

Perceptions towards Special Education of Japanese Parents of Children with Special Needs in the United States

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The purpose of this study was to examine Japanese parent of children with disabilities' perceptions towards special education in the United States. This study included 40 participants who were born and raised in Japan and they are now living in the United States. The results revealed that most Japanese parents still maintained some negative perceptions towards special education from its history of labeling individuals with disabilities as "abnormal" in Japanese culture. Moreover, a majority of participants agreed that America's special education was more focused on each individual's needs and promoted independence whereas Japanese ideas of special education was mainly focused on how to segregate individuals with disabilities from other people or society. Regardless of the language and cultural differences, most participants preferred American service providers who were familiar with special education systems in the U.S. Nevertheless, a significant number of participants claimed that the language barrier and difference in cultures and customs were one of the major disadvantages of receiving services from American professionals.