in eating. Eight Japanese articles discussed this (i.e., “You should prepare yourself for your child making a mess until age 2. Otherwise, she won’t learn to eat by herself” (“Uchinokoga minnato cyotsuto chigau! to kanjitatoki,” 2006, p. 42); “Don’t worry about her making a mess. Make it easier for her to eat by herself and let her eat in a way she wants” (“Isaidai no nayami Inengo niwa dounatsuteru?” 2006, p.91)). Therefore, according to the Japanese experts, promoting independence may sometimes require parental sacrifice or inconvenience.

Both the U.S. and Japanese experts recommended various practical ideas that supported children’s independence. Many of the strategies were similar between the two countries. For example, they suggested that parents should support children’s emerging independence by (a) accepting the feeling of wanting to do things by themselves (i.e., “Even though your child fails, you should accept his willingness to challenge it” (“Aseranai! ga “shitsuke” no kotsu,” 2006, p.16)), (b) letting them do it, (c) arranging the environment that prevents failure or promotes independence (i.e., “Encourage independence by giving your child age-appropriate toys and games” (Pfaff, 2006, p. 115)), (d) praising or encouraging children when they try to do things by themselves.

On the other hand, only Japanese experts mentioned the importance of offering subtle support (support not recognized by children) when the task is too difficult for them. For example, in the domain of “Discipline,” eight out of 24 Japanese articles recommended this strategy for supporting independence (i.e., “As for the part that your child is unable to do, support him without being noticed. Say ‘Good job for doing it by yourself’ and let him experience a sense of accomplishment” (“*1tsusaninatsutara mazu minituketai 5tsu no koto*,” 2005, p. 66)). This cross-cultural difference may suggest the fundamental difference of view toward children between the two countries. The Japanese experts’ view may reflect a child-centered parenting view that prioritizes the children’s needs over the parents’. The Japanese experts seemed to encourage parents to consider the best childrearing practice from the perspective of the children. This finding was congruent with previous studies that found advice from child care experts in Japanese childrearing magazines and books to be extremely child-centered. They often pressured mothers to promptly and consistently meet the needs of their children without reference to the welfare and needs of the mothers (Shinada, 2004; Tendo, 2004; Tsuneyoshi & Boocock, 1997).

Another cross-cultural difference regarding the topic of independence was the domain of Sleep. None of the Japanese experts gave advice that encouraged parents to help children becoming independent sleepers but in the U.S. sample there were 11 such articles. As was explained in the domain of Sleep under research question 2, this difference may reflect the Japanese childrearing practice of co-sleeping. Additionally, being able to fall asleep on his or her own seems to be an important developmental milestone for the U.S. children. However, in the current study, letting children sleep by

themselves was not introduced by Japanese experts. Similar results were also found in a previous cross-cultural study of parenting books conducted by Tsuneyoshi and Boocock (1997). They found that childrearing advice related to sleeping demonstrated the most distinctive cultural difference between Japan and other Western countries (U.S., England, France), compared with other domains such as feeding, toilet-training, self-help, and discipline. Although much of the Japanese experts' advice was influenced by Western child-development theory in various areas, sleep is the one domain that has remained unassimilated.

Much of the U.S. expert's advice in the domain of Mother-Child Relationship encouraged children to be separated from mothers, which was not found in the Japanese sample. The U.S. experts suggested various techniques to make separation manageable for children such as (a) playing games to practice separation (i.e., "Play peek-a-boo and similar games where you disappear briefly and come back. It will help your child understand that when you leave, you always return" (Harrington, 2005, p. 46)), (b) providing self-comfort objects (i.e., "Experts call them transitional objects, and for good reason; they help your children feel more confident as they shift from being completely dependent upon their parents to being individuals. That smelly stuffed bunny is key in soothing your child when you're not there" (Harrington, 2005, p. 46)), and (c) avoiding sneak-out. Although a few experts also stated the importance of providing an appropriate balance of dependence and independence in childrearing, in general the U.S. experts recommended that parents help children become independent from mothers. This finding was consistent with Rothbaum et al.'s (2000) model of the U.S. socialization as fostering

the child's orientation to the outside world while providing the child's need for security at the same time.

Childrearing toward independence may be associated with the U.S. experts' belief in the importance of fostering children's self-regulation. While 12 U.S. experts suggested childrearing techniques that promoted children's self-regulation, only one Japanese expert indicated this type of advice. The U.S. experts discussed children's ability to self-regulate as early as infancy. For example one expert wrote:

But eventually, after many, many repetitions of the same routine- she cries, you go to the crib, pick her up, perhaps change her diaper, and carry her to your preferred nursing spot – she gets the message that, yes, her needs will be met momentarily.

When she knows this – that you will be there soon enough with the milk she wants – she'll actually adopt some self-control or self-comforting techniques (Honig, 2006, p. 21).

Therefore, they advised parents to promote children's self-control with various strategies (i.e., "What's more important is the way you help him regulate his emotions – by soothing him when he cries" (Barack, p. 103)). However, some U.S. experts were against this view that children are able to self-regulate well during the very early years (3 articles). Instead, they indicated that the ability to regulate on a regular basis emerged around age 5.

The Japanese experts provided very little discussion regarding the topic of self-regulation. This may reflect the findings of previous cross-cultural studies that suggest that the goal of childrearing in the U.S. is to help children acquire skills in controlling their own behavior or emotions (Kashiwagi, 1997). In Japanese childrearing practice,

however, the childrearing goal of self-control does not seem to exist. A cross-cultural validation study of the Infant Behavior Questionnaire (IRQ-Revised) suggested that Japanese mothers are less likely to associate their infants' self-control abilities with temperament (Nakagawa & Sukigara, 2005). In other words, Japanese mothers demonstrated a fuzzy understanding of why infants need to learn self-control. In their explanation, Nakagawa and Sukigara referred to the traditional Japanese pattern of protecting children from outside stimulation. Traditionally, parents in Japan protect children from stimulation that is felt to be too strong or unbearable for children to manage. Self-control by toddlers may therefore not be very necessary, and therefore not an important childrearing goal for Japanese parents.

Individuality

More Japanese than U.S. experts recommended that parents acknowledge or respect individual differences, mostly in the areas of development, discipline, and feeding or eating. The experts of both countries discussed individual differences in terms of personality and temperament as they affect children's behavior. Individuality has been a key word for social reformers in Japan, especially in education (Cave, 2001). For example, the promotion of individuality was the central theme in the reports of successive high profile governmental advisory committees in the 1980s and 1990s due to increasing discontent with rigidity, uniformity, and exam-centeredness in the Japanese school system, which often resulted in school bullying and consequent suicide by children (Cave). Japanese childrearing experts may write about it more than do U.S. experts because it is a newer concept in Japan and they therefore feel more need to bring it to parents' attention. Perhaps Japanese experts feel more resistance to the concept than do

U.S. experts. In the U.S., the notion of individual differences has a longer history (Thorndike, 1910).

Table 19

Numbers and (Percentages) of U.S. and Japanese Articles in the Autonomy, Assertiveness, Individuality, and Independence

Domains

	U.S. 1 ^a	Japan 1 ^a	U.S. 2 ^b	Japan 2 ^b	U.S. 3 ^c	Japan 3 ^c	U.S. 4 ^d	Japan 4 ^d	U.S. 5 ^e	Japan 5 ^e	U.S. 6 ^f	Japan 6 ^f	U.S. Total	Japan Total
Autonomy	9	2	3	0	2	4	19	20	1	0	2	4	36 (15.3%)	30 (16.2%)
Ego development	1	1	0	0	0	3	3	11	0	0	1	2	5 (2.1%)	17 (9.2%)
Offer choices	8	1	3	0	2	2	16	6	1	0	1	2	31 (13.1%)	11 (5.9%)
Importance of mischievousness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	7 (3.8%)
Assertiveness	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	9	0	1	0	2	0	14 (7.6%)
Promote assertiveness	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	6 (3.2%)
Importance of assertiveness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	8 (4.3%)
Independence	7	19	12	0	11	7	18	24	1	0	15	4	64 (27.1%)	54 (29.2%)
Importance of independence	2	2	1	0	1	2	5	0	1	0	0	0	10 (4.2%)	4 (2.2%)

Promote independence	6	18	12	0	9	6	10	24	0	0	13	4	50 (21.5%)	52 (28.1%)
Promote self-regulation	2	0	0	0	2	0	4	0	0	0	4	1	12 (5.2%)	1 (.5%)
Individuality difference	4	17	0	3	23	21	9	11	4	1	0	9	40 (16.9%)	62 (33.5%)

^aFeeding/Eating, ^bSleep, ^cDevelopment, ^dDiscipline, ^eToilet-Training, ^fMother-Child Relationship

Research Question 5: To what extent and how do mothers' concerns expressed in message board postings in Japan and the U.S. reflect concepts of closeness?

Frequencies and percentages of the U.S. and Japanese online message postings related to the topics of closeness are indicated in Table 20. They are categorized within domain. The percentage of postings in each topic was calculated as the number of postings fitting each topic relative to the total number of postings within a country (U.S. 120 postings; Japan 121 postings).

Although the number of postings per category was relatively small, there seemed to be some cultural differences. For example, four U.S. mothers posted concerns related to co-sleeping, which was not found in the Japanese sample. While these mothers' concerns were not exactly about sleeping with children all through the night, they were worried because (1) a child comes to the mother's bed in the morning to sleep with her, (b) a mother has to lie down with the child to get him to fall asleep, (3) a child wants to sleep in the mother's arms, and (4) a child wants to sleep on the mother or father. This type of concern was not found in the Japanese sample, most likely because sleeping with children is an acceptable childrearing practice in Japanese culture.

While some Japanese mothers posted concerns related to holding children, this was rarely the case in the U.S. sample. It appeared that the Japanese mothers often used the strategy of holding children to put them to sleep (i.e., "Won't take naps unless someone is holding him") and to calm them down (i.e., "When I hold her, her tantrum will stop. But if I put her down, it starts again"). The Japanese mothers faced the challenge of children's constant demands to be held. The mothers' struggle with whether or not to accept

children’s demandingness was also identified as a concern related to *amae*. For example, one mother wrote “Possibly due to the arrival of the new baby, my daughter starts “*amaeru*.” Especially when my husband is at home, she starts screaming with indiscernible sounds to seek our attention. Should I just let her *amaeru*?”

Mother’s concerns in relation to separation or stranger anxiety were found in both countries. The mothers of both countries expressed concerns about children being extremely clingy, their strong preference for mothers over the fathers, or strong stranger anxiety. One U.S. mother of an 18-month-old girl described her struggle in this way “Whenever I do leave her with someone, she has a ‘meltdown’ as one caregiver described. Today, it was for 2 hours (that’s it)... Sometimes I can’t even leave her with dh¹². She is such a Mama’s girl.”

Table 20

Numbers (and Percentages) of U.S. and Japanese Postings in Each Category and Subcategory in Closeness

Category		Number (and Percentage) of Articles	
		U.S.	Japan
Co-sleeping	Sleep	4 (3.3%)	0
<i>Amae</i>		0	3 (2.5%)
	Mother-child relationship	0	2 (1.7%)

¹²dear husband

	Feeding/eating	0	1 (.8%)
Holding		1 (.8%)	7 (5.8%)
	Sleep	1 (.8%)	4 (3.3%)
	Discipline	0	1 (0.8%)
	Mother-child relationship	0	2 (1.7%)
Stranger/Separation anxiety	Mother-child relationship	6 (5.0%)	7 (5.8%)

Research Question 6: To what extent and how does expert advice in parenting magazines in Japan and the U.S. reflect the concepts of closeness in each of the domains?

Frequencies of the U.S. and Japanese articles related to the topics of closeness are indicated in Table 21. Overall, the Japanese experts gave advice related to closeness more than the U.S. experts. The Japanese experts wrote about responsiveness (31.9%) more than the U.S. experts (23.5%). Advice regarding cultivating close skin contact with children (“Skin Contact”) was frequently found in the Japanese sample (40.5%), but not much in the U.S. sample (16.1%). There was some advice related to stranger or separation anxiety in the articles from both countries (U.S. 3.4% and Japan 4.9%).

Both the U.S. and Japanese experts suggested the childrearing practice of responding to the needs of children promptly. The advice between the two countries was very compatible. Experts from both countries recommended that parents take time to carefully observe children’s behavior, sometimes by keeping a journal. For example, they advised parents of the need to observe for signs of children’s feelings such as yawning, rubbing sleepy eyes, facial expressions indicating food preference, and then to promptly and

lovingly respond to those needs. According to the experts, such sensitivity will build a trusting relationship between parents and children (e.g., “Each time you soothe your child’s persistent cries with food, a cuddle, or a dry diaper, you teach him that he matters and that he can trust you to help him” (Porretto, 2005, p. 144)). Three Japanese articles and one U.S. article also informed parents that parental responsiveness will develop children’s empathy. The Japanese experts seemed to emphasize the need of mothers to imitate children’s vocalization, action, and behavior as a strategy for responding to children (10 articles) more than the U.S. experts (3 articles). For example, one Japanese expert suggested that “As for children who are unable to verbally communicate well, they think that they are able to communicate with adults through imitation. When adults imitate their voice or movements, they think that their expression is accepted” (“1saitsute, mamano yukoto dokomade wakatsuteiruno?” 2006, p. 17). This finding is congruent with the cross-cultural study of maternal responsiveness to infants in three countries, the U.S., France, and Japan (Azuma, 2004; Bornstein et al., 1992). The authors found responsiveness among mothers from all three countries: they were equivalently responsive and nurturant in response to infants’ nondistress and distress vocalizations. However, Japanese mothers demonstrated more imitation than American mothers and the difference was especially significant when the infants were looking at the mothers (Azuma, 2004).

Advice that promoted close skin contact (“Skin-ship”) was found in the Japanese sample much more than in the U.S. sample. The Japanese English term “skin-ship” (physical contact) was used often by the Japanese experts, while some U.S. experts suggested the importance of physical contact but used the term “skin to skin contact.”

According to the Japanese experts, skin-ship has various benefits, including the promotion of child communication, language and emotional development, and parent-child relational closeness. Skin-ship is considered essential to children's healthy growth so it becomes a strategy to deal with children's distress or undesirable behavior (e.g., unwillingness to brush teeth, waking up early in the morning, finger sucking, and tantrums). In addition, skin-ship was posted as a replacement of breast-milk once mothers decide to wean. Just like breast-milk, skin-ship was touted as providing nourishment that every child needs (e.g., "(After you wean), you should give plenty of skin-ship for your baby to make him calm down" ("Bonyū honyūbin ni baibai," 2006, p.81)). In addition, some Japanese experts talked about the risks to mothers and children without skin-ship, as in "By skin-ship, growth hormones will be produced... Without skin-ship, your child may not be able to develop her 'maternal instinct' and be unable to bond with her own child in the future... Your child may become a hysterical child who is unable to get along with others" ("Mitsuchaku & nadenade ikuji no mirakuru pawā," 2006, p. 85-87).

Accordingly, the Japanese experts strongly recommended the use of skin-ship connected with the domains of feeding/eating, sleep, discipline, development, and mother-child relationship.

References to holding were found frequently in the Japanese sample. This type of childrearing practice was also found in the U.S. articles, but in smaller numbers. Like skin-ship, holding was also explained as a strategy to effectively deal with children's distress. Both U.S. and Japanese parenting articles indicated that holding provides comfort to children, especially when they are crying. For example, one U.S. expert quoted a parenting book author's advice which is, "If you've met all your infant's needs

and she's still fussing, the best thing you can do is hold her in your arms, tell her you love her, and keep holding her until she either falls asleep or stop crying" (Turner, 2005, p. 178). The Japanese experts particularly emphasized the use of holding following a reprimand or to calm children having tantrums; these were most frequently found in the domain of discipline.

The Japanese experts generally recommended that mothers hold babies as much as they can (e.g., "As for a child who cries whenever you put him down, hold him as much as he wants. Someday, he won't want to be held anymore" ("Uchinokoga minnato cyotsuto chigau! to kanjitatoki," 2006, p.41); "When your child wants you to hold her, take a break from what you're doing and hold her. Your baby is unable to understand the reason of why you're unable to hold her" ("Akacyango kaiwa sokusyū kōza," 2006, p. 150)). This message was not found in the U.S. sample. The Japanese experts further advised mothers not to worry about children getting in the habit of being held all the time. However, some Japanese parenting articles suggested that mothers do not always have to respond to children's crying, especially when they are busy or suffering with physical pains. Instead, they suggested that mothers should let them cry once in a while. This type of advice was rare, but it indicates that there is a mix of views in Japan regarding the extent to which mothers should respond to the demands of children to constantly be held.

One of the characteristics in the U.S. experts' advice related to close skin contact was the promotion of swaddling. Swaddling was recommended as a strategy to help babies sleep better or longer, soothe crying babies with colic, and promote babies' healthy mental development. The U.S. experts also recommended various techniques to promote

skin contact with children such as touching, patting, rubbing, snuggling, and baby massage. A cross-cultural childrearing study of contemporary parenting books from five countries (Japan, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and China) also suggested that some child development experts in the Western countries have started advocating physical closeness with their children through the practice of co-sleeping, carrying babies on their back or in front, and swaddling (Tsuneyoshi & Boocock, 1997). In this sense, advice regarding physical closeness between the U.S. and Japan is becoming comparable, however, the intensity of the recommendation from the U. S. experts were much less than in the Japanese sample.

Although the benefits of co-sleeping has been introduced in the U.S. through child development specialists such as William Sears (Tsuneyoshi & Boocock, 1997), some U.S. experts sampled for the current study discourage parents to use co-sleeping because of the higher risk of SIDS. For example, one of the U.S. articles talked about the new American Academy of Pediatrics reports that co-sleeping may increase the risk of SIDS. As for the Japanese experts, two articles suggested the childrearing practice of co-sleeping (i.e., “Co-sleeping will provide comfortable sleep for both mother and child through the feel of each others’ breath and skin” (“Akacyan no nō to kokoro wo sodateru 50 no hinto,” 2005, p.19)) and five articles encouraged mothers to lie down with children to put them to sleep. As for the advice to lie down with children, although it was not clear whether or not this meant co-sleeping, the basic purpose behind this practice was to help the child sleep. (However, one Japanese expert encouraged parents to wait until infants’ necks become stable before initiating co-sleeping.) Thus, there was a significant cultural

difference in relation to advice regarding co-sleeping between the U.S. and Japanese experts.

Amaae is a Japanese indigenous concept that means helplessness or the desire to be loved. The verb form of *amae*, “*amaeru*” means physically and psychologically depending on a person, particularly parents. All of the Japanese parenting magazine experts seemed to agree that mothers should accept children’s feelings of *amae*, and let children *amaeru* as much as they want. Japanese experts sometimes advised parents to accept *amae*, even when associated with children’s inappropriate behavior (i.e., “If your child gets violent or runs away from you, it means that he is *amaeru*. Because it is one on one time with you, he is happy. He enjoys getting all the attention from you” (“Over 1sai no donmai! Ikuji sōdan kyōshitsu,” 2005, p.157); “2-year-olds are independent - ‘I want to do it by myself’ and dependent- ‘I want to *ameru* my mommy.’ Accept your child’s *amae* as long as if it doesn’t happen every day” (“Iyaiya & kansyaku kitsuzu wa dō shitara īno?” 2005, p.151)).

Azuma (1986) explained the importance of cultivating *amae* in Japanese childrearing as dependency that will provide an internal motivation to work hard to meet the expectations of the social world. Through the process of cultivating dependence, Japanese children learn to sense what pleases their mothers, and therefore behave accordingly. Thus, *amae* is also a device for mothers to control their children’s behavior. In the current study, however, the Japanese experts did not explain why it is important to accept children’s *amae*. Only one expert indicated the meaning of *amae* (i.e., “To be accepted fully is to receive *amae*. Children who receive *amae* will learn to love others and become interested in others”) and gave suggestions about how to accept children (to

amaeru them) according to their developmental levels (“‘Dame’ ‘ikenai’ no kokoroni todoku tsutaekat,” 2005, p.46).

Some U.S. and Japanese experts’ advice concerned stranger or separation anxiety. Both countries’ experts explained that following the mother is a healthy sign that indicates a strong bond between child and mother. However, while some Japanese experts recommended that mothers should not try to overcome stranger anxiety because it will cease naturally, this type of advice was not found in the U.S. sample. Instead, a few U.S. experts gave advice to give children a security blanket or lovey to cope with separation anxiety.

Table 21

Numbers and (Percentages) of U.S. and Japanese Articles in Each Category and Subcategory in Closeness

	U.S.		Japan		U.S.		Japan		U.S.		Japan		U.S.		Japan		U.S.		Japan	
	1 ^a	1 ^a	2 ^b	2 ^b	3 ^c	3 ^c	4 ^d	4 ^d	5 ^e	5 ^e	6 ^f	6 ^f	Total (%)	Total (%)	Total (%)	Total (%)	Total (%)	Total (%)	Total (%)	Total (%)
Responsiveness	3	9	12	2	10	25	2	12	4	2	18	9	53 (23.5)	59 (31.9)						
<i>Amae</i>	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	3	0	9 (4.9)						
Skin contact	0	19	4	7	13	11	6	22	0	1	15	15	38 (16.1)	75 (40.5)						
Skin-ship	0	13	0	1	1	3	0	5	0	0	4	5	5 (2.1)	27 (14.6)						
Swaddling	0	0	1	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	10 (4.2)	0						
Holding																				
Yes	0	10	0	6	5	6	3	16	0	0	8	11	17 (7.2)	49 (26.5)						
No	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	1 (4)	5 (2.7)						
Others	0	0	4	0	5	3	3	1	0	1	12	0	28 (11.9)	4 (2.2)						
Co-sleeping																				
Yes	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	7 (3.8)						
No	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3 (1.3)	1 (.5)						
Stranger anxiety	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	8	7	8 (3.4)	9 (4.9)						

^aFeeding/Eating. ^bSleep. ^cDevelopment. ^dDiscipline. ^eToilet-Training. ^fMother-Child Relationship.

Research Question 7: To what extent and how do mothers' concerns expressed in message board postings in Japan and the U.S. relate to promotion of a child-centered approach to childrearing in each of the domains?

Frequencies and percentages of the U.S. and Japanese online message postings related to topics promoting a child-centered parenting style, which gives highest priority to children's needs or desires, are indicated in Table 22. They are categorized within this domain. The percentage of postings was calculated as the number of postings relative to the total number of postings within a country (U.S. 120 postings; Japan 121 postings).

The postings related to the promotion of child-centered parenting style were relatively few. There were more concerns related to this topic in the Japanese sample (11.6%) than the U.S. sample (4.2%). These postings indicated maternal struggles with whether or not they should control children's willful behavior or strong preferences. For example, a Japanese mother of a 12-month-old boy posted her dilemma regarding whether or not she should let her son bite her hands and pull her hair, "I tell him not to do it, but I'm not sure whether he is listening or not. I think that I should not be too strict because he is still young." Likewise, another Japanese mother of a 17-month-old child expressed her concern related to her daughter's frequent desire to breast-feed as follows:

My daughter always wants my breast-milk. Before she goes to bed, at night, early in the morning, and during the meals she always wants to drink my milk. She seems to be satisfied with just drinking a small amount. She sits on my lap and pulls my cloths to look for my breast. I feel like she is hunting my breast...Because of the frequent nursing, I'm getting really exhausted. I wonder whether I should wean her (But is it

too cruel to her because she really wants to drink my milk?) or I should let her gradually choose the timing of weaning? (But, by watching her frequent desire, I fear that she may continue to drink my breast milk forever). I'm not sure what to do.

As in this example, most of the Japanese maternal concerns associated with child-centeredness were about feeding or eating. The children demonstrated behavior such as (a) taking 2 or 3 hours to eat, (b) refusing to drink formula or any liquids but breast-milk, (c) asking for juice all the time, (d) not wanting to eat at all or always wanting to eat, (e) being very picky eaters, and/or (f) refusing to sleep without breast-milk. The mothers were worried that the children could become fat or too small, dehydrated or overfed. The mothers described chasing children to feed them or giving them something to drink and putting them on their laps to feed them. Such concerns were not expressed in the U.S. sample. At the same time, some Japanese mothers also indicated compassion toward children's behavior such as in, "My mom told me that I should let her cry and make her hungry so that she will drink formula. But, it is really painful to let her cry." Those Japanese mothers seemed to be unsure about whether they should push or control children's behavior in some way.

Similarly, some U.S. mothers demonstrated their struggles with issues such as whether or not to push children in toilet training or whether or not to let children come to their beds. However, the number of these expressed concerns was few compared to their numbers in the Japanese sample. This cross-cultural difference may be associated with the Japanese traditional childrearing style of not firmly disciplining children's behavior, especially when they are very young. Because of this social norm, the Japanese mothers may be less sure about whether or how to control children's behavior.

Table 22

Numbers (and Percentages) of U.S. and Japanese Postings Related to Child-Centeredness

Category	Number (and Percentage) of Articles	
	U.S.	Japan
Child-centered	5 (4.2%)	14 (11.6%)
Sleep	2 (.8%)	1 (.8%)
Feeding/Eating	1 (.8%)	10 (8.3%)
Discipline	0	2 (.8%)
Toilet-training	1 (.8%)	1 (1.7%)
Mother-child relationship	1 (.8%)	0

Research Question 8. To what extent does expert advice in parenting magazines in Japan and the U.S. relate to promotion of a child-centered approach to childrearing in each of the domains?

Table 23 shows the numbers of articles U.S. and Japanese experts published related to the promotion of child-centered parenting style. The total number of articles for each topic is indicated under the U.S. total and the Japan total. The percentages were also calculated in regard to the sum of articles per topic relative to the total number of articles in each country (U.S. 236; Japan 185).

Strategies to prevent problems and failures were advised equally in the two countries (U.S. 43.2%, Japan 48.1%). This child-centered parenting style accommodates the needs of children to help them be successful in various developmental tasks. The U.S. and Japanese experts gave suggestions to rearrange the environment (e.g., baby proof, create a quiet environment), plan ahead and provide smooth transitions (e.g., no scheduled activities for children when they are tired), provide creative and playful activities or settings for children (e.g., “monster spray bottle¹³,” imaginative play), and offer age appropriate devices (e.g., developmentally-appropriate utensils, Velcro shoes). These suggestions were found across the domains, especially in Feeding/Eating, Sleep, Development, and Discipline.

The two countries were comparable in this category. For example, in the domain of Sleep, experts in both countries suggested management approaches such as avoiding stimulating activities before bed time and providing dark and quiet settings to help children have a good night’s sleep. The only apparent culturally specific guidance here was U.S. experts’ advice regarding the use of white noise maker and monster spray bottles to calm children down. The Japanese experts, instead, suggested that mothers help children establish healthy daily rhythms with strategies such as providing plenty of exercise during the day and opening curtains in the morning to wake them up.

Other child-centered advice found in both countries promoted the view that children’s negative behavior is not intentional (“Children have no malintention” U.S.14.0%, Japan 16.0%). This advice was mostly found in the domains of Discipline and Feeding/Eating. The experts pointed out that children’s undesirable behaviors such as tantrums, picky

¹³ Some experts suggested that mothers should pretend to destroy monsters using spray bottles to help children go to bed without fear.

eating, or defiance was a normal part of development. The experts associated the negative behavior with lack of abilities (e.g., physical, verbal, self-control) or a developmental characteristic (e.g., short attention span, impulsiveness, egocentrism). For example, one U.S. expert wrote “The most typical tantrum triggers include not being able to verbalize what they want, not getting what they want, or being tired or hungry” (Robinson, 2006, p. 58). Previous cross-cultural studies suggest that Japanese parents view children as innocent (Chen, 1996). The current study suggests that this view of children also exists in the U.S.

Advice to follow the child’s lead was found in the domains of Feeding or Eating and Sleep in both countries. However, there were some cultural differences in experts’ teachings in this regard. Some U.S. experts suggested a child-centered approach to sleep strategies in the early months (8 articles). According to this strategy, parents not schedule and instead follow children’s natural rhythms of sleep. The U.S. experts also recommended that parents pay attention to children’s temperaments or natural tendencies. This type of advice regarding sleep was rare in the Japanese sample (2 articles). One possible reason for this difference comes from the prevailing U.S. parenting advice to help children sleep through the night from the early months. Some U.S. experts may be concerned that parents will ignore children’s natural body clock in this context.

On the other hand, the Japanese experts suggested that parents should feed children on demand (10 articles) more than the U.S. experts did (2 articles). In both countries, much of this advice was targeted to children around 0-7 months. For example, one Japanese expert wrote “By nursing your child whenever she cries, rhythms emerge... Basically breast-feed your child as much as she wants. Once you start solid foods, you

can breast-feed her as much as she wants after she finishes solid foods” (“Jyunyū taimu no toraburu stukiri Osakusen,” 2006, p.97)). In a similar vein, the Japanese experts also suggested that parents should not try to wean (“Don’t push”), because the decision should be based on the children’s will. While there were 13 Japanese articles that advised mothers not to force children to wean, in the U.S. sample, there was only one article. The Japanese experts’ advice to not force weaning was influenced by American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)’s guideline that breastfeeding can be continued as long as mutually desired. Interestingly, this guidance was more frequently introduced by the Japanese experts than by the U.S. experts. There seemed to be a stronger emphasis on respecting children’s natural eating rhythms in the Japanese parenting articles than the U.S.’s.

Along these lines, a notable characteristic of the Japanese experts’ advice was not to push children. This advice was found in the Japanese sample (39.5%) much more than in the U.S. sample (11.4%). The Japanese experts suggested that parents should not force children to (a) wean, (b) sleep, (c) acquire language, physical, socioemotional, or academic skills, (d) demonstrate polite behavior (e.g., greet others) or demonstrate desirable behavior (e.g., brushing teeth), and (e) potty-train. The Japanese experts recommended that parents not hurry, not be pushy, and be patient.

There seemed to be several reasons behind this childrearing belief in nonintervention. First, the Japanese experts seemed to believe that too much pushing may result in the opposite outcomes (i.e., “During the meal time, don’t say too much to your child. She will be unable to taste her foods” (“Syokuikutsute nāni?” 2005, p.20)). Secondly, this non-intervention approach and respect for children’s natural developmental rhythms seemed to be associated with traditional Japanese childrearing. Some scholars have

pointed out that the essential component of childrearing is guidance by means of understanding the child's nature at each stage of his or her development (Shibano, 1995; Sato, 1978).

Thirdly, the difference may reflect Hess and Azuma's hypothesis of Japanese teaching as an osmosis model and U.S. teaching as an instructional model (Hess & Azuma, 1991). According to this hypothesis, U.S. parents focus on providing learning opportunities for children by direct verbal instruction, while Japanese parents focus on guiding children by providing the appropriate physical and social environment (Azuma, 2004). In Japan, it is believed that by creating close relationships between parents and children, parents foster internalization of parental values and expectations, and that children therefore behave accordingly. In this context, children's learning takes place naturally in accordance with their internalized motivation and maturity. The Japanese experts' frequent advice to not push children's development or behavior seems to reflect this Japanese learning model.

This belief in not pushing children is also found in Japanese experts' frequent use of the term "*mimamoru*," which literally means watch and protect. It is a non-intervention technique. Sometimes the term *mimamoru* was used interchangeably with the phrases "don't rush" or "don't force" (i.e., "The milestones that are indicated in childrearing books and magazines are just rough standards. Just believe that he will be able to do it someday. Don't rush. *Mimamoru* ("Bēbī no "mōsugudekiru!" wo ōenshiyō," 2006, p.19)). The *mimamoru* approach is also used as a strategy for dealing with children's problem behaviors such as tantrums and crying. For example, one Japanese expert wrote:

(If your child throws tantrums) You should *mimamoru* him for a while. After he calms down, you should hold him tight and speak for him “you wanted to do this right?” so that he can organize his feelings (“Over Isai no donmai! Ikuji sōdan kyōshitsu,” 2005, p.157)

This advice is based on the belief that children are able to cool down by themselves. This type of strategy is also found in U.S. childrearing articles. Yet, there is a difference in that instead of advising parents to just leave children by themselves, the Japanese experts use the term *mimamoru* implying that there should be physical and psychological proximity between parents and children even during tantrums. It is believed that children are able to recover because they know that the parents are paying careful attention to them.

The use of baby talk was recommended by the Japanese experts much more than by the U.S. experts (14 articles and 1 article, respectively). The strategy of using baby talk was viewed by Japanese experts as a tool for promoting a child-centered approach in that it involves accommodating one’s speech to the needs of children. The Japanese experts suggested that parents should use onomatopoeic and idiophone words as well as child-directed speech (e.g., high pitch, slow, repeating, short). The experts explained that baby talk is easy for children to listen to, imitate, understand, and remember, and also comfortable for their ears. This cultural difference is congruent with a previous study of U.S. and Japanese maternal speech styles and content with 3-month-olds. Toda, Fogel, and Kawai (1990) found that Japanese mothers used more babyish, onomatopoeic, and nonsense vocalizations with their infants, while American mothers used more direct question forms with their infants.

Many Japanese experts gave advice that emphasized the importance of understanding children's feelings and behavior (28.6 %), which is a child-centered approach that prioritizes the child's perspectives and needs. This advice was also found in the U.S. sample but to a smaller degree (10.6 %). The experts indicated that parents should accept, acknowledge, empathize, sympathize, and show compassion toward children's feelings, especially when they are experiencing negative emotions such as fear, pain, and frustration. According to the experts of both countries, this type of childrearing practice will help children (a) feel a sense of security, (b) promote sensitivity toward others, (c) build trusting relationships between parents and children, and (d) control their feelings.

Likewise, many Japanese experts gave advice that parents should speak for children. This advice was also found in the U.S. sample but to a smaller degree. For example, a Japanese expert suggested that mothers "say, 'Happy, aren't you?' or 'Sad, aren't you?' to your toddlers to express acceptance of their feelings and to speak for them. By labeling their feelings, children will understand their feelings and want to communicate more" ("Isaitsute, mamano yukoto dokomade wakatsuteiruno? , 2006, p.16). This type of advice implies an underlying assumption that 1- or 2- year-olds are unable to express themselves verbally so parents need to assist them. It also implies that by labeling children's feelings, parents send a message to children that they have received the children's message. Moreover, labeling the feeling may give it legitimacy and help the child understand it. For all of these reasons, speaking for small children may help them calm down.

Table 23

Numbers (and Percentages) of U.S. and Japanese Articles Related to Child-Centeredness

Strategies that	U.S. ^{1a}		Japan ^{1a}		U.S. ^{2b}		Japan ^{2b}		U.S. ^{3c}		Japan ^{3c}		U.S. ^{4d}		Japan ^{4d}		U.S. ^{5e}		Japan ^{5e}		U.S. ^{6f}		Japan ^{6f}		U.S. Total (%)		Japan Total (%)	
	20	26	17	14	25	14	33	28	2	5	2	3	102 (43.2)	90 (48.6)														
prevent problems and failure																												
Rearrange environment	0	4	15	12	11	9	8	18	1	3	0	2	37 (15.7)	48 (25.9)														
Creative solutions	6	7	10	2	11	5	11	11	2	5	1	0	42 (17.8)	30 (16.2)														
Plan ahead	6	8	6	9	3	0	18	6	0	0	0	1	33 (14.0)	24 (13.0)														
Developmentally appropriate device	0	3	0	0	0	0	5	1	1	0	0	0	6 (2.5)	4 (2.2)														
Others	12	16	0	2	0	1	4	0	0	0	1	0	17 (7.2)	19 (10.3)														
Follow your child's lead	2	10	8	2	0	2	0	0	0	1	3	0	16 (6.8)	15 (8.1)														
Prioritize your child's need	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	3	0	0	2	2	2 (.8)	7 (3.8)														
Don't push	4	22	0	3	8	19	6	22	8	5	0	2	27 (11.4)	73 (39.5)														

Child has no maintenance	8	5	0	0	1	3	16	16	0	1	2	5	33 (14.0)	30 (16.0)
Show understanding	1	0	2	0	4	18	11	24	1	0	5	11	25 (10.6)	53 (28.6)
Acknowledge child's feeling/empathize	1	0	2	0	4	14	7	21	1	0	5	10	21 (8.9)	45 (24.3)
Speak for your child	0	0	0	0	0	7	6	10	0	0	1	1	7 (3.0)	18 (9.7)
<i>Mimamoru</i>	0	4	0	1	0	10	0	13	0	1	0	3	0	32 (17.3)
Baby talk	0	0	0	0	0	12	0	1	0	0	1	1	1 (4)	14 (7.6)

^aFeeding/Eating. ^bSleep. ^cDevelopment. ^dDiscipline. ^eToilet-Training. ^fMother-Child Relationship.

CHAPTER 4

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The present study explored and compared (a) the childrearing concerns expressed by Japanese and U.S. mothers on online message boards, and (b) the childrearing advice suggested by Japanese and U.S. experts in parenting magazines. This chapter brings together the findings in order to draw attention to the overarching themes that emerged from them, states the limitations of the study, and offers directions for future research.

Areas of Greatest Concern to U.S. and Japanese Mothers

Using the content of online message boards maintained by popular parenting magazines in each country, I content analyzed the childrearing concerns of U.S. and Japanese mothers. Overall, there were some similarities and differences between the U.S. and Japanese mothers' concerns. Mothers in the two countries were similar in that both groups identified concerns regarding infant/toddler (a) nutrition, (b) sleep problems, (c) development, (d) disobedience, (e) toilet-training strategies, and (f) stranger and separation anxiety. Within these domains, many of the concerns were similar. Yet the exact content of certain of their concerns, particularly within the feeding and sleeping domains, differed markedly.

Both Japanese and U.S. mothers worried about (a) providing age-appropriate foods or drink, (b) helping children become independent eaters, (c) deciding whether or not to stop breastfeeding, (d) putting children down for naps or sleep, (e) children's delays in socio-emotional or language development, (f) dealing with children's disobedience, (g) starting toilet-training or dealing with children's unwillingness to participate, and (h) children's

resistance for separation. Moreover, U.S. and Japanese mothers wrote with equal frequency about childrearing anxiety, stress, and exhaustion.

Across the domains, the concerns that distinguished Japanese and U.S. mothers tended to center around tensions among the goals of promoting children's closeness to the mother, facilitating autonomy, accepting age-appropriate behavior difficulties while trying to socialize acceptable behavior, and promoting physical health. U.S. mothers were more likely than Japanese mothers to worry about night waking, not sleeping alone, food choices and amounts, and biting and hitting behavior. Japanese mothers were more likely than U.S. mothers to worry about strong attachment to breast-milk, not eating too much, weight and appearance, use of harsh punishment, and the use of skin-ship.

Areas Most Addressed in U.S. and Japanese Parenting Magazines.

Using parenting magazine articles in each country, I also content analyzed advice given to parents of young children. Overall, there were some similarities and differences between the U.S. and Japanese experts' advice.

Similar advice was given concerning (a) control, (b) consistency, (c) reasoning, (d) distraction, (e) harsh punishment, (f) responsiveness, (g) closeness, (h) independence, (i) child-centeredness, and (j) sensitivity to mothers. In both countries, mothers were advised to (a) be firm and set limits, (b) give children reasons for rules, (c) be consistent from day to day, (d) use distraction for children's distress, (e) avoid harsh punishment, (f) pay attention to the signs of children's distress or nondistress and promptly respond to needs, (g) support children's emerging independent skills, (h) prevent problems and failures for children, (i) follow the child's lead, and (j) to be concerned not only about childrearing, also about their own needs and getting support from other members of the family.

Japanese experts, however, were more likely than U.S. experts to advise mothers to effectively reprimand child when necessary, value mischief, model appropriate behavior and a positive disposition, praise and value accomplishment, value communication between mother and child, use non-verbal communication, promote assertiveness, offer subtle support when a task is too difficult for children, use skin-ship frequently, acknowledge the child's feelings and speak for the child, use baby talk, and *mimamoru* instead of pushing.

American experts, on the other hand, were more likely than Japanese experts, to discuss the benefits of not giving in, staying calm and gentle, ignoring inappropriate behavior, using time out and establishing consequences, offering choices, fostering children's self-regulation, and using some skin contact such as swaddling,

Overall Similarities in Japanese and U.S. Mothers' Childrearing Concerns and the Strategies Advised by Parenting Magazine Experts

Unlike the findings of previous cross-cultural research that pointed to dichotomous parenting styles between the U.S. and Japan (e.g., Rothbaum et al., 2000), the current study indicated that the parenting strategies suggested by child development experts were similar in many ways between the two countries.

The comparability of maternal childrearing concerns and experts' advice between the two countries implies a globalization of childrearing practice in that both countries are importing advice. The Japanese experts, for example, often quoted guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). Interestingly, in the current study, Japanese experts referenced the AAP guidelines related to weaning that stated that breastfeeding can be continued as long as mutually desired, more than did the U.S. experts. The AAP

advice regarding weaning seems to fit into the Japanese traditional childrearing style of following children's lead. In contrast, warnings regarding co-sleeping as a potential risk factor for SIDS were found less in the Japanese sample than in the U.S. sample.

Accordingly, it is hypothesized that the Japanese experts select Western research advice based on whether it is easily assimilated into existing Japanese childrearing practices.

They may ignore other Western advice that they think Japanese mothers would find unacceptable or too difficult to implement (e.g., leaving the child to cry herself to sleep).

On the other hand, ideas for promoting close skin contact between parent and child were also found in the U.S. sample. While the Japanese experts advocated the importance of skin-ship, the U.S. experts recommended swaddling to help soothe babies with colic, help them sleep better or longer, and promote healthy mental development. Moreover, they also presented various techniques to promote skin contact with children such as touching, patting, rubbing, snuggling, and baby massage. Thus various childrearing practices that promote closeness exist in the U.S.. Advice to follow some of these practices appears to have been influenced by childrearing practices in other countries such as Japan.

Additionally, in the current study, advice associated with the promotion of a child-centered parenting style was found in both countries but to a different degree of intensity. For example, similar strategies to prevent problems and failures were advised such as rearranging the environment, planning ahead, providing creative activities, or offering age appropriate devices. Moreover, both the U.S. and Japanese experts promoted the view that children's negative behavior is not intentional. The experts largely agreed that

undesirable behavior was a normal part of development and associated with a lack of abilities or a developmental characteristic.

Differences in Japanese and U.S. Mothers' Childrearing Concerns and the Strategies Advised by Parenting Magazine Experts

While the Japanese experts suggested the importance of valuing children's needs and perspectives, they also gave advice to consider the mothers' perspectives. For example, experts advised mothers to nurse children as long as children want, but also suggested that mothers start using formula if they were tired of nursing. Sensitivity to mothers was found in the Japanese sample of articles more frequently than in the U.S. sample of articles. Such advice may reflect current Japanese societal concerns regarding prevailing childrearing anxiety and stress among mothers of young children.

Expert advice that values mothers' perspectives along with children's needs was also found in an historical analysis of Japanese parenting magazines conducted by Ishiguro (2004). She pointed out that since the 1990s, some Japanese parenting magazines have been downplaying the lifestyle of mothers who work hard to prioritize the needs of children. Ishiguro saw this movement as a paradigm shift from the traditional model that valued woman's identity as a mother more than her identity as an individual human being. Future research should examine whether experts' messages about valuing children's and mothers' perspectives simultaneously lessen or increase maternal stress and anxiety.

There were some maternal concerns and expert advice that were very specific to the U.S. sample. In the current study, the U.S. parenting magazines experts gave more advice on nutritious eating habits than their Japanese counterparts. U.S. mothers may be more confused, and U.S. experts may devote more attention to nutrition than their Japanese

counterparts because there is more variability of foodstuffs in the U.S., and because recently there has been much concern about obesity among U.S. children. More in-depth analysis of maternal knowledge and awareness regarding nutrition may help explain the difference between the two countries.

Another obvious cross-cultural difference was associated with sleep. This subject was much more common in the postings of U.S. mothers than in the postings of Japanese mothers. Advice to help children become independent sleepers was frequently found in the U.S. sample, but was rare among the Japanese sample. Having children sleeping through the night by themselves in the early years appears to be an important childrearing goal for U.S. mothers. It is feasible to assume that this cross-cultural difference reflects the common Japanese childrearing practice of co-sleeping in contrast to the U.S. tradition of having infants sleep in separate rooms. Until recently, co-sleeping was greatly frowned upon in the U.S. and remains controversial even though it has gained a sizable number of adherents (Tsuneyoshi & Boocock, 1997).

The Japanese experts often suggested indirect guidance. For example, they often recommended the strategy of modeling appropriate behavior to teach children positive dispositions as well as social manners. In addition, the Japanese experts' frequent use of the term *mimamoru* demonstrated childrearing beliefs in and respect for children's ability to recover by themselves without verbal guidance. Furthermore, the experts' advice not to push children was an often repeated theme in the Japanese sample. Accordingly, as found in the historical analysis of Japanese childrearing (Shibano, 1995), respect for children's natural rhythms and initiative remains as a strong theme in today's Japanese childrearing.

While advice to foster autonomy was found in the magazine articles of both countries, the importance of assertiveness and ego development was, in fact, found more in Japanese parenting articles than in U.S. articles. Similarly, Japanese mothers posted concerns related to child's ego development and its reflection in defiant behavior more than the U.S. mothers. The Japanese mothers described their frustration regarding children's disobedience during the terrible twos and confessed to using harsh punishment. The frequent advice from the Japanese experts regarding how to reprimand children may be associated with Japanese mothers' dilemma of whether to promote children's autonomy by letting children do whatever they want to do. I believe that this pattern supports my hypothesis that stress and anxiety among contemporary Japanese mothers is associated with experts' advice promoting child autonomy and assertiveness.

More Japanese mothers were advised to attempt the childrearing practice of fostering child autonomy and assertiveness by letting children behave as they willed. Consequently, the children may behave out of control and therefore the mothers are more likely to encounter situations over which they have to exercise control. However as found in this study, Japanese mothers' use of indirect guidance may not work effectively with children's noncompliance. Therefore, the mothers end up using harsh punishment to stop unwanted behavior, which in turn causes great stress and guilt because of their belief in young children's innocence and inability to control their own behavior.

Unlike the U.S. experts' advice to foster autonomy by making conflict functional through negotiation, the Japanese experts suggested strategies to promote autonomy or independence in the context of respecting and prioritizing the children's needs. This advice is consistent with Japanese traditional child-centeredness. For example, Japanese

experts advised mothers to value their children's mischief, while none of the U.S. experts suggested this. The Japanese experts stressed the use of culturally indigenous techniques such as *mimamoru* or skin-ship to provide comfort and closeness to children, which would in turn effectively deal with children's negative behavior, such as tantrums. This advice is quite different from that given in the U.S., where behaviorist principles have inspired advice to ignore tantrums so as not to reinforce them (Ezzo & Bucknam, 1999).

Taken together, these patterns lead to the hypothesis that closeness between mother and child is at the foundation of Japanese childrearing. Although much of the Japanese experts' advice was related to children's acquisition of independence skills, and this focus was largely influenced by Western child development theory, none of the experts suggested physical separation from mothers such as having children sleep by themselves. Therefore, it is assumed that the Japanese experts applied the theory of autonomy or independence only to the extent that it did not violate closeness between mother and child.

This process could be explained by applying the cultural change framework (Harkness, Super, & Keefer, 1992 cited by Halgunseth, Ispa, & Rudy, 2006). The cultural change framework reveals, for example, how immigrant parents do or do not adapt the culture of a host society. In the current study, new childrearing ideas introduced from Western child developmental theory were partially adopted or synthesized with Japanese traditional parenting ideologies or social circumstances by parenting magazine experts to create unique childrearing strategies. For example, the Japanese experts suggested the goals of autonomy and independence while sustaining the distinctive cultural values of closeness and respect for the child's view. In line with this process of

adaptation, the Japanese experts developed unique parenting strategies to meet this new parenting goal in light of traditional goals applicable to the Japanese childrearing context. Such modification in fact may require great efforts on the parents' side, respecting children's autonomy while at the same time controlling children's behavior in an indirect manner. It is possible to assume that Japanese maternal stress and anxiety are associated with this seemingly incongruous approach that requires mothers to adapt to cultural change.

From the current data, it is impossible to know if the juxtaposition of Western and Japanese childrearing beliefs and styles concerning closeness and child-centeredness are sources of childrearing stress and anxiety. Although Japanese mothers posted more concerns related to these topics compared to U.S. mothers, the number of postings related to these topics was relatively small. It may be helpful for subsequent studies to use other methods, such as in-depth interviews, to gather data related to those constructs.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Several limitations with this study should be mentioned. In this current study, the demographic information of the online message posters was not fully obtained. In the U.S. sample, about the half of the posters indicated demographic information such as the poster's sex, age, number of children, age of child(ren), and sex of child(ren). As for the Japanese sample, sex and number of child(ren) was only identified within each posting. Therefore, the findings of the online posting analyses in this study may not be generalizable to the entire population of mothers in both countries. For example, it is possible to assume that mothers who have regular access to a computer may be restricted to a certain population. In addition, mothers who do not have worries about childrearing

may not participate in such online message boards to exchange ideas. In other words, the current sample may be unrepresentative in that it is limited to mothers who have access to the web and who are particularly worried about childrearing.

In addition, Japanese mothers may have more time to get on-line than U.S. mothers who may be juggling full-time jobs and household work. Japanese mothers are less likely to be working full-time than U.S. mothers. For example, 92% of Japanese infants stayed home with their parents (mostly mothers) in 2007 (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, 2007b), while only 45% of U.S. mothers of infants did not work outside of home in 2002 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003). Japanese mothers are also less likely to be single parents compared to U.S. mothers (22% vs. 32%; National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, 2003; U.S. Census Bureau, 2004). Therefore, U.S. mothers who post to message boards may be a more select group (with more time for such activities) than Japanese mothers who post on message boards. In addition, because U.S. mothers are less likely to be married than Japanese mothers, they may be less likely to be able to draw on the support of their children's fathers. U.S. experts' lesser emphasis on spousal support may stem from their awareness that many of the mothers reading their articles are single.

In addition, it is possible to expect that the postings from the U.S. and Japanese mothers conformed to the social norms of mothers in regard to what is acceptable on each online forum. Although some of those rules or manners could be implicit, the U.S. and Japanese mothers may regulate their information-sharing in accordance with social desirability. In future research it may be profitable to compare maternal childrearing concerns from online message postings with data collected in other ways. Another

research possibility is to collect responses to the online postings to examine what kinds of advice mothers give to each other in each country.

In the U.S. and Japanese parenting magazines, editors often use the same experts repeatedly. In the current analyses, for example, in the parenting magazine, *Scholastic Parents & Family*, one expert wrote 14 articles over a period of two years on topics in various domains, particularly about mother-child relationships. Although this was a rare case, this experts' preference for child-centered parenting styles may be over-represented in the U.S. sample. Nonetheless, it would also be reasonable to assume that readers of this magazine were influenced by the ideas and philosophy of this expert through hearing repeatedly of the importance of valuing children's perspectives and needs.

In the current study many of the Japanese experts are professors, while the U.S. advice articles are not as likely to be written by faculty. It is possible that Japanese mothers therefore feel more compelled than U.S. mothers to follow experts' advice. College teaching is a highly respected occupation in Japan. The term "teacher" means "a person whom people should look up to" (Sato, 1992, p. 160), which is also often used to refer to politicians or someone in a higher positions in Japan. In future research it may be profitable to examine whether or not Japanese mothers feel more pressured to accept and follow experts' advice in parenting magazines than U.S. mothers.

Furthermore, this study's parenting magazine analyses excluded advice provided by so-called peer mothers. In some articles, especially in the Japanese magazines, the editors provided stories from peer mothers to introduce various parenting techniques and experiences in a less threatening manner (Tendo, 2004). According to the Japanese parenting magazine editor, Komiya (personal communication, December 22, 2007), for

example, the promotion of father participation in childrearing seems less pushy to readers if a reader, rather than the expert, tells about an episode of a father's involvement. This comment also implies that, as a marketing strategy, the parenting editors intentionally select certain types of child development experts, parenting methods or products, which could then create childrearing norms in and of themselves. Future research may need to analyze such marketing strategies of parenting magazines in relation to historical changes in childrearing.

Despite its limitations, the current study presented several strengths. It is important to note that the present study suggested that the concepts of autonomy and independence that seem to cohere in Western countries may be different in other cultures such as Japan. The Japanese experts encouraged parents to foster children's emerging egos, but they also gave advice to cultivate closeness with children, indicating that it is possible to be autonomous while still being interdependent. There are some researchers who have suggested that autonomy is different from independence. They present two ways of viewing autonomy: (a) an individualistic perspective – a separate sense of self that is based on a Western individualistic perspective, and (b) an inclusive perspective – a relatively interdependent self (“my family and I” instead of “I”). This is often identified in economically developed collectivist cultures such as Japan (Rudy, Sheldon, Awong, & Tan, 2007). An example of the inclusive perspective would involve children who work hard on a task that their mother chooses for them because they feel that their mothers' desires and their own are one and the same. The findings of the current study, which show that autonomy and connectedness were promoted simultaneously by Japanese

mothers, suggest that the inclusive perspective of autonomy may apply to Japanese socialization more than to socialization in the U.S.

In addition, the current study suggested that there were cultural differences in ways in which independence was conceptualized in specific domains. For example, although much of the Japanese experts' advice was influenced by the Western child-development perspective on independence, in the domain of sleep it remained unassimilated.

According to Yamada (2004), Japanese mothers of preschoolers expect children to be more instrumentally independent (e.g., put toys away, dress by themselves) than U.S. mothers of preschoolers. Japanese experts and parents may interpret independence as self-help skills rather than as separateness. In the current study, independence from caregivers or separateness was discouraged by the Japanese experts. As with the concept of autonomy, there appeared to be several interpretations of independence that may co-exist in Japanese culture. Future research can extend these findings by determining if there are differences in the mechanisms used to promote (or discourage) autonomy and independence within and among cultures.

Lastly, this study has taken the first step in identifying maternal concerns related to childrearing through analyses of online message boards. In addition, it contributes to the possibility of examining cross-cultural difference of childrearing strategies through content analysis of parenting magazines. Subsequent work will need to focus on the effects of parenting magazine advice on parents' childrearing experiences and well-being.

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Appendix A1

U.S. Magazine Samples

Title	Launch year	Amazon.com magazine ranking (8/18/06)	Price	Frequency	Publisher	Target child age	Website
<i>Parents</i>	1926	#62	\$42.00/year	monthly	Gruner +Jahr U.S.A. Publishing	Crib to college	http://www.parents.com/ message board
<i>Parenting</i>	1987	#77	\$40.23/year	11 YR	Time Publishing Ventures	Newborns to adolescence	
<i>American Baby</i>	1938	#392	\$23.94/year	monthly	Meredith Corp	Birth to Age 3	http://www.americanbaby.com/ message board
<i>Scholastic Parent & Child</i>	1993	#112	\$35.00/year	6-8 YR	Scholastic	Birth to middle school	

Note: It is of interest that on February 26, 2008, Amazon.com. magazine rankings (the sales ranking for all magazines) were #274 for *Parents*, #707 for *Parenting*, #303 for *American Baby*, and #1212 for *Scholastic Parent & Child*.

Appendix A2

Japanese Magazine Samples

Title	Launch year	Amazon.co.jp ranking (7/5/06)	Price year ¹	Frequency	Publisher	Target child age	Website
<i>Ohayo Akacyan</i>	2004	# 76,916	\$61.71/ year ¹	monthly	Gakken Kenkyu Sya (Learning and Research Cooperation)	Age 0 to 1.5	http://www.oha-aka.net/ message board
<i>NHK Sukesuku Kosodate</i>	1967	# 135,554	\$64.00/ year	monthly	Nihon Hoso Kyokai (Japan Broadcast Publishing)	Age 0 to 3	
<i>Kotsuko Kurabu</i>	1996	# 168,992	\$65.57/ year	monthly	Bennesse	Age 1-3	
<i>Baby-mo</i>	2002	# 46,750	\$65.57/ year	monthly	Shufu no Tomo sya (Friends of Stay-At-Home Moms Cooperation)	Age 0 and 1	http://baby.goo.ne.jp/ message board

Note. It is of interest that on February 26, 2008, Amazon.co.jp. magazine rankings (the sales ranking for all magazines) were #647 for *Ohayo Akacyan*, #1614 for *NHK Sukesuku Kosodate*, #490 for *Kotsuko Kurabu*, and #112 for *Baby-mo*.

¹ \$1.00 = 105 yen

Appendix B1-1

U.S. Online Postings: Feeding/Eating

Concern with Nutrition (36)	What to feed (9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any food that I should try to feed? (12 months, 2002). • How much and what does your child eat? (just turned one, 2013). • What are appropriate starting out foods? She tends to gag. (9 months, 2021). • What to feed for breakfast? (10 months, 2071). • What to feed for breakfast? (9 months, 2082). • What to feed? She choked on the tiniest pieces. (6 months, 2085). • Any ideas for quick meals or snack? (24 months, 2108). • How can she get enough calcium if she is allergic to milk? (14 months, 2103). • Question about formula type (2 months, 2061).
	Picky eater (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He doesn't like any veggie and isn't a big meat eater. Give him vitamin? (20 months, 2072). • He won't eat things like chicken, spaghetti, or stuff we're eating for dinner.(15 months, 2088). • He refuses to eat meat, fruit or vegetables for us. But daycare says he eats practically everything that they put it in front of him. (18 months, 2104). • He barely eats anything. I am running out of things to feed this child! (2 ½, 2107).
	Refusing to drink (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She won't drink whole milk (15 months, 2094).
	When to start (10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any ideas for how to help child swallow solid foods? (6 months, 2083). • When to start nice cereal? (3 months, 2001). • When to start nice cereal? (5 weeks, 2081). • He doesn't seem ready for stage 3 foods. (10 months, 2027). • He doesn't seem ready for stage 3 foods. (1 year, 2029). • When to start meat? (4 months, 2067). • When to start yogurt? (6 months, 2068). • When to start lumpier foods? (9 months, 2084). • When to start feeding peanut butter? (17 months, 2095). • When to start milk? (10 months, 2071).
	Big eater (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat too much.(almost 3, 2008). • She is obsessed with eating.(15 months, 2045) • Wants to eat after 2 hours. Big eater (5 weeks, 2081).
	How much to feed? (6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much does your 1-2wk old eat? (2063). • My baby spits up with almost every burp (4 months, 2015). • Spit-up breast milk (5 weeks, 2080). • How much milk to feed before bedtime? (20 months, 2057). • My son consistently wants milk (22 months, 2092).

	<p>Feeding schedule (3)</p> <p>Is my milk problem? (2)</p> <p>Others(3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much milk and juice should she be getting in a day? (just turned 2, 2035). • I'm waking up every 3 hours to feed. (3 months, 2062). • I work full-time and pump while at work 2-3 times. I also pump once at night before I go to bed and sometimes in the morning right before going to work. I also bf my daughter 3-4 times during the day. I feel like I am pumping all of the time for not much output. (infant, 2004). • I am starting back to my master's classes next week. How many ounces should I have ready for him for each feeding I am away? (3 weeks, 2022). • My milk is green! (baby, 2006). • He is getting Fussy and seems to be having lots of gas after feedings... do you think its my milk that is the problem?? I'm not eating anything to crazy (1.5 weeks, 2020). • After switching to whole milk, his poop color changed (just turned 1, 2013). • Can't take his bottle well because of sore.(4 months, 2069). • Should I boil the water? (6 months, 2068) .
Weaning (6)	<p>Attachment to breast-milk(3)</p> <p>Others(3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now I'm ready to wean my almost 1-year-old. I've got her down to just morning, nap, and night....but she won't go to sleep without me nursing... (2048). • But like I'll get her asleep and as soon as I lay her down she stands up and wants to nurse for a minute then she totally zonks out (just turned 1, 2059). • My 2-year-olds are jealous for their younger sibs breastfed.(24 months, 2024). • My son still takes 2 bottles a day. Usually one before nap and of course BEDTIME. I know I could stop the nap one but the nighttime will be hard.(17 months, 2078). • I'm losing my milk supply. Should I wean? (15 months, 2101). • Worry about breast pain and rash after weaning.(9 months, 2117).
Independent Eater (6)	Feed him or herself (6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can I get him feed himself? (15 months, 2088). • How to help him feed himself and drink out of the sippy cup? (9 months, 2118). • He won't drink out of a sippy cup or a straw (12 months, 2042). • Refusing to drink from the sippie cup (12 months, 2002) • My child wants to sit on my lap to eat (almost 2, 2054). • Difficulty in getting my child to eat table food. (2 years, 2111).
Concern with Manners (2)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eats like a pig and gets her food everywhere (2 years 9 months, 2047). • Plays with his food and makes a big mess at restaurants. (2 years, 2055).
Others (3)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do your kids help? (24 months, 2108). • It's kind of hurts when she nurses.(15 months, 2101). • Looking for women that plan or are bf'ing longer than normal. (11 months, 2012).

Appendix B1-2

Japanese Online Postings: Feeding/Eating

<p>Concern with Nutrition (32)</p>	<p>What to feed (6)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you know of any good baby food website or cooking book? (1 year 2 months, 1011). • What to feed when the child's teeth start coming in? (1 year, 1014). • I'm struggling with what to cook (2 years, 1045). • What to feed for breakfast? (2 years 3 months, 1103). • How much juice should I give him? (2 years, 1056). • What other drinks should I give my child besides breast milk? (2 months, 1013).
	<p>When to start (2)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should I start solid foods? (5 months, 1027). • When should I start giving him juice? (1 year 2 months, 1021).
	<p>Picky eater (4)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My child doesn't want to try out new foods (2 years, 1045). • My child hates vegetables (2 years, 1057). • My child only grabs her favorite foods and runs away (2 years 2 months, 1059). • My child doesn't eat any green vegetables (2 years, 1093).
	<p>Refusing to drink (5)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After starting to give him formula, he doesn't want to drink breast milk anymore. What should I do? (2 weeks) (2 weeks, 1032). • He recently started refusing to drink milk (7 months, 1002). • She hates formula and the bottle (6 months, 1022). • My child doesn't drink formula any more (5 months, 1069). • When I try to give him formula, he refuses. But he doesn't refuse when my husband does (5 months, 1083).
	<p>Small eater (7)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recently my child has started eating less (7 months, 1010). • Recently my child doesn't eat much.(1 years, 1035) • I'm concerned because my child doesn't eat (2 years, 1057). • Small eater (2 years 2 months, 1059). • She doesn't eat much and cries for milk (1 year 8 months, 1096). • Small eater (1 year 8 months, 1098) • He doesn't eat much at home. I have to chase him around to feed him (2 years 7 months, 1107)
	<p>Big eater (1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My 1 year and 5 months old daughter loves to eat. Each meal, she eats a bowl of rice, side dishes, and a banana. Even though she sometimes requests she wants some more. She weighed about 11 kilograms. I think she is fatter than other children. I'm afraid that they will say something about her weight during her 1.5 year-old screening. But, I don't know I should stop giving her less even she wants to more (1095).

	<p>Feeding Schedule (6)</p> <p>Is my milk problem? (3)</p> <p>Others(2)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I wonder whether my feeding schedule is adequate. Sometimes she falls asleep while drinking. She drinks my breast-milk every 1 to 1.5 hours (4 months, 1085). • The time between feeding is short so he ends up drinking too much (5 months, 1027). • My child wines and always wants to be feed (1.5 months, 1071). • My son drinks formula every 2 to 3 hours night and day. I wonder how long this will last (1.5 months, 1090). • Should I give formula to my child whenever she wants? Or should I set up the feeding schedule? She doesn't drink much and I'm really concerned (3 months, 1089). • Would it be possible to work outside the home while breast-feeding my child? (4 months, 1068). • My breast milk may be not enough. My child wakes up every 1 to 2 hours. He or she doesn't like formula (1 month, 1074). • I've been eating too many sweets. It that why my child who is breastfed is fat? (2 months, 1066). • I've been eating too many sweets. It that why my child who is breastfed is fat? (2 months, 1073). • How to store breast milk during the night? Should I put it in the refrigerator? (2 weeks, 1009). • My child always spits up his or her milk (formula and breast milk) (1.5 months, 1086).
Weaning (9)	<p>Attach-ment to breast-milk (5)</p> <p>Others(4)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She really wants my breast-milk. Should I wean her? (1 year 5 months, 1007). • I want to wean her but she screams and refuses to take any liquids but breast-milk. I'm afraid that she is dehydrated (1 year 6 months, 1025). • He really wants my breast-milk and he is really attached to me. I can't do housework. (2 years, 1045). • He needs my breast milk to go to sleep. I'm worried about his cavities. Should I wean him? (1 year, 1028). • I tried to use reasoning so that he would stop drinking breast-milk. But, it had the opposite effect. He is now really attached to breast-milk (1 year, 1035). • Should I stop giving milk to her before bed time? (1 year 2 months, 1005). • What should I give him to drink after weaning? (1 year, 1033). • I want to know how to wean (1 year 9 months, 1063). • After weaning, she starts crying at night. (1 year 2 months, 1076)..
Independent Eating (6)	Feed him or herself (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I've started training my daughter to feed herself. But she crushed foods with her hand and hates to put them in her mouth (11 months, 1018). • My child doesn't sit still at the table to eat. I have to put him on my lap to feed him or let him walk around to eat (1 year, 1035). • When is my child going to start eating by him/herself? He/she doesn't like to drink from a cup (10 months, 1100).

	Bottle attachment (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She doesn't want to drink follow-up milk without a bottle (2 year 2 months, 1059). • She is still drinking milk with the bottle (1 year 8 months, 1096). • My child is unable to graduate from the bottle (1 year 10 months, 1082).
Concern with Manners (3)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I've started training my daughter to feed herself. But she crushed foods with her hand and hates to put them in her mouth (11 months, 1018). • My child doesn't sit still at table to eat. I have to put him on my lap to feed or let him walk around to eat (1 year, 1035). • It takes my daughter 2 to 3 hours to eat. If I take the foods away from her, she gets really upset (2 years 9 months, 1104).
Tradition (3)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What to cook for the baby's first bite ceremony? (1004). • I want to know the menu for a baby's first bite ceremony (1075). • What should I cook for my daughter's birthday? (1 year, 1087).

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She wants to sleep on us (1 week, 2064). • Only sleep in my arms during the day (5 weeks, 2079). • He doesn't go to sleep without me. Laying down with him (24 months, 2086). • He still comes to my bed only morning to seep with me (20.5 months, 2089). • How to let baby fall asleep by herself? (11 weeks, 2120).
Nap trouble (6)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard to wake up from the nap (2 weeks, 2005). • He suddenly started napping twice a day again. Is it normal? (6 months, 2028). • He is on a sort of nap strike (25 months, 2105). • After a high fever, he won't take naps anymore (2 ½ years, 2112). • For the past 6 months he has been slowly not taking naps (almost 2, 2102). • Won't take naps unless someone is holding him.(2 months, 2023).
Schedule (3)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your child's bed time and wake up time? How often and how long does your child take a nap? (15 months, 2073). • What time 2-year-olds go to bed? (22 months, 2077). • What are sleeping habits of your 6 mo? (6 months, 2085).
Safety and health (3)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe to use a pillow? (19 months, 2014) . • Won't sleep lying flat on her back in a crib (1 wk, 2064). • Having nightmares? (Just turned 2, 2035).
Others (3)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diaper leaking at night. (20 months, 2057). • He refuses to sleep in his crib. He loves to sleep in his little seat that rocks.(10 wks, 2065). • She won't sleep anywhere other than in her crib or car.(2099, 12 months).

Appendix B2-2

Japanese Online Postings: Sleep

Sleep trouble (11)	Crying at night (3)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After weaning, she started crying at night. Even if I give her wheat tea, she doesn't drink it. Even if I pat her back, she doesn't stop crying (1 year 2 months, 1076). • My daughter recently started crying at night, almost like a loud shout. Someone told me that 2-year-olds don't cry at night, though (2 years, 1110). • My daughter cries at night and in the early morning (1 year 10 months, 1082).
	Wake up frequently or at night (3)	Need breast-milk (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My 1 month old boy drinks milk almost every 2 to 3 hours, night and day (He wakes her up every 3 hours). Because I'm not physically strong, I'm worried about how long this cycle will last (1071). • My child wakes up every 1-2 hours. My breast milk may be not enough. But, she doesn't like formula (1 month, 1074).
		Other (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My son wakes up every two hours at night. I pat his back or hold him to put him to sleep. Even if I decrease the hours of his nap, it is the same. Every day I don't get enough hours of sleep (7 months, 1026).
	Trouble going to sleep/bed (5)	Need breast-milk (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My son still needs breast-milk to go to sleep. I'm afraid of cavities. I'd rather wean him until he is really ready though (1 year, 1028). • My son still falls asleep with my breast-milk at nap time. I'm worried about cavities (1 year 1 month, 1088). • My daughter can't go to sleep without breast-feeding. How can I help her to sleep without it? If I don't give it, she pulls my clothes to look for my breast. Sleeping beside her doesn't seem to help (1 year 8 months, 1120).
		Others (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I work full-time. This summer we have a company trip and my boss asked me to come with them. Of course I would like to go, but I'm really worried whether my daughter is able to sleep with my husband. Mothers of children around my daughter's age, would it be OK for your child not to sleep with you? I've never had such an occasion and I'm not sure. My husband said that he can handle this, though. He is optimist (2 years 1 month, 1049). • As you may have experienced, it takes about one hour to put my child to sleep. I'm also not a good sleeper so I understand his feelings. I almost gave up on this because nothing seemed to help him to sleep. But today I was really frustrated because my husband went to sleep while I was putting my child to sleep. This has been our pattern. Even though we all go to bed at the same time (co-sleeping), my husband goes to sleep before my son (2 year 9 months, 1121).
Nap trouble(4)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He has trouble going to sleep during nap time. I breastfeed or hold him so that he can go to sleep. However, an experienced

			<p>mom advised me to just leave him alone so that he will fall asleep. But, if I do that, he screams so much and I'm not sure what to do (4 months, 1015).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My child's nap time is very short, 45 minutes. Because he is still sleepy, he cries and becomes grouchy. He goes back to sleep but he will sleep for another 45 minutes again. How do you help your baby when he or she wakes up in the middle of a nap? Do you hold him or her for a while and put him or her back to bed? (3 months, 1019). • My daughter takes a nap twice a day – morning and afternoon. It has been really helpful for me because I can do house work while she is sleeping. However, I heard that they only need to take a nap once a day around her age from childrearing books. If I stop her morning nap, she gets grouchy and falls asleep during the lunch time. What should I do? (1 year 2 months, 1036). • My son refuses to take naps even if he shows signs of sleepiness (rubbing his eyes, asking to hold him). When I invite him to sleep by saying things such as "Sleepy, aren't you? Let's go to sleep together," his response is "no!" Every weekend, I need to put him in our car and drive around in order to put him sleep. However, he seems to take a nap at his day care (1 year 10 months, 1039).
Schedule (3)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My 40 day old baby sleeps more than 6 hours at night (She doesn't sleep much during the day). So, I get panicked and wake her up by changing her diapers and breast-feeding her. I'm really concerned because sleeping more than 6 hours at her age seems abnormal (1064). • I just had my first baby and don't know much about childrearing. Do children who are about to turn 1 month have more hours waking than sleeping? (1.5 months, 1078). • Should I wake my baby up during the day? She usually wakes up, drinks breast-milk, and goes back to sleep. We take a walk in the morning, but she falls asleep. How do you play with your baby when she is up? (1.5 months).
Safety and health (4)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My baby moves a lot during the night. She moves from one corner of the room to the other (Japanese families mostly use futons on the floor). Because it is still chilly, I bought a sleeper for her. However, the bottom part rolls up to her neck area at night. It kinds of looks like a scarf and is really dangerous. I'm thinking about buying another one. Can you recommend any good sleepers for me? (6 months, 1030). • My daughter gets upset and cries when I put covers on her while she is sleeping. It was OK during the summer, but now it is getting chilly. Since the beginning of this month, she caught a cold twice and is still not doing well. What should I do? (1 year, 1084). • My daughter tosses back and forth on her bed. She also lies sideways with her head in an upward position. Is it OK to sleep like this at 2 months old? (1008). • I'm concerned about my son's snoring. It gets really loud and suddenly gets quiet. Does he snore because he is a big baby? (7 months, 1080).

Appendix B3-2

Japan Online Postings: Development

Physical (14)	Weight and appearance (10)	Is my child too fat? (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My daughter was born at 51 cm and 3470 grams. Currently she is 69 cm and 900 grams. People always say things like “You’re really fat!” “Chubby cheeks.” I don’t think that she is drinking or eating too much. I’m really concerned because my child is a girl (7 months, 1024). • My daughter is 2 months old and weighs 7 kilograms. Is she too fat? I heard that the taste of breast milk changes in accordance with what the mother eats. I’ve been eating sweets almost every day. I’m worried that she is getting fat because of what I’ve been eating (1066). • My daughter is 2 months old and weighs 7 kilograms. I heard that the taste of breast milk changes in accordance with what the mother eats. I’ve been eating sweets almost every day because of the stress coming from raising two young children. I’m worried that she is getting fat because of what I’ve been eating (1073). • My 1 year 5 months old daughter loves to eat. Each meal, she eats a bowl of rice, side dishes, and a banana. Even then she sometimes requests. She weighed about 11 kilograms. I think she is fatter than other children. I’m afraid that they will say something about her weight during her 1.5 year-old screening. But, I don’t know if I should stop giving her more when she asks (1095). • My 2.5 months old son already weighs 7600 grams. Is he fat? He has been just drinking my breast milk. Does this have something to do with what I’ve been eating? (1091).
		Is my child too small? (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My child’s weight has not been increasing well (7 months, 1002). • My son doesn’t to eat much and is smaller than other children (2 years 7 months, 1107).
		Others (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My child seems to have a big head. My husband and I have small heads though (age 2, 1108). • My son’s stomach seems to stick out. It almost looks like there is a big ball in it (just turned, 1119). • My 1 year 8 months old daughter doesn’t eat well. The public nurse told me that “I think that you shouldn’t worry too much about it, but she is small” (1 year 8 months, 1098).
	Motor development (3)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My child rolled over for the first time today. How do you create space for your baby to roll over? (5 months, 1012). • My 3.5 months old is unable to lift his neck up when lying on his stomach (1070). • My 4 months old recently started making bubbles with her mouth. What is she doing? (1101).
	Other (1)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My daughter started grinding her teeth (during the day). I

			<p>can't stand that sounds (1 year 2 months, 1111).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My son is unable to communicate well. He doesn't look back when I call his name. He prefers to play by himself. He doesn't seem to know his name. He only understands "come on," "bye," and "clap." He is unable to point. I wonder if he has autism (1 year 4 months, 1016). • My son is over 11 months and doesn't imitate adults or say bye bye (1065). • My 2 years 5 months old daughter seems to have a delay in language development. With ambiguous words, her vocabulary is at about 60. She started using two words the other day. However, she uses "Juice please!" for any kind of request (1051). • The day after tomorrow, I'm taking him to the 1.5 year old screening. While filling out their questionnaires, I started worrying about a question "Does your child say meaningful words (nouns)? Write down more than 4 words." He can only say "manma" (mama) and "wanwan." (bow wow). Is his language development delayed? (1.5 years, 1099). • My child is not interested in picture books. He doesn't point. His language development seems to be delayed (1.5 years, 1003).
Language (5)			
Socio-emotional (10)	Fight over the same toy (3)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My 2 years 10 months old seems to show interests in playing with other children around his/her age. But, he or she is also unable to say no. So other children end up taking his or her toys away. I'm worried that he or she will always loose. Should I wait and just let this happen until he or she is capable of asserting his or her will someday? (1055). • My daughter bursts into tears when other children take her toys away. When this happens, I try to comfort her and distract her with other things. She gets really upset if someone forcefully takes her toy away. I get upset too but don't want to have a bad relationship with the mother of the child (2 years 6 months, 1058). • My son gets really upset when others take his favorite toys away. Even if I say such as "let's take turns" or "Can you share it with him for a while?" he refuses to share. So, I usually apologize to the child, but of course the child doesn't listen to me. Would it be better for me to let my child experience the fight? (2 years 9 months, 1117).
	Finger sucking (2)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I want to stop my 1.5 years old child sucking her fingers (1067). • I was told to help my child stop sucking his or her fingers at the 1.5 year old screening. His or her teeth seem not to coming out right. But, I don't want to put mustard on his or her fingers (1.5 years, 1105).
	Screaming/ Fussy (2)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since 3-4 days ago, my daughter suddenly started screaming during the day for 1 or 2 hours. She is almost losing her voice. Is it normal? Is it a part of development? (4 months, 1029).

	Others (3)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My 5 months old son has been really fussy no matter what I do (1020). • My 2 years 2 months old used to greet people (bowing, waving). But recently, he or she runs way when I ask him or her to greet someone (1102). • My daughter is shy and I wonder if she is able to make friends (1 year 10 months, 1118). • My daughter likes to masturbate with buckles of shopping carts in public (almost 2 years, 1116).
Concerns related to the 1.5-year-old screening (6)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm worried about the 1.5-year-old screening (1.5 years, 1003). • I think that they will say something negative about my child at 1.5-year-old screening (1 year 5 months, 1095). • I started worrying about my child's development when filling out the questioners for the 1.5-year-old screening (1.5 years, 1099). • I was told to help my child to stop sucking his/her fingers during his/her 1.5-year-old screening (1.5 years, 1105). • I was told that my child's teeth will stick out if she continues to suck her fingers during her 1.5-year-old screening (1.5 years, 1067). • The public nurse told me that "I think that you shouldn't worry too much about it, but she is small" (1 year 8 months, 1098).
Others (2)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I showed my son a Disney movie the other day and he seemed to like it. I wonder if it is OK for children to view videos or TV around this age (10 months, 1031). • How do you play with your baby when he or she is awake? (1.5 months, 1081).

Appendix B4-1

U.S. Online Postings: Discipline

Disobedient (13)	<p>Tantrum (1)</p> <p>Terrible twos (3)</p> <p>Refusing to listen (6)</p> <p>Refusing to brushing teeth (1)</p> <p>Others (4)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tantrum, talk back (33 months, 2046). • After a high fever, his terrible 2's coming out? (age 2 ½, 2112). • Early terrible twos (13 ½ months, 2026). • Terrible twos (2 ½, 2053). • Not good at listening (2 ½, 2053). • He won't listen to me (age 2, 2055). • Doesn't listen after a high fever (age 2 ½, 2112). • She refuses to do anything she is told and just screams at the top of her lungs (31 months, 2114). • She won't listen to me and wants be outside all the time (age 2, 2043). • She doesn't get down when i tell her to do (24 months, 2074). • Won't let me brush her teeth (almost 2, 2009). • Becomes a monster when I dress him and change his diaper (just over 2, 2049). • Violently respond to my "no" (13 months, 2090). • Refuses to hold my hands to walk in public (15 months, 2100). • Hates the stroller (16 ½ months, 2041).
Hurting (13)	Hurting others (13)	<p>Biting (5)</p> <p>Hitting (4)</p> <p>Others(5)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bites baby brother (2 ½, 2010). • Bites another baby at daycare (13 months, 2017). • Bites me (16 months, 2058). • Bites another child (age 2, 2097). • Hits and bites other kids at day care (19 months, 2038). • Hits other children (16 months, 2019). • Hits and bites other kids at day care (19 months, 2038). • Hits a lot (2 ½, 2053). • After a high fever, he hits and takes toys (2 ½, 2112). • She is mean to my husband (age 2, 2044). • Push and hurt other children. Hurt things (33 months, 2046) • He slaps me and punches me hard when I dress him (just over 2, 2049). • Throws his toys when he gets angry (27 months, 2087). • Violently responds to my "no"(13 months, 2090).
Punishment (3)	Physical (3)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't want to spank her (16 months, 2019). • I don't want to spank her (age 2, 2097). • I have tried everything - time outs and yes I admit I have spanked her (34 months, 2115).
Dangerous			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hates the stroller (16 ½ months, 2041).

Behavior (4)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She doesn't get down when i tell her to do (13 ½ months, 2026). • How to deal with climber? (24 months, 2074). • Refuses to hold my hands to walk in public (15 months, 2100).
Others (3)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Won't let me brush her teeth (almost 2, 2009). • Should I let her brush her own teeth even she doesn't do right? (just turned 2, 2035). • Whines so much.(15 months, 2045).

Appendix B4-2

Japanese Online Postings: Discipline

Disobedient (20)	Terrible twos (7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My son recently starts asserting himself. His ego is sprouting. He starts saying no to diaper change, cloth change, and bath. He used to take a nap, but now says “no.” Every weekend, I need to put him in our car and drive around in order to put him sleep (1 year 10 months, 1039). • When I tell my son stop doing dangerous things to his young sister, he says “no.” So, I say “Don’t say no. She will be injured.” His response is “Don’t say no to my no…” I finally have to slap him to stop his action (2 years 6 months, 1048). • My daughter demonstrates typical behavior of two year olds’ “no no phrase.” Especially when my husband is at home, she starts screaming with unidentifiable sounds to seek our attention. Because this is so stressful, I sometimes spank her, even though I know it is wrong. Is she doing this because of the arrival of the new baby (regression)? (2 years 2 months, 1062). • My daughter recently starts screaming anything she doesn’t like and saying no to everything. She is going through the “no no phase”(1 year 10 months, 1072). • My son is always noisy and running around the house. He says no to everything. I guess that terrible twos are coming. I’m afraid of morning arrival. I’m depressed (almost 2, 1115). • My child recently became “terrible twos – rough and self-centered. Although I know this is really difficult time for any mothers, I end up shouting at my child. Possibly because of this, she or he recently fights against me by hitting my face, glaring at me or shouting at me (2-year-old, 1106). • Even with a small thing if it bothers her, she lies around the floor and screams. She puts her fingers in her mouth and screams. Even I offer to hold her, she continues to scream. It this called “terrible twos”? (2 years 2 months, 1047).
	Tantrum (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It takes too long for my daughter to finish her meal (2-3 hours). If I take her plates, she throws tantrum. Should I ignore her behavior and put them away? (2 years 9 months, 1104). • My daughter recently starts masturbating with shopping carts. She pushes her private part toward buckles. She seems really preoccupied with this behavior. No matter how many times I tell her to stop, she gets upset and doesn’t listen to me. Because it is really getting serious, I pinch her legs, but it doesn’t work. When I put her down to the floor, she throws tantrum and bursts into tears. Four

	Refusing to listen (2)		<p>out of one who walk by us glance at her masturbation ☹️ (almost 2, 1116).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My son recently starts standing by himself. Because he is still not stable, I try to stop him. But he doesn't listen to me and wants to try it again and again. He also strongly refuses to go to bed. He kicks his legs, shakes his neck, and screams (7 months, 1026). • My daughter recently starts masturbating with shopping carts. She pushes her private part toward buckles. She seems really preoccupied with this behavior. No matter how many times I tell her to stop, she gets upset and doesn't listen to me. Because it is really getting serious, I pinch her legs, but it doesn't work. When I put her down to the floor, she throws tantrum and bursts into tears. Four out of one who walk by us glance at her masturbation ☹️ (almost 2, 1116).
	Refusing to wear hats or shoes (3)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My son hates wearing hats. If I try, he takes it off and throws it away. Even I reason him that he can't go outside unless he puts his hat on, he takes it off right away. If I put it back on him, he gets really upset and bursts into tears (2 years 2 months, 1044). • Because she starts walking, I bought her shoes. Whenever I try to put it on her; however, she gets really upset and bursts into tears. She also refuses socks (almost 1, 1077). • My son hates putting his hat on (2 years 3 months, 1094).
	Refusing to brushing teeth (2)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My daughter doesn't open her mouth when I try to brush her teeth (1 year 2 months, 1001). • My son hates when I try to brush his teeth (1 year 1 month, 1088).
	Others (5)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My child refuses to sit at table to eat. He becomes grouch. So, I have to put him on my lap to feed or let him walk around to eat (1 year, 1035). • My daughter refuses to hold my hand outside and wants to go down stairs by herself. If I sold her, she starts crying with saying "Hold me! Hold me," and refuses to ride her stroller. Then I end up holding her and pushing her stroller at the same time. It makes me really frustrated because I have a big tummy (She is pregnant with her second child) (1 year, 1037). • Since she turned two she refuses her hair cut. Even at a hair cut salon that has a DVD for children to view from their seat, she screams and moves her arms and legs to refuse (2 years 2 months, 1050). • My daughter only grabs her favorite foods and runs away. When I serve her dislike foods, she gets upset and brushes them away from the table. This has been happening to us almost 1 year and now she is two (2 years 2 months, 1059). • When things are not going alone with her will, she behaves really rough. I can't handle her anymore (1-year-old, 1082).

	Verbal (3)		<p>doesn't listen to me. Because it is really getting serious, I pinch her legs, but it doesn't work. When I put her down to the floor, she throws tantrum and bursts into tears. Four out of one who walk by us glance at her masturbation ☹️ (almost 2, 1116).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm in the middle of "terrible twos" childrearing. Especially right before my period (PMS), I tend to shout at him. Even with small things, they gradually touch my nerve. So, I start saying something like "I don't care" "You do your way" "Go away and reflect your behavior." "Forget about your meal." Then I feel so guilty when I see my son's really depressed and sad face (2-year-old, 1113). • My child recently became "terrible twos – rough and self-centered. Although I know this is really difficult time for any mothers, I end up shouting at my child. Possibly because of this, she or he recently fights against me by hitting my face, glaring at me or shouting at me (2-year-old, 1106). • Because he strongly refused to go to sleep, I finally spanked his bottom and yelled at him "If you're sleepy, go to sleep! I hate you!" (7 months, 1026).
Dangerous Behavior (2)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My daughter refuses to hold hand with me. She also wants to go down stairs by herself (1 year, 1037). • My son recently starts standing by himself. Because he is still not stable, I try to stop him. But he doesn't listen to me and wants to try it again and again (7 months, 1026).
Others (3)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you prevent your child watching TV from close distance? (2 year 5 months, 1040). • My child use to be able to greet people (just gestures) when he was younger. But, he recently runs away when I ask him to do greeting (2 year 2 months, 1102). • My daughter always wants my breast-milk. She sits on my lap and pulls my cloth to look for my breast. I feel like she is hunting my breast (1 year 5 months, 1007).

Appendix B5-1

U.S. Online Postings: Toilet-training

Strategies (8)	How to start toilet-training (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to start and how long does it take? (14 months, 2032). • I want to get her use to the potty and have been putting her on it just about everyday, she will sit there for a few minutes and then get upset and want down. Any suggestions? (14 months, 2075). • Does anyone have any good hints on how to get it to click in her little head? (24.5 months, 2011). • How can I get him to actually use the big boy potty and not just sit there? (2 ½ years, 2096). • He will sit on the potty but won't stay so i need some advice (21 months, 2031).
	Refusing to do it in the toilet or go to the bathroom(2)	
	Other (1)	
Readiness (5)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is my child ready for toilet-training (21 months, 2031). • Is my child ready for toilet-training (Almost 2, 2034). • Is the toilet training stage when he wants to be out of diaper? (Just over 2, 2049). • I think it is time to start training. Should I buy a little potty? (will be soon 2, 2051). • I've been thinking about getting him a potty to sit on a couple times a day, do you think it is crazy to start so young? (10 months, 2071).
Training nightmare (2)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He started peeing in stuff that should not be peed in. What did you do to stop him from doing it? (2 ½ years, 2039). • Smearred her poop all over her room (34 months, 2040).
Regression (2)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the past two weeks, he has wet the bed almost every night. I don't understand why this has started (31months, 2116). • Refuses to go to the potty for the babysitter. I cannot understand why she would not want to pee and poop by herself anymore (2 ½ years, 2115).

Appendix B5-2

Japanese Online Postings: Toilet-training

Strategies (9)	How to start toilet-training (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How should I start toilet training? (just turned 2, 1046). • We just started toilet training and bought a child potty seat. But he is afraid of using it. Possibly this is because he is unable to reach his feet to the floor. So, I'm going to buy a potty chair. Please let me know of a potty chair that you recommend (2 years, 1054). • I wonder what kind of things I need to get in order to start toilet training. How should I start? (2 years 1 month, 1092).
	Doesn't urinate in the toilet (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I just started toilet training with my two and a half years old daughter, but it is not going well. Her pee is not coming out in the potty and she starts playing with the toilet tissue (2 ½ years, 1042). • My 2 year 4 month old doesn't pee in the potty. Because she is wearing training pants, it really gets wet. I sometimes invite her to use the potty with finger puppets. I also try to teach her that using the potty is fun. But it is not going well. Please let me know how you do this (1097).
	Can't poop in the toilet (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My two and a half year old is able to pee but unable to poop in the potty. She can only do this in her diaper. I want to help her when I see her trying to do this in the potty, but I don't know how (1043). • My daughter is unable to poop in the potty. Could I let her graduate from diapers? Or is it better to wait until she is able to? Please let me know under what conditions she can be diaper free (2 years 9 months, 1053).
	Schedule (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I just started toilet training with my two and a half year old daughter, but it is not going well. Her pee is not coming out in the potty and she starts playing with the toilet tissue. I've heard that scheduling potty time may help, but I'm unable to do this because I'm also taking care of my 4 month old. Teach me if you know of any good methods (1042). • I started toilet training when she was one and a half year old. It has been almost one year. When she turned one year 10 month, she became capable of peeing in the potty. Since she turned two, she is almost able to poop in the potty. However, she can't still let me know when she needs to go pee. So I invite her to go to toilet every 30 minutes. When will she be able to hold her pee for a little longer time? I want to finish the toilet training before she turns three (2.5 years, 1052).
	Refuse to do it in the toilet or go to the bathroom (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My son's toilet-training is not progressing. He refuses to do it in the potty and demands me to put his diaper on. Then he does it in his diaper. It makes me really upset. How do you teach him? (2 years 3 months, 1109).
Readiness (2)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is she too early for this? I would like to try during the summer. If I wait another year, she will be over 3 (just turned 2, 1046). • My 2 year 1 month old son sometimes tells me when he pees or poops in his diaper. Is he ready for toilet-training? (1092).
Regression (1)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since she was a year and a half, my daughter started telling me when she peed in her diaper. We started the toilet training since then. About 1.5 months ago, she started peeing in the potty for the first time. However now, she refuses to go to the bathroom. Should I force her to go to the bathroom or stop the training for a while? However, I heard that the summer is the best time for toilet-training. I wonder what to do (1 year 8

		months, 1112).
Others (2)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since a month ago, my 2 year 9 month old daughter is able to pee in the potty. She has never wet her bed. Does this mean she is potty trained, even if she may wet her bed someday in the future? (1061). • I'm in the middle of toilet training my 2 year old daughter. How do you do it when you go out? Today she told me that she is going to pee in the potty for the first time when we we're out. However, the facility we visited didn't have a potty with a child seat. Plus I was also carrying baby with a baby sling. So I told her "This potty is different from the one at home. Your bottom may fall into the potty. Lets wait to pee at home." I wonder how I could help her to use adult size potties when we go out. If the public toilets are dirty, what should I do? (1060).

Appendix B6-1

U.S. Online Postings: Mother-Child Relationship

Attachment issues (6)			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Very upset with separation from mama (18 months, 2076).• He will not stay with anyone else but me. So I dont get a break from him (age 2, 2043).• Suddenly started carrying a blanket (14 months, 2091).• I lay him in his bed he screams bloody murder the second I leave the room. I know it's probably an attachment thing but I can't handle it! (age 2, 2086).• Wants to sit on my lap to eat (almost 2, 2054).• She strongly prefers me over the father. She always tells him to go away and wants me to do everything for her (age 2, 2044).
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Appendix B6-2

Japanese Online Postings: Mother-Child Relationship

Attachment issues (7)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My daughter used to wait for me in the dressing room while I was washing my body. Recently, she bursts into tears when I'm away from her sight. I feel like I'm unable to wash my body well (6 months, 1023). • My baby follows me everywhere I go. If I'm away from him for a second, he bursts into tears... (7 months, 1026). • When she can't find me, she cries and looks for me. Even if my husband holds her, she wants me. I thought that the following period (attachment period) was already over, but she might be doing this because she senses that I'm now pregnant (1 year 10 months, 1037). • My daughter starts crying when I'm away from her sight. Is this a sign of regression? Right now I'm staying at my parents' house because the second baby was just born. I'm really afraid how I'm going to deal with this after going back to my house (1 year 8 months, 1079). • My 1 year 10 month old daughter has very strong stranger anxiety. She gets stiff when she meets a stranger. When I take her to a child rearing support center, she typically stays by herself instead of being around with other kids (1118). • This summer we have a company trip and my boss asked me to come with them. Of course I would like to go, but I'm really worried whether my daughter is able to sleep with my husband. Mothers of children around my daughter's age, would it be OK for your child not to sleep with you? I've never had such an occasion and I'm not sure. My husband said that he can handle this, though. He is optimistic (2 years 1 month, 1049). • My son still shows separation anxiety. He bursts into tears when he is held by people besides his parents (1 year 4 months, 1016).
Closeness (4)	<p>Concern related to <i>amaeru</i> (2)</p> <p>Concern related to skin-ship (3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recently he is really attached to my breast milk and is getting "<i>amaeru</i>." So, I'm not able to keep up with my house work. He is going to start a child care center from June. Do you think that he can go to a child care without crying? (2 years, 1045). • Possibly due to the arrival of the new baby, my daughter starts "<i>amaeru</i>." Especially when my husband is at home, she starts screaming with unidentifiable sounds to seek our attention. Should I just let her "<i>amaeru</i>"? (2 years 2 months, 1062). • Should I feed my daughter other than breast milk? I don't want to give up on the skin-ship that we can get from breast feeding (2 months, 1013). • My daughter refuses to hold my hand outside and wants to go down stairs by herself. When I reprimand her, she starts crying and saying "Hold me! Hold me," and refuses to ride her stroller. Then I end up holding her and pushing her stroller at the same time. It makes me really frustrated because I have a big tummy (She is pregnant with her second child) (1 year 10 months, 1037). • When she starts throwing a tantrum, she will calm down if I hold her. But as soon as I put her down, she begins her tantrum again (1 year 3 months, 1017).

Other (1)		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• My son bites my hands but not my husbands'. He also pulls my hair but not my husband's (because he has short hair?). Does he look down on me? (1 year, 1006).
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VITA

Noriko Porter was born August 20 1961 in Kanazawa, Japan. In 1984, she graduated from the University of Toyama in Japan where she majored in kindergarten education. In May 1986, she earned her M.S. degree in early childhood education from South Illinois University at Carbondale. From 1987 to 1998 she taught at Hokuriku Gakuin Junior College as a full-time faculty and at the University of Toyama as an adjunct faculty. During that time also regularly conducted various workshops and seminars for early childhood teachers.

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