

EFFECTS OF ASCRIBED AND ACHIEVED CHARACTERISTICS ON SOCIAL VALUES IN JAPAN AND THE UNITED STATES

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ABSTRACT

In this paper we compare the impact of ascribed and achieved characteristics as they affect the structuring of values in Japan and the US. The role of education in shaping individual values has to be understood within a broad social and cultural framework. Indeed, we argue that the impact of education is weakened in a context of traditional social structure which emphasizes rigid forms of age and gender stratification. The analysis is based on national random samples of Japanese ($N = 1,764$) and United States ($N = 1,497$) respondents. Factor analysis shows the existence in both countries of clusters of value items around the themes of family, work, social, and cultural orientation. The clusters from each country overlap in some items, reflecting their different histories and cultural manifestations. Based on regression analysis, our main finding is that in the United States, values are more likely to be structured around educational differences while in Japan, values tend to be organized around age disparities.

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Despite the similarities in their economic systems and occupational structures, the study suggests that, in Japan, a traditional ascribed characteristic such as age dominates value stratification.

INTRODUCTION

There is a widely accepted belief that the structure of values follows the lines of the stratification system and that education, as a component of class, is a basic determinant of the values held by individuals (Hyman and Wright 1979; Kohn 1969). In modern industrial societies, education rather than tradition or religion, has been shown to play a major role in shaping individual values (Weber 1946). James Davis (1982), in a classical study using the General Social Survey (GSS), showed that education was the most pervasive predictor of individual values in a wide range of areas, and that occupational items had little additional impact. Moreover, education has been shown to have a similar effect on values in many industrialized societies (Davis 1975; Schooler and Atsushi 1988; Lincoln et al. 1990). Kohn et al. (1990) have demonstrated this in their study of the impact of social class on psychological functioning in the United States, Japan, and Poland. However, the values they examined are directly oriented toward the world of work. It remains an open question whether education has a similar impact on values that are broader and distant from the world of work.

In this paper, we suggest that the role of education in shaping a wide range of individual values has to be understood within broad social and cultural frameworks. All advanced industrial societies show the great importance of education for achieving higher standards of living, within a modern occupational structure based on individual achievement. However, the impact of education on the structuring of social values may be altered where traditional social structures exist alongside a modern economy, in which rigid forms of age and gender stratification are maintained (Loscocco and Kalleberg 1988). It is therefore reasonable to inquire whether education has a different impact on the structure of values in a society like the United States, which supports an ideology of individual mobility and individual achievement, as compared to Japan, which encourages group solidarity within a more traditional stratification system (Palmore and Maeda 1985).

As indicators of a traditional basis of stratification we used age and gender. We expect both of these variables to have a stronger impact on values in Japan than the United States. In particular, it is well-known that age is a powerful determinant of prestige and status in Japan (Reischauer 1977). We expect gender to have a strong impact in Japan as well, because of the greater gender specification in that country of occupational and family roles (Iwao 1993). In particular, occupational opportunity for women is very limited in Japan;

lifelong employment guarantees are virtually limited to males, whereas women tend to remain in the home after childbirth (Spilerman and Ishida 1993). In this paper we compare the effect of ascribed characteristics of individuals, such as age and gender, versus educational attainment in two societies with broadly comparable economic structures. However, while Japan is certainly a post-industrial society with a modern occupational structure, there remain strong traditional elements in the social organization of Japanese society (Smith 1983). It is well-known that Japan is an age-graded society (Campbell 1992) that has retained traditional gender roles (White 1992). We therefore inquire into the extent to which Japanese values are affected by individuals' ascriptive, rather than achieved, characteristics.

We examine these issues using data from a unique comparative survey of values in Japan and the United States on a wide range of social topics.¹ Our strategy will be to examine the relative strength of education as an achieved feature of individuals, compared to age and gender, in patterning values in these two societies. In the first section of the paper, we compare selected values held in Japan and the United States and we undertake a factor analysis in order to identify clusters of values. In the second part of the paper, we examine the role of achieved and ascribed characteristics in the two societies, regressing models of values and value clusters against education, gender and age, as regressors.

DATA AND METHOD OF ANALYSIS

Data collection was carried out in Japan and the United States in 1993 under the sponsorship of the International Longevity Center, Mount Sinai School of Medicine (New York), and the International Leadership Center on Longevity and Society (Tokyo). The study was based on national random samples of men and women 18 years and older ($N = 1,764$ in Japan, $N = 1,497$ in the United States). The data were collected through telephone interviews by Louis Harris and Associates in the United States and through face to face interviews by the Central Research Services in Japan. The questionnaires were largely identical, though some questions were targeted to particular subgroups in each country.

The questionnaire was originally written in English and translated into Japanese. Attention was paid to the wording of the questions to insure clarity and comparability of meaning. Once the questionnaire had been translated in Japanese, it was retranslated into English by two native Japanese working independently, and their translations were compared. Where the translations differed, a method of interpretation was devised to assess the culturally appropriate meaning of the questions. In this paper, we examine twelve social and moral values found in question #7 (see Table 1 for the actual wording). Each value-item was coded 0 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) and then treated as a continuous variable.

The issue of cultural bias in answering value questions is pertinent here. In particular, there may be a tendency in some cultures to agree with most normative value statements. Thus, consistent country effects across the twelve items, whether in the examination of mean differences or the effects of a country dummy term, are suspect. In particular, the Japan term in the additive regression models picks up the overall cultural orientation of the society, as well as country differences in relation to a specific item. However, we expect that the analysis of the impact of the explanatory variables, net of the country effect, is less vulnerable to this concern about the absence of a comparable "zero point" in the scales of the two societies.

COMPARING JAPANESE AND AMERICAN RESPONDENTS ON SOCIAL AND MORAL VALUES

General Social and Historical Background

While there are significant challenges in cross-cultural research, comparative analysis of values remains important, particularly insofar as it helps to shed light on the relationship between values and social structures (Schwartz 1992; Silver and Muller 1995) and guides social policies.² For the purpose of doing comparative analysis, it is important to have some general, although simplified, idea of key social and historical differences between the societies.

As a nation established by immigrants, the United States has prided itself on its heterogeneity and its mix of cultural traditions, while Japan has attempted to maintain its homogeneity with steps as dramatic as a self-imposed isolation from international exchange for more than two centuries (1639-1853). While the United States has a relatively short history as a nation—little more than two centuries—Japanese cultural traditions span two millennia. Americans share allegiance to a set of principles outlined in the nation's founding documents and a belief in "the American dream," while the Japanese, with their extensive history, share a much greater common culture. At the risk of oversimplifying, one can assert that to be an American is to share the belief in a set of abstract principles, while to be Japanese is to be embedded in a historical, material, and cultural set of traditions. The American ethos—an amalgam of immigrant traditions—is essentially portable; the Japanese ethos is situated within a localized history and geography (Tocqueville 1840, p. 8; Reischauer 1977, pp. 1, 41).

The immigrant basis of U.S. society has often resulted in a focus on the immediate future, that is, the individual attainment of the American dream of social mobility. Immigrants have left behind communities and traditional lifestyles and forged new identities in the United States; hence attachment to the past does not have the same meaning for Americans as it does for the

Japanese, who are deeply embedded in a 2,000-year history. Prior to the rapid urbanization and industrialization of Japan during the Meiji Restoration (1868-1912), 80 percent of Japanese were connected, not only to their immediate families, but also to extended agrarian communities and to the land they cultivated (Kodansha 1994, p. 133). Removed from their former social groupings and cultures, Americans are also notoriously individualistic, while the Japanese are strongly oriented toward the needs of the groups or collectivities of which they are a part (Doi 1971, pp. 54-57; Smith 1983, p. 73; Reischauer 1977, pp. 135-137).

Analysis of Individual Values in Japan and the United States

Twelve value items representing a broad variety of social and moral values were examined from the United States and Japanese samples (see Table 1). To correct for a differential tendency to agree with normative statements, the overall U.S. mean was set equal to the overall Japanese mean (2.63). Three patterns emerge from these simple mean differences.

A first cluster of items shows *no difference or little difference* between Japan and the United States. There is no difference in their attitudes toward remembering the kindness of others. Nearly all respondents in both groups—99 percent in each sample—affirmed that "One must never forget the kindness received from others." Both groups expressed strong beliefs that "Elderly should be respected because of their age" and "One should actively participate in local activities and functions." With a means difference of 0.14 in each value item, Japanese were somewhat more likely to endorse these statements. These findings suggest that interpersonal relations, sociability, and intergenerational relations are highly valued in both countries. Both groups also strongly affirmed that national pride was an important value, with means of 3.67 and 3.45 for United States and Japan respectively.

A second cluster of items shows which values Japanese respondents are more likely to endorse. The Japanese are *more likely* to support the belief that wealth can solve all problems, that life without children is empty, that it is legitimate to break a promise to the family for the sake of the job, and that immoral means should not be used to get ahead. Thus, Japanese were more inclined to denounce the use of wrong means in search of advancement than were Americans, with a means difference of .37, suggesting a somewhat greater sense of ethical or moral imperatives, as would be expected in a culture with a Confucian ethical heritage. Indeed, even the assessment of the power of money to solve problems is found in Japan within a context of moral standards.

Table 1. Means of U.S. and Japanese Respondents on General Values*

Values ^a	American Means (N=1,497)	Japanese Means (N=1,764)	Means Difference ^b
1. Success is attainable with luck & effort	3.45	2.68	-0.77**
2. If wealthy, you'll have your way	1.46	1.66	0.20**
3. Say what you think honestly	2.13	1.94	-0.19**
4. Never forget kindness	3.82	3.80	-0.02
5. Do not use immoral means to get ahead	3.10	3.47	0.37**
6. Can't trust non-believers	1.72	0.77	-0.95**
7. Life without children is empty	2.57	3.25	0.68**
8. Respect elderly because of age	2.69	2.83	0.14**
9. Participate in local activities	2.87	3.01	0.14**
10. OK to break promise to family for job	1.67	2.61	0.94**
11. Proud of being American/Japanese	3.67	3.45	-0.22**
12. Sacrifice lifestyle for society	2.39	2.07	-0.32**
AVERAGE	2.63	2.63	0.00

Notes: ^aFive category scales were used from 1=strongly disagree to 4=strongly agree. Higher numbers indicate greater agreement with the statement. Level of significance * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

^bJapanese-American

^aValue items form a single question in the questionnaire (# 7) were analyzed in both the United States and Japanese samples

1. "One can succeed by trying very hard and having a little bit of luck."
2. "If you have money almost everything will go your way."
3. "You should honestly say what you think even if it means hurting another person."
4. "One must never forget the kindness received from others."
5. "A person should not resort to a means he or she knows is wrong even though it will lead to success."
6. "I can't trust someone who does not believe in God."
7. "Life without children is empty."
8. "Older people should be respected primarily because of their age."
9. "One should actively participate in local activities and functions."
10. "Breaking a promise to a family member is acceptable when the job requires it."
11. "I am proud of being American/Japanese."
12. "One should actively sacrifice some of his or her lifestyle for the sake of society."

The Japanese questionnaire contained one additional statement:

13. "It is the descendants' duty to maintain their ancestors' graves."

Finally, the greater willingness of Japanese to give priority to work obligations over family obligations reflects the importance of loyalty to the firm and lifelong career commitment, although this might be changing now.

A third cluster of items shows the values *least likely* to be supported by the Japanese respondents. Japanese were less likely to say that they can't trust nonbelievers (means difference of -0.95), less likely to feel that success is attainable with luck and effort (means difference of -0.77), less likely to say that they would sacrifice life style for society (means difference of -0.32), less likely to stress national pride (means difference -0.22), and less likely to be direct when communicating with others (means difference of -0.19).

The fact that Japanese are less likely to stress national pride may be a reflection of the still-pervasive impact of World War II and the subsequent American occupation. The smaller likelihood of direct communication has also been widely noticed among Japanese specialists. Japanese use language differently than Westerners, who tend to be more direct. In Japan communication tends to be contextual, with as much emphasis put on what is not said as on what is said. A surprising finding was that Japanese respondents were much less likely to agree that "One should actively sacrifice some of his or her lifestyle for the sake of society" than were their American counterparts, with a means difference of -0.32. This response seems, on first examination, to be contrary to the Japanese tendency to put the group first and the American propensity for individualism. The discrepancy may be explained by the fundamental differences in the Japanese and American understanding of the relationship between the group and the individual. Japanese respondents are so accustomed to considering the needs of the group and of the individual as interdependent that they do not experience "sacrifice" or feel themselves deprived when making concessions or accommodations for the group (Smith 1983, pp. 58, 128-29; Plath 1980, p. 218; Lock 1993, pp. 202-203).³ In contrast, Americans, who are highly attuned to individual rights and needs, may experience themselves as making sacrifices for the group in a variety of circumstances.⁴

Greater differences between the values reported in each sample concerned attitudes toward putting work ahead of family, the importance of children, willingness to trust persons who don't believe in God, and faith in the idea that hard work and luck will lead to success.⁵ Japanese respondents were more likely than Americans to agree that "Breaking a promise to a family member is acceptable when the job requires it," with a difference in means of .94.

Despite the Japanese commitment to hard work, Japanese respondents were considerably less confident that success is a matter of hard work and luck than were their American counterparts. While U.S. respondents were likely to confirm that "One can succeed by trying very hard and having a little bit of luck," Japanese expressed less confidence in this formula, with a difference in means of -0.77. This discrepancy may be explained by the American belief in the potential of the individual to achieve success, whereas Japanese society is far more interdependent and age-structured: for example, despite one's personal motivation and achievements, the structure of the organization can hold one back (Vogel 1979, p. 148; Spilerman and Ishida 1996). Yet, Japanese were somewhat more likely than Americans to believe that "If you have money almost everything will go your way," with a mean of 0.20 above the U.S. mean. However, one should notice the low means (United States = 1.46 and Japanese = 1.66) on this value item for both the Japanese and the Americans.

AN ANALYSIS OF VALUE CLUSTERS

While the comparison of responses to individual value items indicates that there are several points of overlap, as well as areas of difference, between the two samples, comparisons of these singular value items reveal little about the structure of responses in the two countries. A factor analysis of the value items was therefore employed to give a summary picture of the structure of values in the two societies. The factor analysis was carried out separately with the Japanese and U.S. samples. There are twelve observed variables in the American sample and thirteen in the Japanese sample, covering a broad range of values (see Table 1). Table 2 gives the results of the factor analyses after oblique rotation of the factors was performed. Factor extraction was by principal components. The factors were then rotated to an oblique solution using the PROMAX method.

The factor model that was retained was based on a four-factor solution in each country.⁶ Clusters emerged around the following four value orientations: familial orientation, work orientation, social orientation, and cultural orientation. The familial orientation refers to values that inform an identity within the family; the work orientation defines values that identify a work ethos; the social orientation refers to values that underlie engagement in social activities; and the cultural orientation refers to values that define national identity. It should be noted that while the four orientations refer to the same underlying dimension in each country, the items that make up these value orientations overlap but are not identical in the two societies.

Familial Orientation

As can be seen from Table 2, the Familial Orientation cluster contains different items in the U.S. and Japanese samples, and points to a different meaning of familial identity. In the U.S. sample the Familial Orientation is made up of three variables, two of which reflect values of intergenerational continuity around children and the elderly (Var7A7 and Var7A8) and one that reflects the lack of trust in people who don't believe in God (Var7A6). This cluster of items can be understood as a reflection of the importance of intergenerational continuity in the American family, and the family's role in the transmission of religious values. In a society based on the notion of the separation of church and state, the transmission of religious values is seen as a function of the family. Public institutions are not trusted with this important charge. Historically, one of the chief concerns of American immigrants has been the freedom to raise one's children within the religious tradition of one's choice. Religious and moral training have been held within the province of the family (Fukuyama 1995). Thus distrust of non-believers and concerns for children and elders converge as components of the American Familial Orientation.

Table 2. Rotated Factor Pattern Matrix of Generational Value Orientation

	Japanese Sample			
	Factor 1 Familial Orientation	Factor 2 Work Orientation	Factor 3 Cultural Orientation	Factor 4 Social Orientation
7A13. Maintain tomb of ancestors	0.7873	0.0053	-0.0493	-0.0379
7A7. Life without children is empty	0.6644	-0.0576	-0.0930	0.0526
7A11. Proud of being American/Japanese	0.5234	0.0589	0.1869	0.0349
7A8. Respect elderly because of age	0.4764	0.1874	0.0427	0.0136
7A2. If wealthy you'll have your way	0.0426	0.6506	-0.2985	-0.0525
7Aa. Success attainable with luck & effort	0.0139	0.6496	0.2150	-0.0112
7A3. Say what you think honestly	-0.1694	0.5813	0.0972	0.2084
7A10. OK to break promise to family for job	0.2137	0.3353	0.0120	-0.1020
7A5. Do not use immoral means to get ahead	-0.0917	0.0047	0.7389	0.0370
7A4. Never forget kindness	0.1476	0.0867	0.6410	-0.0843
7A12. Sacrifice lifestyle for society	-0.0400	0.0018	0.1862	0.7809
7A6. Can't trust non-believers	0.0258	0.1135	-0.3879	0.6194
7A9. Participate in local activities	0.3676	-0.1385	0.1082	0.4842
	U.S. Sample			
	Factor 1 Familial Orientation	Factor 2 Social Orientation	Factor 3 Work Orientation	Factor 4 Cultural Orientation
7A6. Can't trust non-believers	0.7578	-0.0073	-0.0245	-0.0806
7A7. Life without children is empty	0.6417	-0.0067	0.0010	0.1349
7A8. Respect elderly because of age	0.6053	0.0199	0.0493	-0.0301
7A12. Sacrifice lifestyle for society	-0.1232	0.7264	0.3055	-0.0566
7A9. Participate in local activities	0.0943	0.6787	-0.0300	0.1312
7A5. Do not use immoral means to get ahead	-0.0366	0.5265	-0.4080	-0.1754
7A10. OK to break promise to family for job	-0.0807	0.1174	0.6847	0.0981
7A2. If wealthy you'll have your way	0.2101	-0.0636	0.6128	-0.1978
7A4. Never forget kindness	0.1318	0.3487	-0.3637	0.0972
7A1. Success attainable with luck & effort	0.0366	-0.0072	0.2637	0.7062
7A11. Proud of being American/Japanese	0.0607	0.1371	-0.1852	0.6272
7A3. Say what you think honestly even if hurting another person	0.1544	0.1742	0.1938	-0.4050

Notes: Based on Japanese Questions #7, items 1-13.

Base on U.S. Question #7, items 1-12.

The Japanese Familial Orientation also stresses generational links, but in addition it includes an identification with family history (Var7A13) and a sense of national identity (Var7A11). Familism in Japanese society has been commented upon by several researchers (Plath 1980; Reischauer 1977; Smith 1983), who point to its role in providing a context for social stability. The

convergence of familial values and national pride in the Japanese Familial Orientation reflects the Japanese historical experience: to be Japanese means not only to share a national heritage and cultural traditions, but also to share bloodlines with other Japanese, defined in relationship to the imperial line. As numerous commentators on Japan have noted, imperial Japan was a family-state, with the image of the "state-as-family (*kazoku kokka*)" (Kinoshita and Kiefer 1992, p. 48). Lock (1993, p. 88) notes that this concept "fused the ethos of the continuity of the sacred line of Japanese emperors ... with the idea of the continuity of the patrilineal household or "ie," which became a microcosm of the state." Ancestry and ancestor worship continue to be of importance, with most homes keeping a *butsudān*, or Buddhist altar, where ancestors are venerated (Morioka 1986, p. 201; Smith 1983, pp. 2, 123-124, 135).

In contrast, the American experience of family is marked by dislocation and separation. As a nation of immigrants, Americans have historically left their families of origin in search of religious freedom and economic opportunity. With the notable exception of African-American families, which were routinely fragmented by the economic imperatives of the slave trade, the American ethos includes a willingness to voluntarily uproot oneself from family and community in search of a better future. Unlike Japan, the United States continues to be a society where geographical mobility is expected and encouraged.

Work Orientation

The Work Orientation refers to values that represent a sense of self as experienced in the workplace. The clusters of items that load strongly on this factor in the United States and Japan suggest different types of work identity. The American Work Orientation (Factor 3) is comprised of three items: two of them, belief in the importance of money (Var7A2) and priority given to job over familial obligations (Var7A10), load strongly and positively on the factor. A third item, "never forget kindness" (Var7A4), loads negatively on this factor, suggesting rejection of ethical considerations as part of the Work Orientation. In contrast, the Japanese Work Orientation (factor 2) is somewhat broader and shows a combination of instrumental and expressive items that all load strongly and positively on the work factor. The Japanese Work Orientation not only includes attitudes toward success and money (Var7A1, Var7A2), but also includes social values that reflect concerns for relationships and social cohesiveness (Var7A3 and Var7A10).

These clusters of values reflect the difference between Japanese and U.S. work structures and work cultures. While the American work organization stresses success and advancement as major corporate goals, Japanese stress loyalty and group solidarity. For example, the system of advancement in large organizations is very different in the United States and Japan (Spilerman and

Ishida 1996). While advancement in the United States primarily reflects individual achievement and aspirations, advancement in Japan reflects the need for social harmony as part of an integrated personnel system. Furthermore, socialization of managerial elites is based on identification with the firm as a whole as well as cohort bonding. These features of the Japanese corporate culture make it clear that success is not so much a function of individual performance as is based on the reinforcement of personal and emotional bonds.

Social Orientation

While the Japanese Work Orientation was more nuanced with human concerns than the American Work Orientation, the American Social Orientation (Factor 2) is somewhat more expansive than the Japanese Social Orientation (Factor 4). In the U.S. sample, the Social Orientation is organized around a cluster of three items that load strongly and positively on this factor and that denote social (Var7A12, Var7A9) and moral (Var7A5) orientations.

For American respondents, the rejection of wrong means to get ahead (7A5) seems broadly associated with social cohesion and group participation. The U.S. Social Orientation is inclusive of these cultural and moral dimensions. Not surprisingly, the American commitment to volunteer organizations, long noted in sociological literature (Bellah, Sullivan, Swidler and Tipton 1985), is the strongest variable in this factor. In contrast, the Japanese Social Orientation, while including the necessity of sacrificing for the group and participating in local activities, does not include the ethical-moral dimensions that cohere in the American sample. Participation in local activities is the weakest variable in the Japanese Social Orientation. We attribute this relatively low score to the rarity of volunteer organizations in Japanese society and to the possibility that Japanese respondents understood this participation as above and beyond the nearly mandatory participation in neighborhood associations which regulate the quality of life in local areas.⁷

However, the Japanese Social Orientation includes the variable for distrust of non-believers. While very few Japanese respondents (11%) agreed with the statement "I can't trust someone who doesn't believe in a religion," the factor formation suggests that the question of belief in religion is essentially a relational or social, rather than a theological or moral, concern for Japanese respondents. Japanese ethical values are not rooted in a theological tradition; rather they are part of a set of beliefs about the natural and social order prescribed in the Confucian *Anglects*. Ancestor worship, which rather than the worship of a deity, had been the dominant mode of religious life for centuries, is at the basis of Japanese religious life today (Smith 1983, p. 32; Kinoshita and Kiefer 1992, pp. 48, 51). The household rather than the church is the site of worship for Japanese. As sociologists have long contended,

religious belief emerges from belief in the group and from totemic ancestor worship (Durkheim 1915). Seldom is this more clearly illustrated than in Japan, where popular belief in the emperor's claim to divinity and ancestral veneration continues despite the effects of a century of modernization (Morioka 1986, p. 201). Among respondents to this survey, 83 percent of the Japanese surveyed felt it was their duty to maintain their ancestors' tombs. Thus, in this factor, distrust of non-believers is linked with value items stressing social solidarity, rather than reflecting a theological concern. The component variables in the Social Orientation factor of both countries share the principle of sacrificing for a higher purpose, whether the local community or the society.

Cultural Orientation

The Cultural Orientation is constituted differently in the American and Japanese samples. In the American sample, the Cultural Orientation (Factor 4) includes three value items: belief in hard work and luck (7A1), forthrightness as long as it does not hurt others (7A3), and national pride (7A11). Rather than creating links of group solidarity and mutual obligation, these values reflect general principles based on individualistic expression of achievement. Being successful as a result of hard work and luck, being straightforward and honest, and pride in being American seem to be the essence of what has been called "the American Self" (Bellah et al. 1985). Indeed, the American identity is formed around pride in work—the Protestant ethic at work—a sense of "Yankee honesty" (being straightforward and honest) and pride in being a citizen. The cluster of items suggest that national pride is defined through individuals' achievement and economic success in the present rather than reflecting a historical sense of collective identification with the country's history as is the case in Japan. Thus, the convergence of attitudes toward hard work and forthrightness with national pride suggests that the American national identity is more a function of an ideology and general principles than of shared history.

The Japanese Cultural Orientation clusters around only two items: the concern over the use of wrong means (Var7A5) and the importance of remembering the kindness of others (Var7A4). These items are strikingly different from those in the American Cultural Orientation, suggesting a Japanese Cultural Orientation disposed toward forging social links and adhering to moral principles that reinforce collective solidarity. While the Japanese Cultural Orientation brings about self-identity developed within a context of reciprocal relationships, the American Cultural Orientation brings out an individual sense of self differentiated from the group. As Plath observes, "The American archetype... seems more attuned to cultivating a orientation that knows it is unique in the cosmos, the Japanese archetype to a self than can feel human in the company of others" (1980, p. 218).

THE IMPACT OF EDUCATION, GENDER, AND AGE ON INDIVIDUAL VALUE ITEMS

Having found clear value clusters around familial, work, social, and cultural orientations in Japan and the United States, we now examine the individual value items in the two countries, in terms of some of the principal dimensions used in the analysis of stratification systems—gender, age, and education. Because there are differences in the precise items that fall within a value cluster in each country, as discussed previously, we do not at this point use the factor scales as dependent variables in a regression analysis. Instead, we examine the individuals value items and how they are influenced by characteristics of respondents in each society. After discussing these materials, we investigate the extent to which the results can be summarized by factor regressions.

To examine country differences in the effects of the three covariates of interest, we used an interaction specification in the regression model.⁸ Explanatory variables were used for gender and education (along with a term for Japan); age, however, was introduced as a set of categorical terms, in order to investigate the possibility of non-linear life cycle effects.

Education Effects

The effects of educational attainment are fairly clear. In Japan, the impact of education on individual and social values is muted, in comparison with its role in the United States in differentiating among individuals in their personal values. This finding is evident from comparing the coefficients for education (EDU) and the interaction between education and Japan (JAPAN X EDU) in the several models of Table 3. In 11 of the 12 regressions of the value items, the interaction term has the opposite sign from the main effect; in nine of the regressions the interaction term operates to reduce the magnitude in Japan of the educational effect—for example, for "Avoid wrong means" (Var7A5) the educational effect is .273 in the United States but .062 in Japan; for "Life without children is empty" (Var7A7) the comparable effects are -.291 and -.083 respectively.

The muted returns to education in Japan, in comparison with the United States, suggest much greater value homogeneity in Japan, at least with respect to educational attainment.⁹ In the United States, education is a primary indicator of social class, and the values held by Americans—with respect to cultural views, family and community responsibilities—are greatly influenced by class; indeed, by the educational component of class (Ishida 1993). In Japan,

Table 3. Regression of Value Items on Individual Characteristics
(unstandardized coefficients, OLS Estimates)^a

Independent Variable ^b	1. Success Through Effort & Luck	2. Money Is Central	3. Say What You Think	4. Remember Kindness	5. Avoiding Wrong Means	6. Cannot Trust Non-Believers
Intercept	3.39**	2.29**	2.90**	3.71**	2.21**	2.25**
Japan	-0.48**	-0.08	-0.51**	-0.02	0.85**	-1.43**
Fem	0.03	-0.35**	-0.31**	0.08**	0.19**	0.18**
A2 (36-45)	0.01	-0.23*	-0.49**	0.01	0.15	0.06
A3 (46-55)	0.07	-0.29**	-0.54**	-0.05	0.25**	-0.01
A4 (56-65)	-0.01	-0.26*	-0.67**	0.05	0.22**	0.10
A5 (>65)	0.03	-0.25*	-0.62**	-0.03	0.04	0.43**
EDU (cont)	0.01	-0.19**	-0.10**	0.03**	0.27**	-0.28**
Japan x Fem	-0.04	0.22**	-0.10	0.01	-0.10	-0.27**
Japan x A2	-0.22	-0.23	0.22	0.11**	0.07	-0.01
Japan x A3	-0.32**	-0.15	0.33*	0.18**	0.04	0.12
Japan x A4	-0.08	-0.14	0.51**	0.11	0.12	0.17
Japan x A5	0.01	-0.22	0.60**	0.21**	0.42**	0.15
Japan x EDU	-0.06	0.13**	0.06	-0.05**	-0.21**	0.20**
R ²	0.10	0.03	0.04	0.02	0.07	0.16

Independent Variable ^b	7. Fulfillment Through Children	8. Respect Elderly	9. Participate in Local Activities	10. Priority to Job Obligations	11. Proud of Country	12. Sacrifice Lifestyle for Society
Intercept	3.01**	3.07**	2.35**	2.20**	3.44**	2.26**
Japan	0.33**	-0.45**	0.30**	0.29	-0.05	-1.01**
Fem	0.27**	0.06	0.07	0.04	0.14**	-0.12
A2 (36-45)	0.11	0.06	0.03	-0.31	0.06	-0.02
A3 (46-55)	0.02	0.06	-0.02	0.04	0.17**	-0.05
A4 (56-65)	0.41**	-0.18	0.15	-0.19	0.18**	-0.12
A5 (>65)	0.70**	-0.11	0.29**	0.09	0.20**	0.09
EDU (cont)	-0.29**	-0.16**	0.17**	-0.20**	0.03	0.08**
Japan x Fem	-0.50**	0.06	-0.07	-0.26**	-0.10	-0.10
Japan x A2	0.07	0.11	0.27**	0.34**	0.16	0.33**
Japan x A3	0.24	0.08	0.52*	0.41**	0.16	0.73**
Japan x A4	-0.02	0.50**	0.35**	0.77**	0.28**	0.92**
Japan x A5	-0.26	0.57**	0.30**	0.48**	0.33**	1.00
Japan x EDU	0.21**	0.14**	-0.15**	0.17**	-0.13**	0.12**
R ²	0.12	0.01	0.04	0.13	0.07	0.05

Notes: Significance levels at ** $p < .01$ and * $p < .05$.

^aHigh score means agreement with statement.

^bDeleted items for categorical variables are U.S., male, age A1(<35).

our data suggest that this is not the case; the variation in educational attainment in that country simply does not translate into value differences. In Japan, the values articulated by the less educated are closer to those of the better educated than is the case in the United States.

Gender Effects

The pattern of gender effects is more complex and requires a consideration of the specific values. First note that for many of the values there is no significant difference between Japan and the United States with respect to gender effects. This is true for: "Success derives from individual effort and luck" (Var7A1), "One should not forget kindness" (Var7A4), "Avoid wrong means" (Var7A5), "Respect for the elderly" (Var7A8), "Importance of social activity" (Var7A9), "Pride of country" (Var7A11), and "Sacrifice lifestyle for society" (Var7A12). There are gender effects in some of these values (significant FEM term); for example, women are less likely than men to agree that "One should be honest even if it hurts another" (Var7A3), and more likely to agree that "One should not employ wrong means to get ahead" (Var7A5). However, there are no country differences here in the magnitude of the gender effects (in significant interaction with FEM). Japanese and American women respond in much the same way.

Relative to men in the two countries, Japanese women are less likely than American women to be child-centered (Var7A7), to see loyalty to one's job as more important than commitment to family (Var7A10), or to see a belief in religion as central to the trustworthiness of individuals (Var7A6). The responses to values about children (Var7A7) and loyalty to the job (Var7A10) may seem counter to what was reported earlier, namely, the greater child-centeredness of Japanese society, and the greater willingness in Japan to permit the intrusion of job responsibilities into the household. Those, however, are country effects; what is reported here refers to country differences in the discrepancy between men and women. These findings should be viewed as superimposed upon the country effects. A final significant gender interaction relates to (Var7A2), "Money can solve almost anything." American women are considerably less likely to subscribe to this value than American men (FEM = -.35); in Japan, by contrast, the gender gap is small (-.13), suggesting a consensus between the sexes on the importance of money. Yet, we would say that what dominates the findings in this section is the rather similar impact of gender in the two countries. In the majority of the regressions on value items the interaction between gender and the country term is insignificant. Gender affects the value orientations in much the same way in Japan and in the United States. This finding is surprising and, to us, unexpected.¹⁰

Age Effects

It is important to keep in mind that, in addition to capturing aging effects, the age groups constitute cohorts with different historical memories. Five age groups were created: Younger than 35 (the omitted term in the regressions), 36-45, 46-55, 56-65, and older than 65. The impact of World War II was deeply experienced by those Japanese who were young individuals at the time of the war and are now over age 55 (Lock 1993, p. 81). The economic and psychological aftermath of the war also affected subsequent generations. Only the youngest cohort has lived in a prosperous nation that did not experience the direct economic and psychological impact of the war and the subsequent American occupation. In the case of the United States, World War II also had a generational impact, but the trauma to the American psyche was probably less dramatic than that created by the Great Depression and less divisive than that created by the Vietnam War.

Taking the main effects of age as a base (the U.S. values) and examining the pattern of interaction effects between JAPAN and the age terms, we can say that, relative to Americans, the Japanese show a consistent increase with age in the beliefs that success arises from effort and luck (Var7A1), that honesty is more important than tactfulness (Var7A3), that immoral means should be avoided in getting ahead (Var7A5), that elders should be respected for their age (Var7A8), that one should feel national pride (Var7A11), and that one should sacrifice lifestyle for the society (Var7A12). In each case there is a clear tendency for age to be more positively associated with the value in Japan than in the United States. These findings reinforce the view of Japan as an age-stratified society. *In Japan, age differentiates among individuals in the values they hold, just as we observed earlier that education differentiates among Americans in the values that they hold.*

With respect to the remaining values, we find no age differences between the countries in the importance of money for solving all problems (Var7A2), or in lack of trust in non-believers (Var7A6). The interaction terms are not significant; thus we cannot reject the null hypothesis that Americans and Japanese display identical age trends in these two values. With respect to (Var7A9), "Community participation" and (Var7A10) "Priority of job obligations over family commitments" there is a distinct trend to the age effects over the life cycle. In each case, the pattern in the interaction terms is curvilinear, peaking at age 46-55 for community participation (Var7A9), and at age 56-65 for priority to job obligations (Var7A10). However, if we examine the absolute effects of age in Japan, in place of the effects relative to the U.S. terms, we find that support for each value increases with age. Thus, while we are now commenting on absolute effects in Japan, and earlier we were discussing effects relative to the United States, our conclusion is much the same:

Japanese society is far more stratified by age in its structuring of values than is the case in the United States.

Our analysis of the continuous age effect, combined with some evidence of cohort effect, point to clear value differences between the youngest age group (under 35 years old) and older generations. Our data suggest that in Japan and the United States young people's eagerness to be straightforward even if it hurts others (Var7A3), combined with their belief that money can solve all problems (Var7A2), lesser commitment to maintaining moral standards (Var7A5), and lower degree of involvement in society's activities (Var7A9), contributes to similar cultural styles in both countries. Our findings suggest that the generations under 35 years, compared to older age groups, are challenging the traditional social order. This is, of course, especially striking in the case of Japan, where conformity to social norms and obedience to older generations have until now been respected. Our findings suggest that the youngest age groups in the United States and Japan have similar values.

Until Japan has shown little generational conflict despite dramatic age differences in values and beliefs. In comparison, in the United States, where the differentiating effects of age on values are less pronounced, generational conflict is far more visible (Goode 1963). How can we understand this observation? One possibility relates to how values get expressed. Much has been written, by sociologists as well as psychoanalysts, about the repressed nature of Japanese society (e.g., Benedict 1946; Roland 1988; Doi 1985) and about the array of social institutions that function to maintain a high state of social cohesion in the society, especially around age structures (Smith 1983). Thus, it is possible that expressions of values and beliefs, especially if they are likely to engender conflict, do not get translated into social activity. This is not necessarily a healthy state of affairs as it can underlie rapid and sometimes violent social change if the cohesive bonds are ever weakened.

THE IMPACT OF EDUCATION, GENDER AND AGE ON VALUE CLUSTERS

In the first analytic section of the paper we used factor analysis to describe the constellation of value orientations held by Japanese and American respondents. We saw that there were substantial similarities in how Japanese and Americans express their individual selves and that in each country a four-factor solution provides a reasonable summary of this structure. However, we noted that there were also differences in the precise items that fall within each value cluster. For that reason we hesitated to create factor scales as variables to be examined in a regression analysis and turned to the study of the individual value items and how they are influenced by characteristics of individual in each society. Using this formulation we were able to use the combined country sample to examine country differences.

Having completed the analysis of value items, we now replicate the analysis with value factors:

1. familial orientation,
2. work orientation,
3. cultural orientation, and
4. social orientation.

Each value factor was created by summing Z-scores for the component items. Omega coefficients of reliability, which are appropriate for factor analytic based scales (Zeller and Carmines 1980, pp. 59-63), are only moderate in size. (United States: .460, .421, and .311, .320; Japan: .561, .362, .322, and .445). We did not attempt to construct more refined scales since the burden of our analysis rests on the regressions of the individual value items, with the factor regressions presented only as an efficient way in which to summarize the results. Finally, since the component items in a factor differ by country (see Table 2), the regressions were carried out separately for each country. This makes tests of significance of country differences problematic; we therefore make only descriptive comparisons. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Regression of Value Factors on Individual Characteristics (Unstandardized coefficients, OLS estimates)

Independent Variables	Panel A Japanese Factors*			
	Familial Orientation	Work Orientation	Cultural Orientation	Social Orientation
Intercept	-1.4118**	0.5321**	-1.0536**	-2.0503**
FEM	-0.0690**	-0.5497**	0.2772**	-0.2638**
EDU	-0.2765**	-0.1527**	0.0229	0.0928
AGE	0.0434	0.0021	0.0180**	0.0420**
R ²	0.1022	0.0176	0.0386	0.1073
	Panel B U.S. Factors*			
	Familial Orientation	Work Orientation	Cultural Orientation	Social Orientation
Intercept	0.5225**	0.9345**	-1.3020**	-1.4706**
FEM	0.3339**	-0.2118**	0.4211**	0.1253
EDU	-0.5009**	-0.2773**	0.1271**	0.4090**
AGE	0.0134**	-0.0027	0.0174**	0.0083**
R ²	0.094	0.0387	0.0434	0.048

Notes: Component items are in factors reported in Table 2.
Level of significance * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

In the United States, a familial orientation is positively associated with female and age, and negatively with education. Otherwise said, women, older individuals, and less educated persons are more likely to report a family orientation. In Japan, the gender effect is not significant. The other variables show the same qualitative relationship to familial orientation as they do in the United States, except that the effect of education is stronger in the United States, the effect of age stronger in Japan.¹¹

In the United States, a social orientation is positively associated with education and with age; there is no gender difference in this country. In Japan, there is a gender effect (women show less of a social orientation), possibly because they are more likely to be homebound. The education and age effects are the same in sign as in the United States. However, the education effect is stronger in the United States, while the age effect is stronger in Japan.

Regarding work orientation, in the United States there is no age effect, but a gender and education effect—higher for women and the more educated. In Japan, the results are the same. There is no association of this value with age; the education effect, while qualitatively the same as in the United States, is weaker. In the United States, a cultural orientation is greater for women, and this orientation increases with education and age. In Japan, the results are similar, except that the education effect is not significant. The magnitude of the age effect is the same in the two countries.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, we find substantial differences in the structuring of values in the two post-industrial societies, the United States and Japan. Using the United States as a reference, we find that in Japan the effect of education on value differentiation is much weaker. Instead, in Japan there is a strong tendency for the value structures to be patterned in terms of age.¹² Our summary results based on the analysis of the factors are consistent with our earlier analyses based on individual items. In particular, we can draw strong conclusions about the fault lines in the stratification systems of the two societies. In the United States, differentiation of cultural values is based on education; in Japan it is age that predicts most strongly to cultural values. The second ascriptive measure that we introduced, gender, which we expected to pattern values differently in the two societies, appears to have little in the way of differential impact. The similar gender effect in the United States and Japan was surprising and there is a need for further empirical and theoretical exploration to substantiate and explain this.

Our findings regarding the role of cultural differences add to the debate about homogeneity and heterogeneity in post-industrial societies (Robertson 1995). Post-industrial societies like Japan and the United States have similar economic

structures and comparable occupational systems; at the same time their values, expressed throughout a variety of social institutions, show clear signs of cultural distinctiveness. The persistence of traditional social structures, especially an emphasis on the social meaning of age, mitigates the homogenizing impact of modern educational achievement in shaping the social order. A theoretical implication of our findings for the comparative analysis of social structures is the danger of defining a model of social organization as universal, without considering the impact of cultural differences in the way social and moral values are molded through the specific patterning of ascribed features of a society (Habib 1992).

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NOTES

1. The original report on The Generation Project (1995a) by Muller and Silver provides an overview of the research results, together with a joint Japanese and U.S. report (1995). These reports are available from the International Longevity Center, Mount Sinai School of Medicine.

2. The recent Euro-Barometers, sponsored by the Commission of the European Communities, the World Values Study, conducted by the European Value Systems Study Group (Inglehart 1990; Stoetzel 1983), and the Japanese government comprehensive survey "Japanese National Character" since 1953, are some examples of the use of comparative values research to guide policies. Some commentators have suggested that they set normative standards, perhaps steering as well as documenting social changes (Smith 1983; Research Committee for the Study of the Japanese National Character 1992; Lock 1993).

3. The term "sacrificing" reflects different meanings for Japanese and American respondents. Interviews with Japanese informants showed that for Japanese the term "sacrifice" does not connote undue effort, pain, or giving up. Rather it is experienced as a duty, an expected behavior, and a common occurrence in family and social life.

4. Another explanation for this unexpected finding may lie in a characteristic of the research instrument: the sequence of questions in the Japanese survey juxtaposed the variables 7A9 ("participate in local activities") and 7A12 ("sacrifice lifestyle for society"). The term "chūki" (neighborhood or locality) preceded the term "shakai" (nation), perhaps heightening the distinction between "local community" and "nation" in the respondents' reading of the value items as well as connoting an allegiance to the state that many Japanese have disavowed in the post-war era. Interviews with Japanese translators clarified the language and suggested this interpretation of the finding.

5. The Japanese question was not fully identical with the U.S. translation: Japanese were asked to agree or disagree with the statement "I can't trust someone who doesn't believe in a religion (shukyo)" while U.S. respondents were asked if they could "trust someone who didn't believe in God."

6. It should be noted that we also did a factor analysis using only the same 12 value items in United States and Japan, leaving out the additional items referring to "maintaining ancestors' graves" (7A13). The Japanese factor analysis showed that the factor loadings were less comparable to those of the United States and that the Japanese factors no longer made theoretical sense. Thus, we do not think that the inclusion of "maintaining ancestors' graves" (1A13) contaminated our comparative factor analysis; rather it demonstrated the theoretical importance of this value in the Japanese factor configurations.

7. One should note that volunteer associations in the United States, as well as political organizations, are national, with local chapters. This differs from Japanese neighborhood associations, which are based on geographical proximity and local interests (Imamura 1987, p. 104).

8. In Table 3, value numbers refer to the listing of variables in Table 1. In the text we characterize the values with summary descriptions.

9. We think that this observation reflects the continuous psychological scar left by the Japanese defeat in World War II. However, this is changing. The Study of the Japanese National Character (Nipponjin No Kokuminsei) shows that from 1953-1988 there has been a dramatic change in the percentage of Japanese who feel "superior," going from 20 percent in 1953 to 58 percent in 1983 (Questions 9 and 6, p. 541).

10. While gender affects value orientation in much the same way in Japan and the United States, this does not hold for economic transfers, where gender differences are clearly present. For an analysis of the impact of gender on economic transfers in Japan and the United States, see Muller and Silver (1995b).

11. While the R2 values in Table 4 are low, they are all significant at the .001 level based on a conventional F-test.

12. We cannot distinguish methodologically between these alternative explanations. However, because of the linear increase of many of the effects with age, we suspect that an aging argument is the better explanation.

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