

Perceptions of Gender Roles Among American and Japanese Students



Matthew Sanders

Advisors:

Dr. Yoshiko Saito-Abbott

Dr. Chikaomi Takahashi

Outline



- Significance of the Study
- Research Questions
- Review of Literature
- Research Method
- Research Findings
- Conclusion
- Bibliography
- Acknowledgements

Significance of the Study



- One of the most obvious social differences I observed while studying abroad in Japan was gender roles and values, where Japan appears to have clearly defined gender roles.
- This has made me reflect on my own culture as well, where I always believed that gender roles are much more vague.
- I wish to determine what Japanese and American people think of their own gender roles.

Research Questions



1. What are the expected gender roles as perceived by American and Japanese students, and how do they feel about these expected roles?
2. What factors, such as media or family life, affect students' perceived gender roles?

Review of Literature



- Gender Role definition
- Gender Trends in Japan
 - Pre-Meiji - Allied Occupation
 - College Enrollment Rates
 - Education of Women in Japan
 - Modern Enrollment Rates: U.S. vs. Japan
 - Household trends
 - Workforce trends
- U.S. Household & Workforce trends
- Factors influencing development/reinforcement of gender roles
 - Family
 - Media

Japan's Gender Role Trends: Meiji Restoration (1868-1912)



- Before Meiji Restoration (1868)
 - only men received formal education (math, science, reading & writing chinese characters)
 - women learned house chores, arts, music, reading
- Meiji Restoration (1868-1912)
 - public coed schools and private women's schools appear
 - women learn arts, history, reading & writing, physical education, home economics
 - Main objective for educating women:
 - “good wife, wise mother”

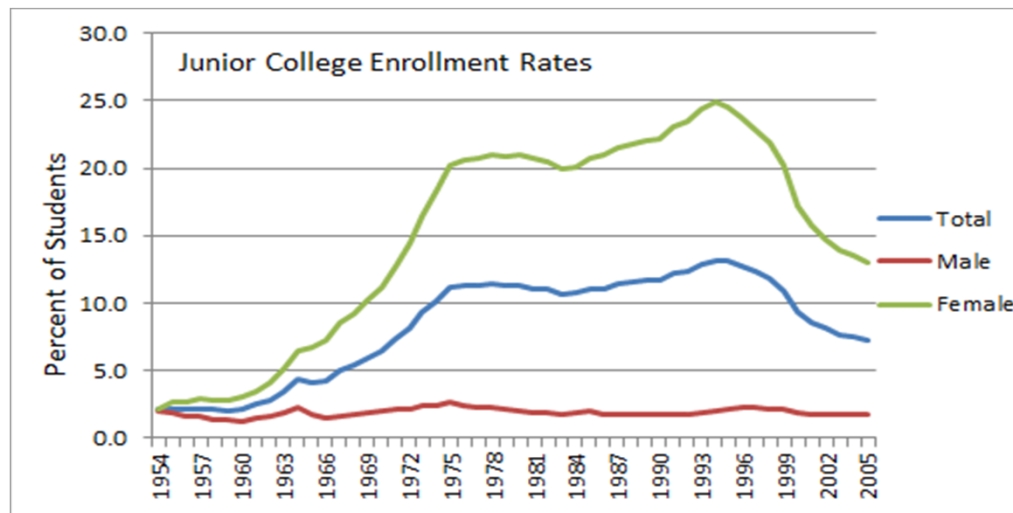
Japan's Gender Role Trends: Allied Occupation Era (1945-1952)



- Fundamental Law of Education: new education system (1946)
 - establishment of co-education
 - equal educational opportunity
- New Constitution (1947)
 - equal work opportunity
 - women's voting rights
 - no discrimination between sexes under the law

Junior College Enrollment Rates in Japan 1954-2005

- Junior College Rates
 - female: 3%-13% increase
 - male: 2%-1.8% decrease

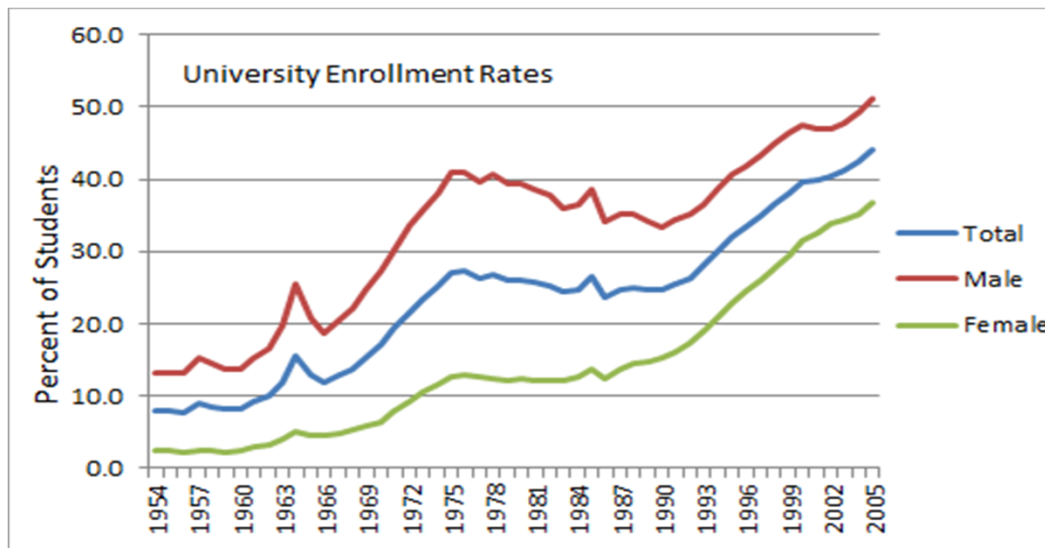


1. junior college as “women’s school”
 - a. teach housework, home economics, etc.
 - b. “good wife, wise mother”
2. drastic drop in enrollment after 1995

(Statistics Bureau, 2006)

University Enrollment Rates in Japan 1954-2005

- University Rates
 - female: 5%-37% increase
 - male: 13%-51% increase



1. efforts for gender equality
 - a. women strive for career - university enrollment increased
 - b. junior college enrollment decreased

(Statistics Bureau, 2006)

Education of Women in Japan



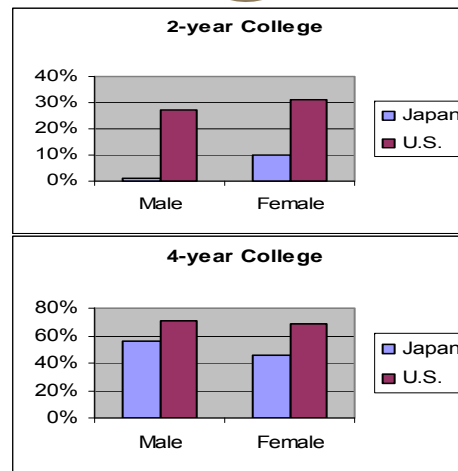
- Until about 1965, education taught “Good wife, wise mother”
 - goal of educated women:
 - better help husband
 - help educate children (esp. boys)
 - better run household
- Not wanted as permanent employees, regardless of education
 - usually secretarial work
 - encouraged to quit work after childbirth
- Today:
 - although influenced by this belief, current trends shifting away from this toward more equal expectations

Modern College Enrollment Rates: U.S. vs. Japan



U.S. 2011 Enrollment Rates

- 2 year colleges
 - Female: 31%
 - Male: 27%
- 4 year universities
 - Female: 68%
 - Male: 71%



Japan 2011 Enrollment Rates

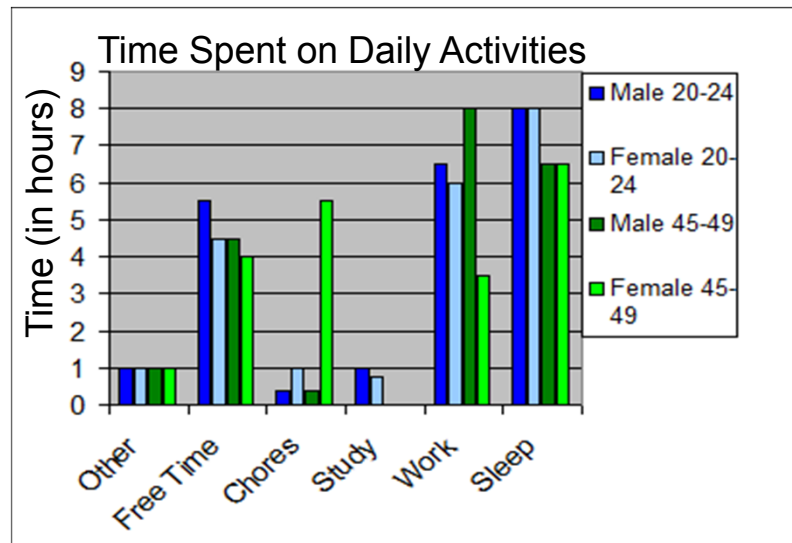
- 2-year colleges
 - Female: 10%
 - Male: 1.2%
- 4 year universities
 - Female: 46%
 - Male: 56%

1. 2 year college enrollment more prevalent in U.S.
 - a. rate similar between male and female - not gender oriented
2. 4 year universities: difference between gender enrollment similar between Japan and U.S.

Japan Household Trends

Age 20-24

- Household chores
 - female: 1 hour
 - male: <1 hour
- Work hours
 - female: 5 hours
 - male: 6 hours



Age 45-49

- Household chores
 - female: 5 hours
 - male: <1 hour
- Work hours
 - female: 3 hours
 - male: 8 hours

1. College age - about same amount of time on each activity
2. Middle age - women at home, men at work

Japan Workforce Trends

Age 20-24

- Regular Staff
 - Female: 36.4%
 - Male: 38.5%
- Part-time/Temporary Work
 - Female: 22%
 - Male: 19.8%

Age 45-49

- Regular Staff
 - Female: 26.3%
 - Male: 69.9%
- Part-time/Temporary Work
 - Female: 31.8%
 - Male: 2.1%

1. College age women - contribute to society = full time work
2. Middle age women - family/settled down = part time work
 - a. full-time - 2.5x more men than women
 - b. part-time - 15x more women

U.S. Household and Workforce Trends



- 1965
 - Paid Work per week
 - Mothers: 8 hours
 - Fathers: 42 hours
 - Housework
 - Mothers: 32 hours
 - Fathers: 4 hours
 - Child Care
 - Mothers: 10 hours
 - Fathers: 3 hours
- 2011
 - Paid Work per week
 - Mothers: 21 hours
 - Fathers: 37 hours
 - Housework
 - Mothers: 18 hours
 - Fathers: 10 hours
 - Child Care
 - Mothers: 14 hours
 - Fathers: 7 hours

1. shifting of roles
 - a. women shifting from home to workplace
 - b. men have begun taking part in home-care
2. today still mostly women at home, men at work

Influential Factors of Gender Roles: Family



- Family is first introduction to gender roles
 - parental roles (ex: working father, stay-at-home mother)
 - toys: G.I. Joe's and Hotwheels for boys, dolls and tea sets for girls
 - chores: life-long patterns
 - girls help mother cook & clean
 - boys help father fix things

(Lindsey, L. 2010; Hendry, J. 1996; Witt, S. 1997.; Levey, T & Silver, C. 2006)

Influential Factors of Gender Roles: Media



U.S.	Japan
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Children's T.V.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ males more present○ impresses job appropriateness for males/females	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Family Drama<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ promotes stereotypes family model○ reflects how men/women should act
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Advertisements<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ portrayal of gender role<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ women cleaning, child-caring■ men working, playing sports	

(Lindsey, L. 2010; Smith, S.; Valaskivi, K. 2000)

The Study



Research Questions

1. What are the expected gender roles as perceived by American and Japanese students, and how do they feel about these expected roles?
2. What factors, such as media or family life, affect students' perceived gender roles?

Research Method

- ❖ Survey Participants: 66
 - Japanese Students: 32
 - Male: 14
 - Female: 18
 - American Students: 34
 - Male: 22
 - Female: 12

- ❖ Research Instruments
 - Online Survey (Google forms)

English Survey

Perceptions of Gender Roles Among Japanese and American Students
By name: Matthew Davidson. I am a senior graduating with a B.A. in Japanese Language and Culture. For my capstone project I am researching gender roles among university students in Japan and the U.S. I would greatly appreciate your input. This survey will only take approximately 10 minutes.
* Required

1. Gender *
Mark only one oval.
 Male
 Female

2. Age *
Mark only one oval.
 17-20
 21-25
 26-29
 30+

3. Nationality *
Mark only one oval.
 American
 Japanese
 Other: _____

4. Ethnicity *
Mark only one oval.
 White
 African-American
 Native American/Alaskan
 Hispanic
 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
 Asian
 Other: _____

Japanese Survey

男女の役割:日米大学生の意識調査
アメリカと日本の両国での研究についてお礼状を送りたい。このアンケートは、日本の大学で学ぶアメリカ人の学生と日本の学生の間で行われます。あなたの意見は非常に重要です。このアンケートは約10分程度かかります。
* Required

1. 性別 *
ひとつだけまるをの圈に入れて下さい。
 男性
 女性

2. 年齢 *
ひとつだけまるをの圈に入れて下さい。
 17-20
 21-25
 26-29
 30+

3. 国籍 *
ひとつだけまるをの圈に入れて下さい。
Mark only one oval.
 アメリカ人
 日本人
 Other: _____

4. 民族 *
ひとつだけまるをの圈に入れて下さい。
Mark only one oval.
 白人
 黒人
 アメリカ先住民/アラスカ先住民
 ヒスパニック系
 ハワイ先住民/太平洋島先住民
 アジア系
 Other: _____

Research Question 1

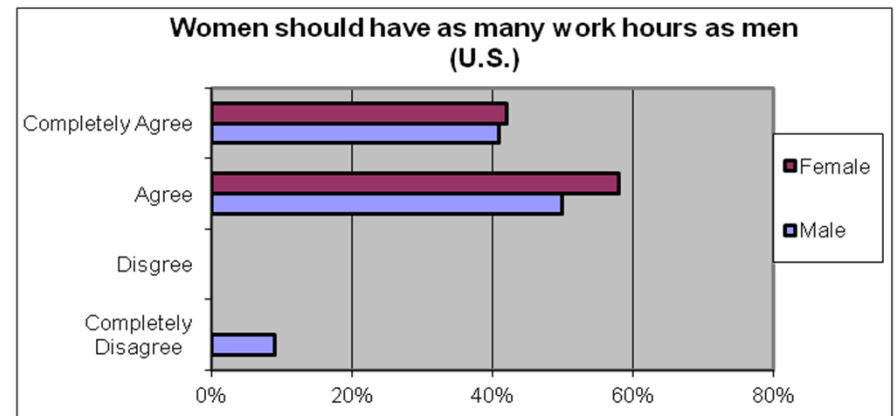
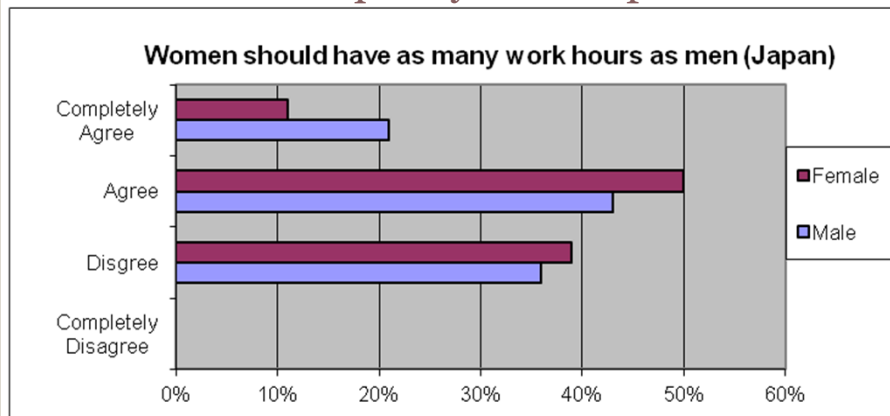


What are the expected gender roles as perceived by American and Japanese students, and how do they feel about these expected roles?

Women's Gender Roles: Equal Work Hours



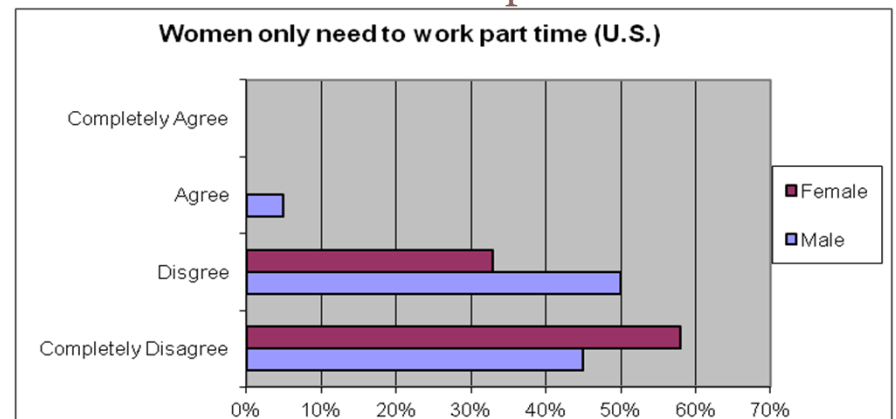
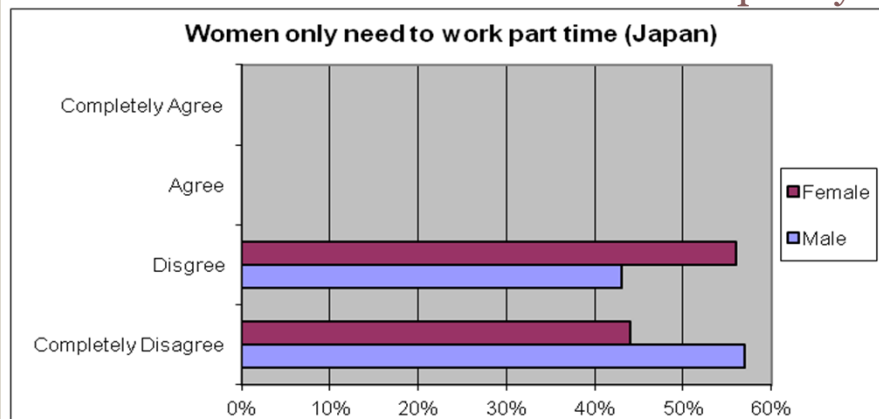
- Japan: many men & women agree that women should have as many work hours as men, some disagree
 - Some, both men & women, still believe women at home, men at work
- U.S.: almost 100% agreement
 - Want equality in workplace



Women's Gender Roles: Part-Time Work



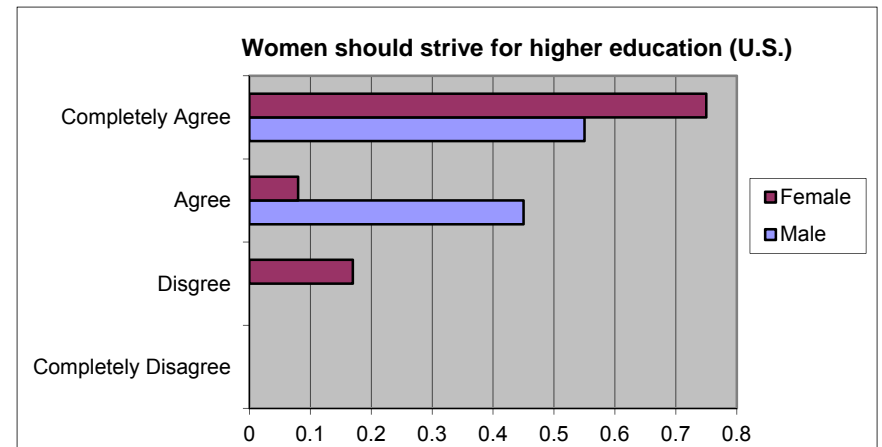
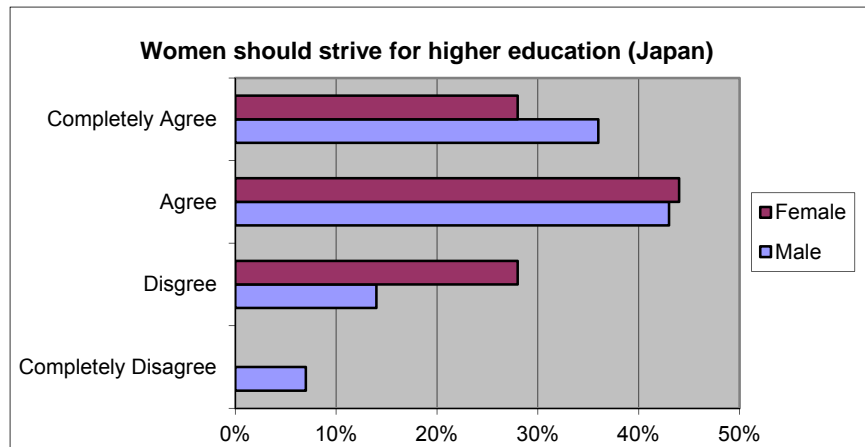
- Japan: completely disagree that women only need to work part-time
 - Although disagreement on same hours as men, no longer believe women are just part-time workers
- U.S.: almost complete disagreement
 - Follows trends towards equality between men & women in workplace



Women's Gender Roles: Higher Education



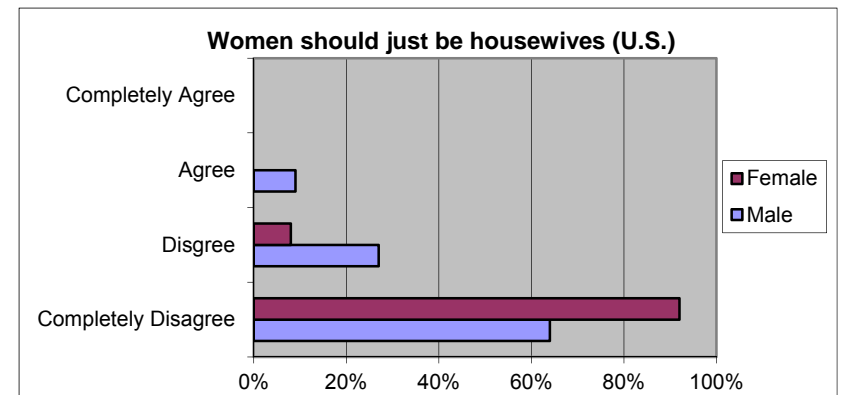
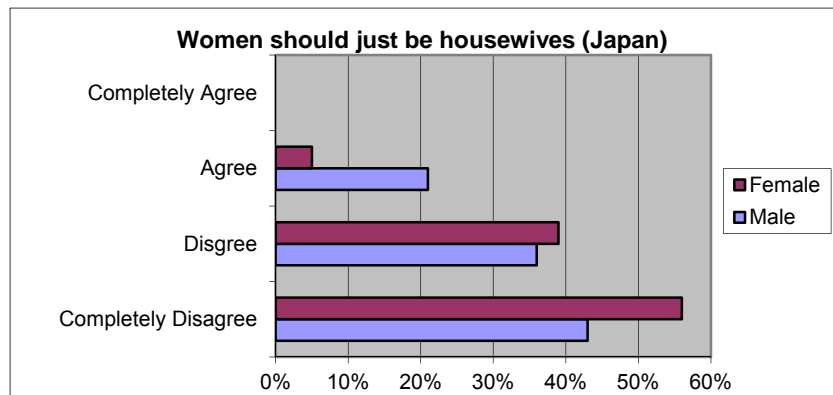
- Japan & U.S.: most men & women agree women should strive for higher education
 - Higher educational attainment important for both genders in both countries



Women's Gender Roles: Housewives



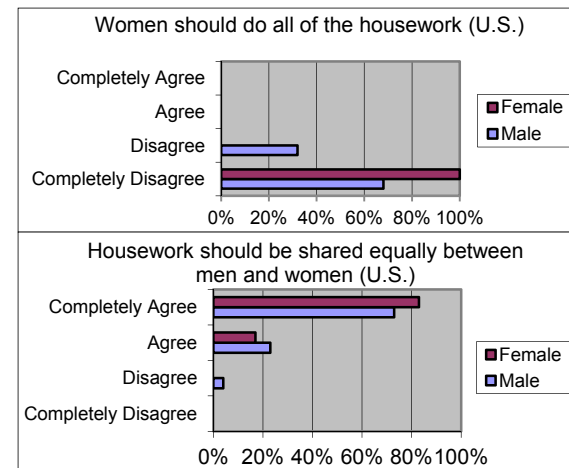
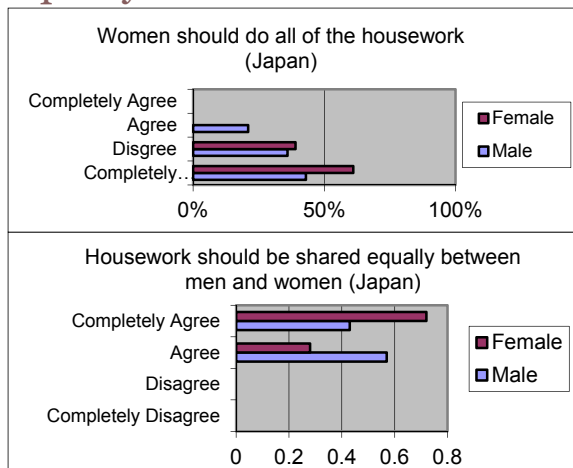
- Japan & U.S.: most men & women disagree with women being housewives, following trend of women acquiring education & entering workplace
 - Japan: some agreement from men reflects persistence of traditional roles
 - U.S.: almost no men agree – doesn't reflect traditional roles



Women's Gender Roles: Housework



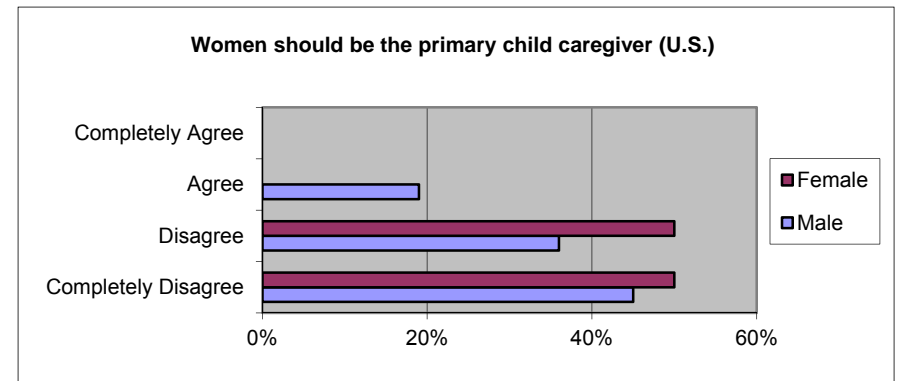
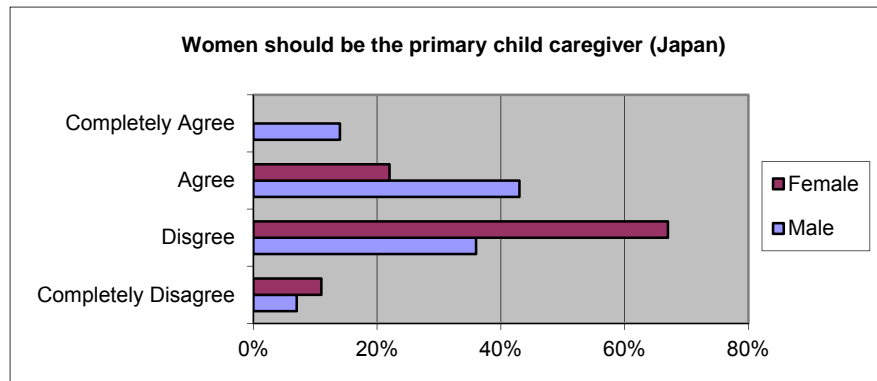
- Japan: most men & women disagree with women doing all housework, all agree should be shared equally
 - Some men agree with women housework – traditional role expectations
- U.S.: completely disagree with women doing all housework – should be shared equally



Women's Gender Roles: Child Care-giving



- Japan: most women disagree, most men agree with women as primary care-giver
 - Agreement of some, especially men, shows traditional expectation of women as child care-givers
- U.S.: majority of men and all women disagree with women as primary child care-giver
 - Some men still see child rearing as women's job

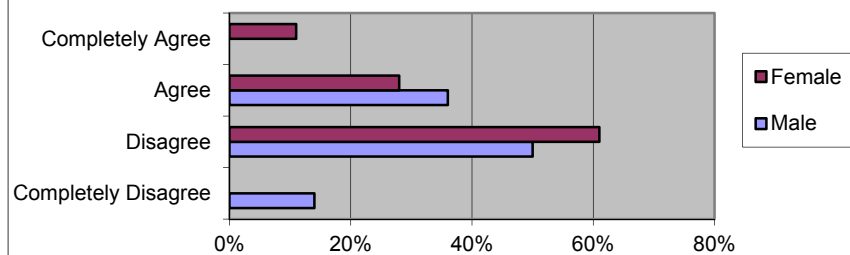


Men's Gender Roles: Child Care-giving

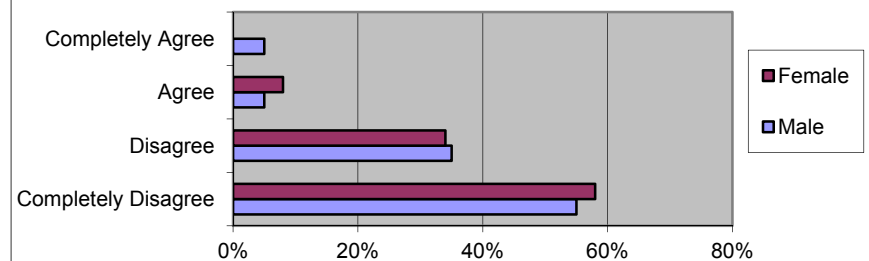


- Japan: most disagree with men as primary child care-givers
 - Many men and women agree with men as child care-givers: perhaps a shift in expectation of male gender role from worker to home care-taker
- U.S.: vast majority of males & female disagree
 - Men still not viewed as primary child care-giver

Men should be the primary child care-giver (Japan)



Men should be the primary child care-giver (U.S.)

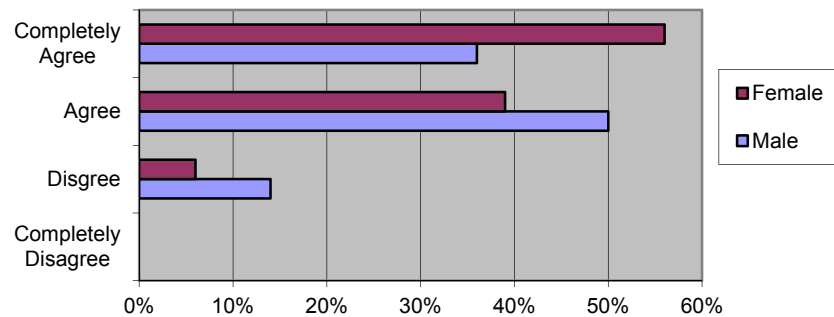


Gender Roles: Child Care-giving

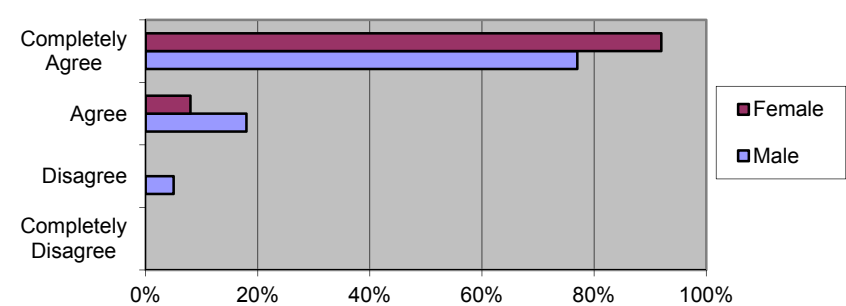


- Japan & U.S.: men & women in both countries agree with shared child care
- With expectation of women entering workforce and attaining higher education, men expected to take bigger part in child care

Child care-giving should be shared equally between spouses (Japan)

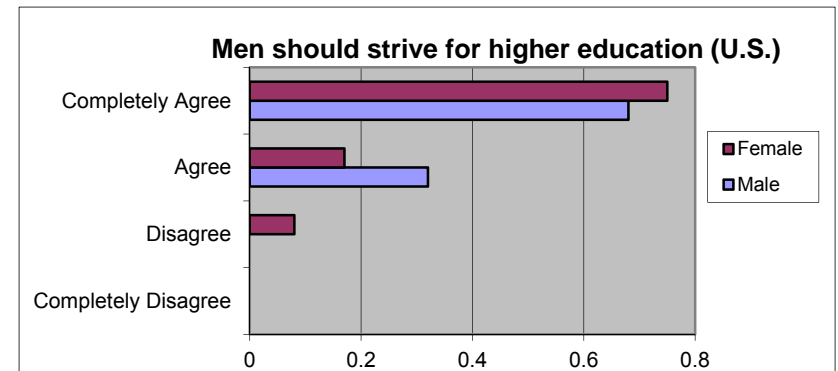
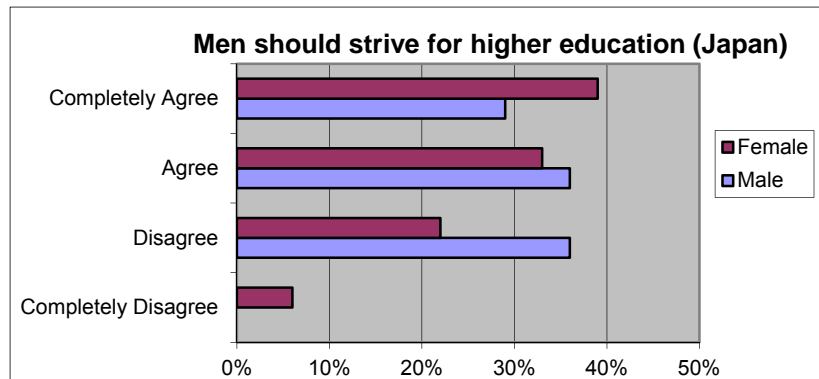


Child care-giving should be shared equally between spouses (U.S.)



Men's Gender Roles: Higher Education

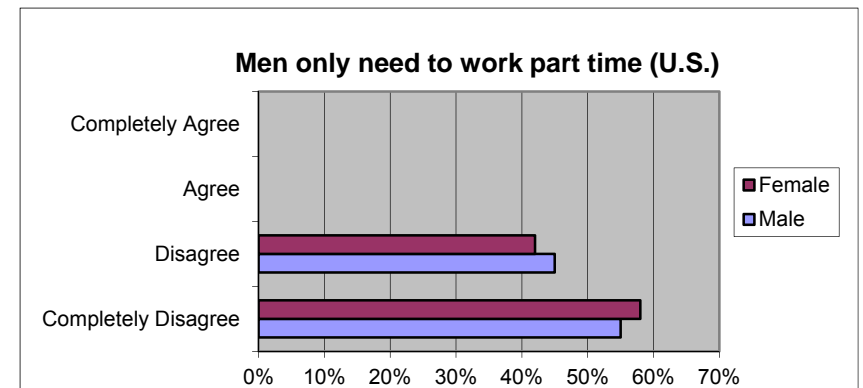
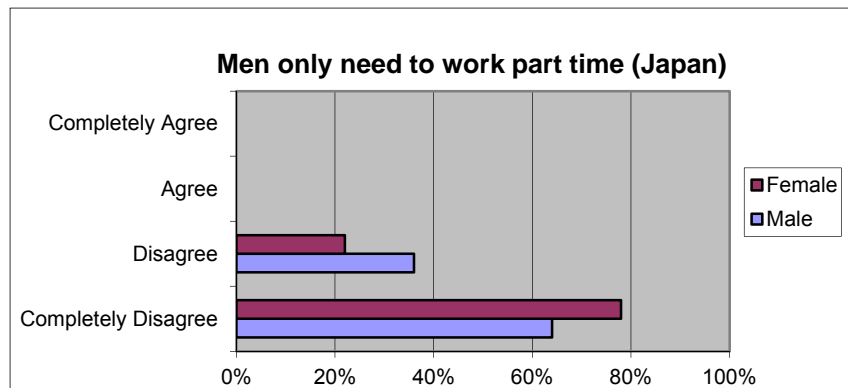
- Japan: most men & women agree that men should strive for higher education, but some disagree
 - Education still important part of male role in Japan, but not necessary
- U.S.: almost all men & women agree
 - Higher education essential to male role



Men's Gender Roles: Part-time Work



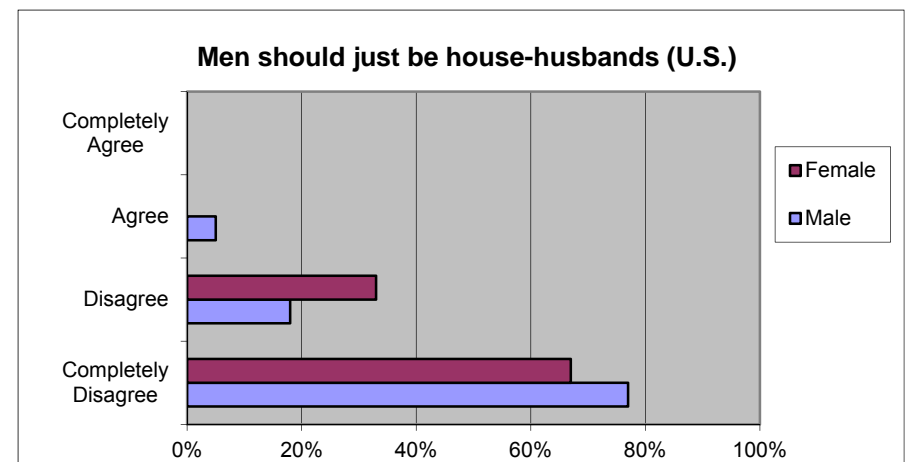
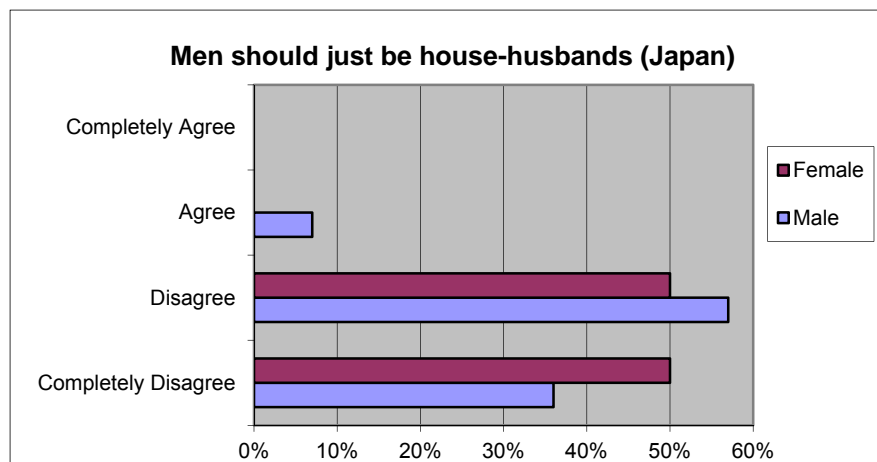
- Men & women in Japan & U.S. disagree
 - Reflects belief that men need to earn enough to fulfill role of breadwinner



Men's Gender Roles: House Care-taker



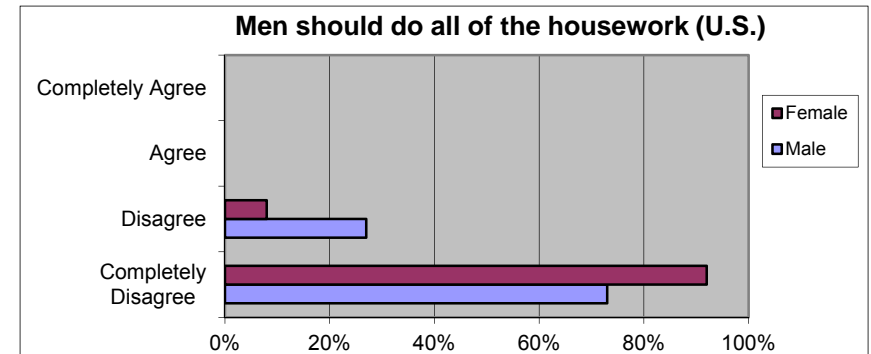
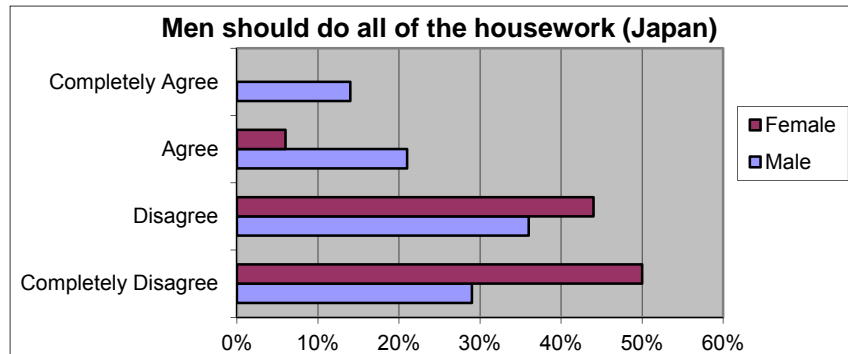
- Japan & U.S. men & women disagree that men should just be house-husbands
- Men still not viewed as home care-takers



Men's Gender Roles: Housework



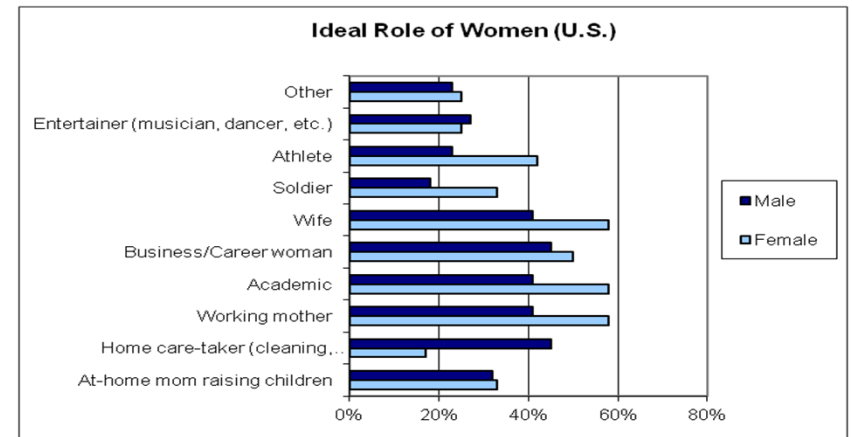
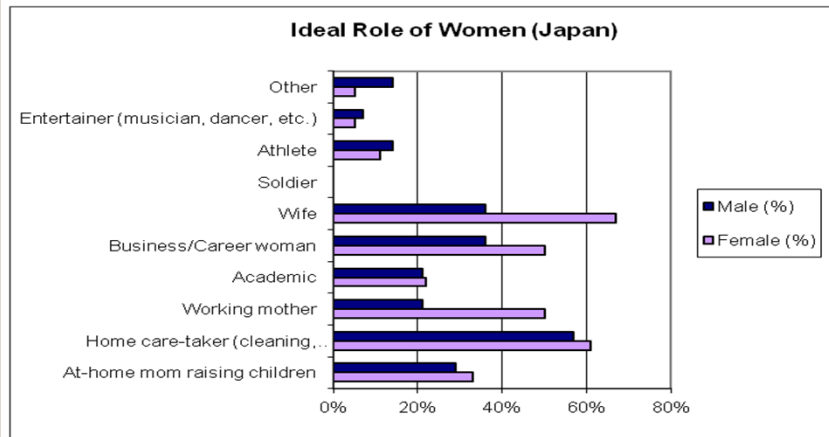
- Japan: most men and almost all women disagree
 - Not viewed by women as primary home care-takers
 - Agreement from some men shows possible shift in self-perceived role of men towards more active role in home
- U.S.: all men & women disagree – men not seen as primarily home care-takers



Ideal Role of Women



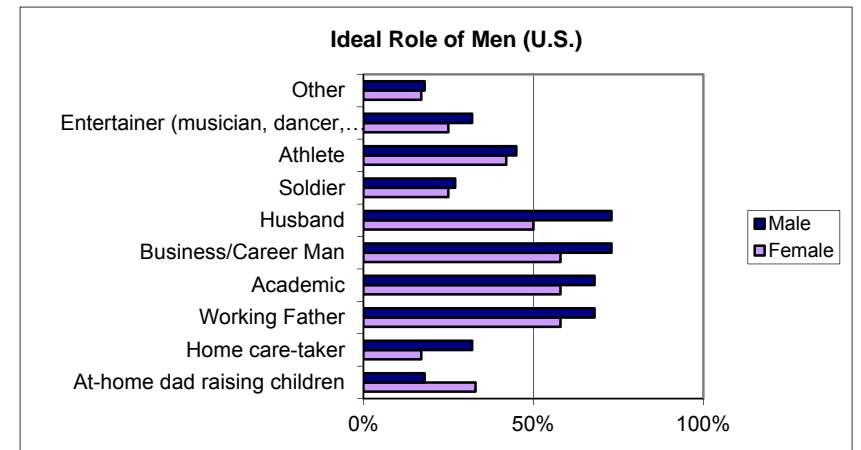
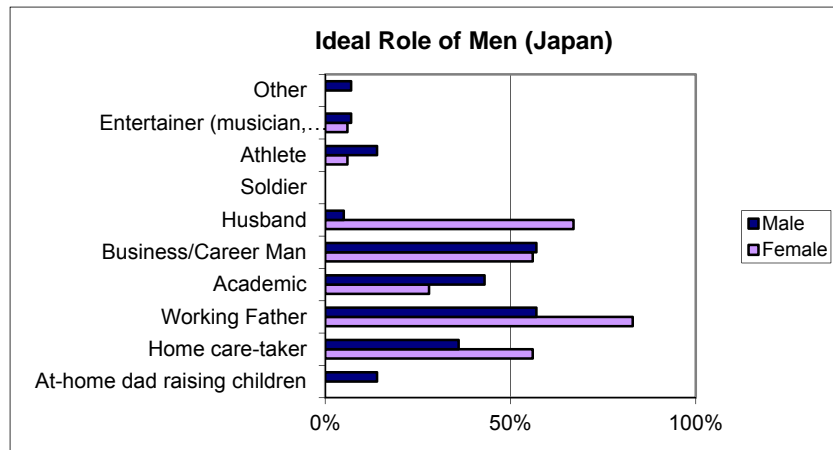
- Japan: Wife, business women, working mother, home care-taker, at-home mom
 - Mix of traditional role as home care-taker & raising children, & modern working woman
 - Shows shifting in values for women's gender roles from home care-taker to worker
- U.S.: most respondents answered all roles, or Other: do whatever they want
 - Reflects belief that women are equal to men & can fulfill whatever role they want
 - Role as wife, working mother, academic & business woman still most prominent among females, reflecting priority is family & work



Ideal Role of Men



- Japan: Educated business man, working father most important
 - Females answered husband, home care-taker & working father: expect men to marry and take more active role in household
 - Males view ideal role as business man, working father & home care-taker: still viewed as career driven, but more importance placed on home/family role
- U.S.: Educated business man, working father, and husband most prominent, but many answered with all roles
 - Females answered at-home dad: expect more help with childcare
 - Males answered husband, business man, working father: expect to marry, work & take care of family



Research Question 1 Summary of Findings



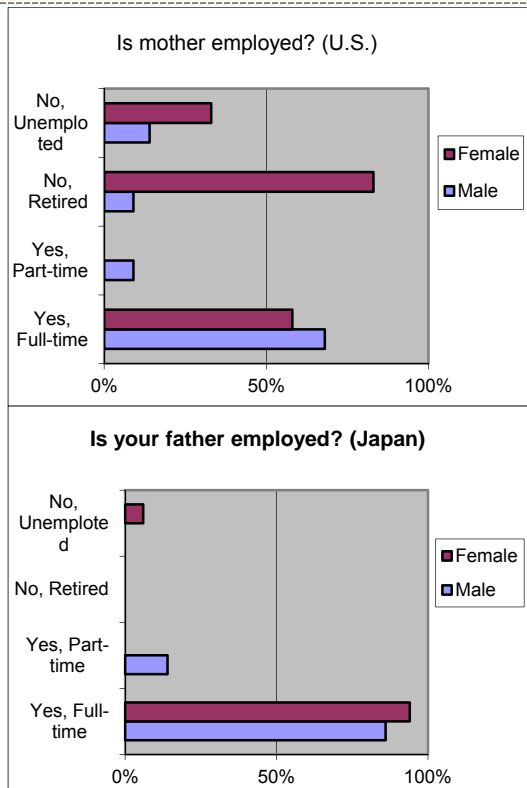
- Japan:
 - Expectation of traditional roles still persist, particularly among women, with women in household and men at work
 - New way of thinking about child care, particularly among men
 - Men moving from workplace to home, women from home to workplace
 - Overall shift toward equal gender roles can be seen
- U.S.:
 - Strong expectation for equal roles among both men and women
 - Women expected to work and be mother; Men work and be fathers
 - Housework and child care-giving expected to be shared

Research Question 2

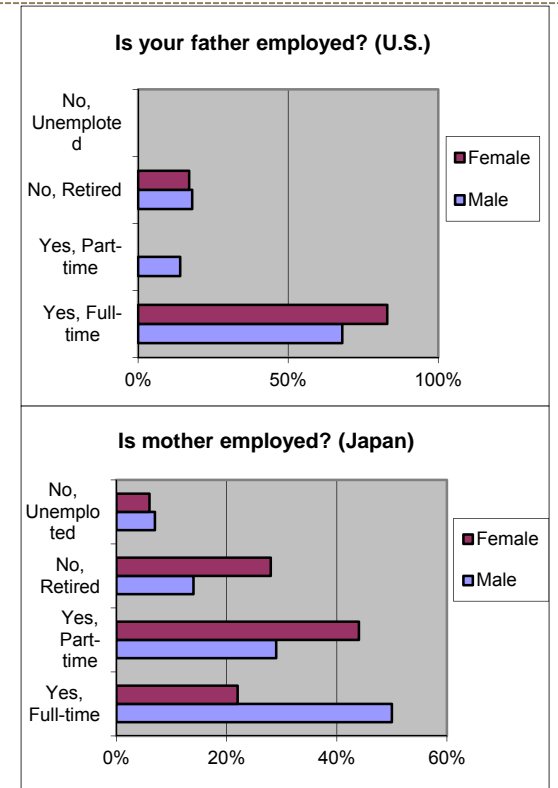


What factors, such as media or family life, affect students' perceived gender roles?

Influential Factors: Parental Employment



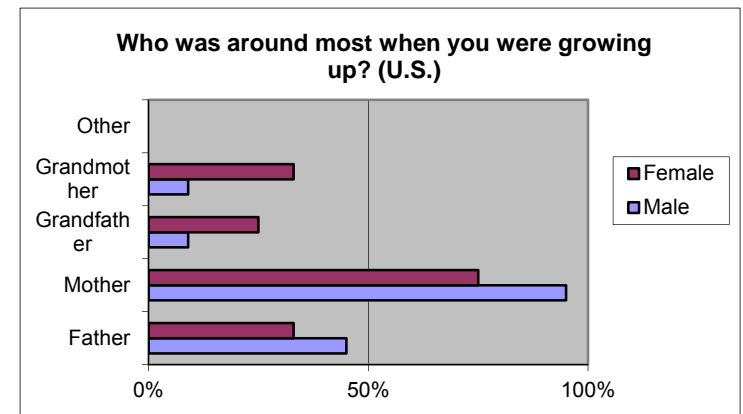
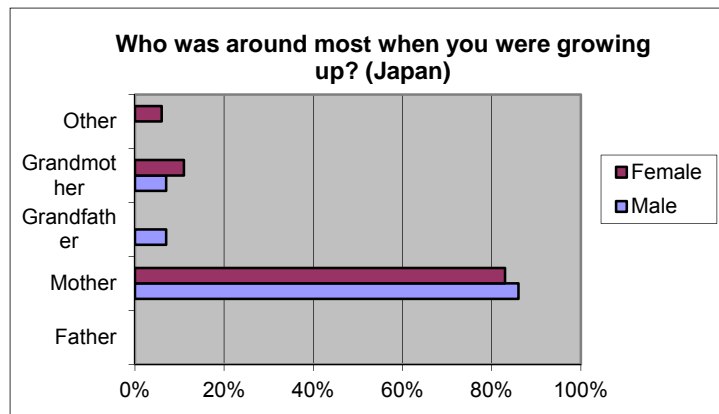
- Japan: fathers primary earners; mothers mostly part-time or at home
 - Creates image of men at work, women at home
- U.S.: fathers and mothers almost equal full-time
 - more mothers not working
 - Creates image of work being for men & women, while women still have more presence at home



Influential Factors: Family Presence



- Japan: almost all answered mother, none answered father
 - Creates image of mothers as home & child care-takers, fathers as workers
- U.S.: most answered mother, many answered mother & father
 - Image of mother as home & child care-taker stronger, but image of both father & mother at home present



Influential Factors: Childhood Toys



- Japan:

- Cooking sets for girls, habituates household chores
- Boys play video games & sports: intro to computer tech & physical activity/competition

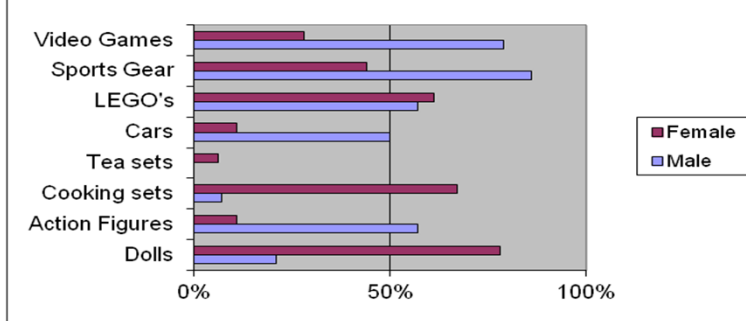
- Both:

- Action figures for boys, dolls for girls: image of ideal man/woman
- LEGO's gender neutral

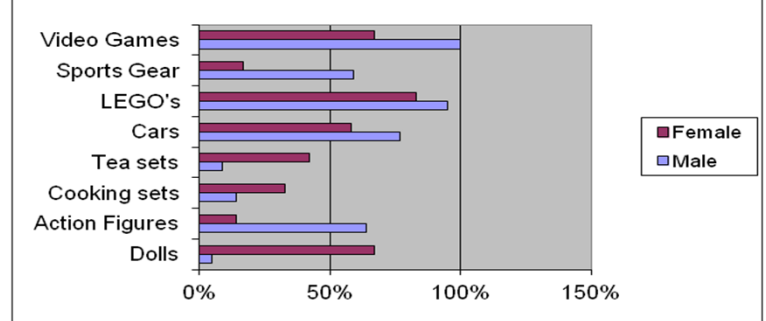
- U.S.:

- Tea sets and cooking sets for some girls: some habituation towards household chores
- Sports gear for most boys: physical activity & competition
- Most toys about even for boys & girls: similar habits formed at early age

What types of toys did you like to play with when you were growing up? (Japan)



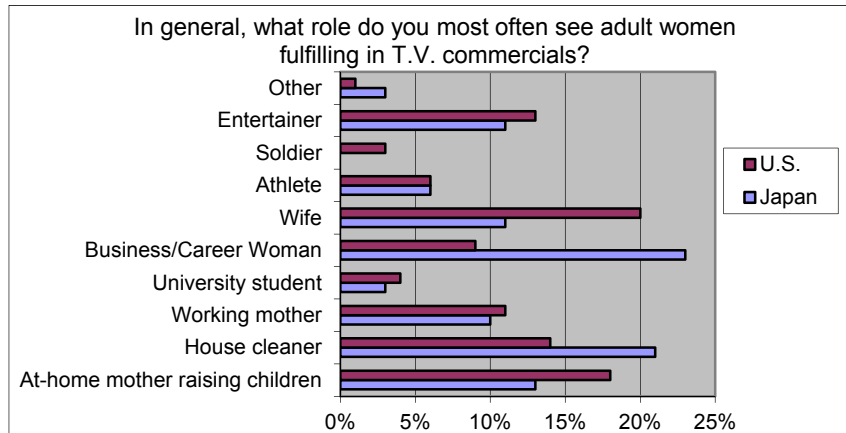
What types of toys did you like to play with when you were growing up? (U.S.)



Influential Factors: T.V. Commercials

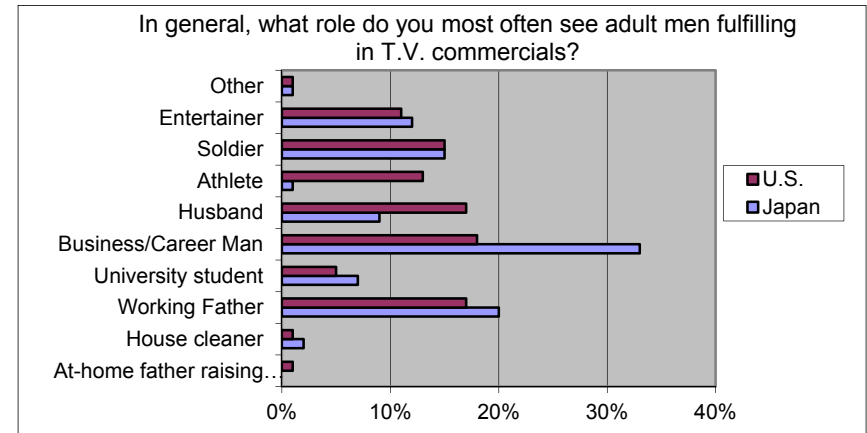
• Women's Role:

- U.S.: wife, at-home mom, house cleaner
 - o Persisting image of traditional gender roles
- Japan: business women, house cleaner, at-home mom
 - o Push for working women, while enforcing traditional roles



• Men's Role:

- U.S.: varied, but not house cleaner or at-home father
 - o Emphasis on father and working man
- Japan: mostly business man and working father
 - o Male supports family financially

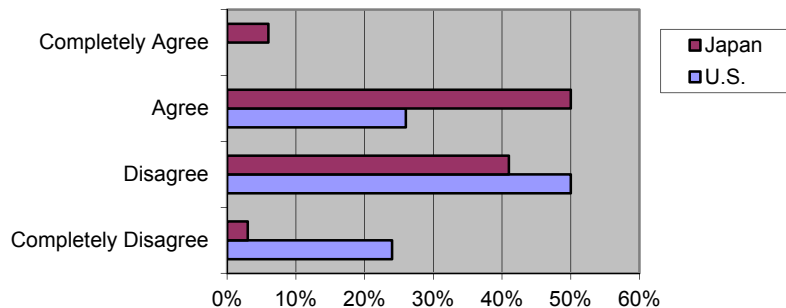


Influential Factors: T.V. Shows

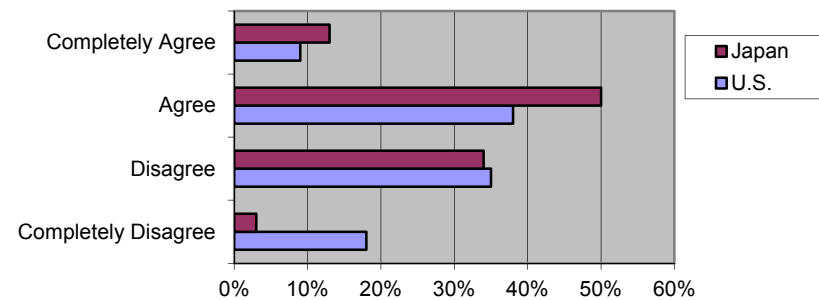


- In Japan & U.S. about half men & women agree, half disagree that roles of men & women on T.V. reflect reality
 - 50% expect gender roles on T.V. to be the same as reality, & vice versa

I believe that the roles women play on T.V. shows are an accurate reflection of the roles women play in reality.



I believe that the roles men play on television shows are an accurate reflection of the roles men play in reality.



Research Question 2 Summary of Findings



- T.V., both commercials & shows, provide strong influence on expected gender roles
 - Roles seen on T.V. expected to be at least similar to reality, & vice-versa
- Toys appear to have some influence on gender roles, though not as strong as T.V.
 - Japan: cooking sets habituates household chores
- Japan: family presence & expectation of men's gender roles do not match very well
 - Question 1 findings supported expectation of greater male presence in family vs. Father not a prominent figure growing up
- U.S.: family presence reflects expected gender roles of men & women
- Parental employment reflects expectation of roles for Japan & U.S. with mostly men at full-time work, & with some women working, some not working

Conclusion & Discussions



- Japan: traditional roles still influencing expectations, but in general shift towards expectation of equality between genders can be seen
- U.S.: traditional roles not very present, equality between genders expected
- Media has strong influence on expected roles
 - T.V. portrayal of genders expected to be same as reality
- Family life:
 - Japan: presence of mother in household effecting lingering traditional roles
 - Absence of father as prominent figure growing up incongruous with expectations of men & women for males to take more part in household
 - U.S. expects working mothers as well as fathers

Limitations of the Study



- Limited region & age group

Future Studies



- Further examination of Japanese child-care roles
- Expansion of influential factors on gender roles
 - Internet, cinema, schooling
- What is the correlation, if any, between the lack of fathers as prominent figures in the family and the expectations for men to take more part in the household?
- Reality of gender roles after university vs. what was expected

Bibliography



1. Hendry, J. (2003). *Understanding Japanese Society*. New York, NY: Routledge.
2. Lindsey, L. , & Christy, S. (1997). *Gender Roles : A Sociological Perspective*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall.
3. Witt, S. (1997). Parental influence on children's socialization to gender roles. *Adolescence*, 32(126), 253-359.
4. Valaskivi, K. "Being a Part of the Famil? Genre, Gender and Production in a Japanese TV Drama." *Media, Culture & Science*, 2.3 (2000): 309-325.
5. Levey, T. (2006). Gender and value orientations: What's the difference!? the case of Japan and the United States. *Sociological Forum*, 21(4), 659-691.
6. 北村 優子. "Gender Equality Dilemma in Japanese Society: How Traditional Ideas Affect both Women and Men." *文教大学国際学部紀要*. 19.1 (2008): 65-78. Internet.
7. Takamura, S. (2012). "Economic Empowerment of Women in Japan." *4th Global Forum on Gender Statistics*. United Nations Statistics Division Retrieved April 18, 2014, from <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/default.htm>.
8. Smith, S & Granados, A. "Gender and the Media." *National PTA*. Retrieved April 10, 2014, from <http://www.pta.org/members/content.cfm?ItemNumber=2258>.
9. Parker, K. & Wang, W. (2013). "Modern Parenthood." *PewResearch Social & Demographic Trends*. Retrieved April 10, 2014, from <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org>.
10. Arima, A. (2003). Gender stereotypes in Japanese television advertisements. *Sex Roles*, 49(1), 81-90.
11. Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology - Japan. (2012). *Statistics: Overview*. Retrieved March 9, 2014, from <http://www.mext.go.jp/english/statistics/index.htm>.
12. U.S. Census Bureau. (2012). *Educational Attainment of the Population 18 Years and Over, by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin: 2013*. Retrieved March 9, 2014, from http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/cats/education/higher_education_institutions_and_enrollment.html.
13. Statistics Bureau, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. (2006). *就学率及び進学率*. Retrieved April 18, 2014, from <http://www.stat.go.jp/index.htm>

Acknowledgements



- Professor Yoshiko Saito-Abbott
- Professor Michiko Terajima
- Professor Chikaomi Takashi
- Gus Leonard
- Japanese Exchange Students