Post-80s employees' perceptions of typical Japanese business culture

Bachelor thesis in business administration

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Bachelor thesis within business administration

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Key words: Post-80s generation, Japanese business culture, perception

Abstract

Background: Japanese business culture is the most successful and mature business culture in eastern world which has been established during the past century. This thesis deals with the perceptions of post-80s employees' towards typical Japanese business culture since post-80s employees have become a major fresh flow in most companies and they were raised up in a totally different world with faster development of information technology which gave them absolutely different means of obtaining knowledge and news.

Purpose: The purpose of this thesis is to identify the employees of the post-80s generation's perceptions of Japanese business culture and whether there are any clashes between each other or not.

Method: The combination of deductive approach and quantitative method is used to fulfil the purpose of the thesis. A survey was conducted in Japan among 197 post-80s employees in the means of questionnaire to obtain primary data.

Conclusion: The survey results indicate that post-80s employees are satisfied with some components of the typical Japanese business culture while some components have critical clashes with the characteristics of post-80s employees. However, the result shows just the perspective of the employees but the company's views were not taken into consideration.

Table of contents

1. Introduction

1.1 Background
It is known to all that Japanese entrepreneurs have established many famous multi-national enterprises during the past century, like Sony, Hitachi, Toyota Honda etc. And Japanese economy had a big jump after the World War II although it suffered from a lost decade. Therefore, typical Japanese business culture has been established in the long run. And lots of research has been done to investigate Japanese way of management from 1970s until the early 1990s when the growing sense of crisis in Japanese management occurred since the mid-1990s (Jackson and Tomioka, 2004). Many researchers have concluded that Japanese culture is a helping hand to the success of Japanese enterprises.

Culture is the historical outcome of civilization process of human being, and culture is a significant factor for a nation or a country to move forward and improve. In business, culture is, in the terminology of management scholars, an intangible asset, a key strategic resource, and a source of sustainable competitive advantage because it is path dependent and therefore unique to each organization; because it yields value in terms of productivity, customer service, or innovation; because it is nearly impossible to deconstruct and reproduce; and because it is not available for others to acquire (Angel, 2011). Thus, for an enterprise, business culture is as important as the culture itself to a nation. That is why multi-national enterprises usually spread their business culture when they go abroad.

However, human beings are not computers or machines, so not all employees can totally accept the business culture of an enterprise because clashes may occur when the employees get their personality involved. The post-80s generation has been a major flow that is just starting their career or is looking for a job all over the world. Especially in East Asia, like Japan and China, post-80s generation has been a hot topic to be discussed. However, along with the fast development of IT technology, the education background and the way of obtaining knowledge and information have been totally different from the past generations. And different personality characteristics may be established as well. So problems may arise when youths start to work right after graduation from school. Therefore, what do the young generation think of the existing Japanese culture? Do they think it is still an advantage or do they think it needs to be updated? Will any clashes occur?

1.2 Problem Discussion
A lot of work has been done about identifying the Japanese business culture, both in western and eastern perspectives. Also, many researchers have also tried to analyze the different personality characteristics that the post-80s generation posses, especially in Japan and China. But very few contributions can be found about the link or clash of the two topics. Facts have shown that many differences can be seen from generation to generation and the world has never been so small because of the rapid development of internet technology, which makes the youths that were born between 1980 and 1989 are significantly different from the past generations. What's more, this generation has become the major fresh flood of most companies. So I think it can be interesting and worthy to indentify and analyze the post-80s generation's perceptions of typical Japanese business culture. And it can be helpful for those young employees who are working or

interested in working in a Japanese enterprise. Also, it may give the managers an overall view of understanding their new employees in order to help them to gain employees' loyalty to the enterprises since loyalty issue is one of the most critical issues regarding human resource management in a company (Durkin, 2005).

1.3 Purpose
The purpose of this thesis is to identify the employees of the post-80s generation's perceptions of Japanese business culture and whether there are any clashes between typical characteristics of post-80s generation and Japanese business culture.

Research Questions
1. What are the post-80s generation's perceptions of typical Japanese business culture?
2. Are there any clashes between post-80s personality characteristics and Japanese business culture?

1.4 Perspective
There will be different opinions and results to conduct a search from different perspectives. So understanding the perspective in the beginning of the research is very important when writing the thesis in order to avoid a random walk. The purpose of this thesis is to identify the post-80s employee's perception of Japanese business culture, so the research is mainly conducted from the employees' perspective.

1.5 Definitions
Post-80s generation means the generation of people who were born between the year of 1980 and 1989, that is to say, those who are 22 or 31 in the year of 2011. When divided more specifically, the group of people born between 1980 and 1983 are called early post-80s, the group born between 1984 is called middle post-80s and the group born between 1987 and 1989 are called late post-80s.

Business culture is kind of social phenomena that are established when commercial trade is made during a long period. Business culture is always linked with commercial activities and may change according to the change of commercial trend in the long run (Xue, 2002)

1.6 Delimitation
I am generally satisfied with the result of the survey. However, I have also understood that the population of post-80s employees is pretty large. The expected number of respondents was set at 246 but the actual valid number of questionnaire is 197 due to time limitation. What's more, the survey was conducted in Hyogo Prefecture in Japan, so restriction of geography should be taken into consideration as well. And distributors of questionnaire live closely with most respondents, so many of them work in several same organizations. So their perceptions may represent a group of people's view in certain area but I still believe this survey can give a bird eye of the general perceptions of the post-80s employees of Japanese business culture because it is believed that post-80s generation shares many characteristics in common.

1.7 Methodology

Understanding the research philosophy is crucial to a researcher in the very beginning since the philosophy will always drive the direction of your mind in the process of conducting the research. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill(2007), the research philosophy adopted in the research contains important assumptions about the way in which the world is viewed. What's more, the strategy and the methods chosen in the research will be influence by the research philosophy.

In my thesis, positivism is adopted as the general research philosophy. Positivism is always adopted by natural scientists to discover or test physical theories. Those who prefer to adopt positivism usually like to work with an observable social reality. What's more, they expect law-like generalizations similar to those produced by the physical and natural scientists at the end of the research (Remenyi, Williams, Money& Swartz, 1998). According to Suanders et al. (2007), another important component of this philosophy is that the research is the research is undertaken in a value-free way as far as possible. I use literature review as secondary data to build frame of reference in my research and conduct a survey to find primary data in order to answer my research questions. So it is not possible for me to influence the result of the survey, neither can I estimate the result of the survey which means the research is believed to be totally independent. Therefore, finding out a social reality is the basic purpose of my research. So I believe positivism suits my research best.

2. Frame of reference

2.1 Definition of culture and business culture

Culture has always been a very hot topic to be discussed, especially in the past few decades, when trades across boundaries are more and more common. Various definitions of culture are presented by different researchers. According to Hofstede (1991), culture refers to the systems of meaning-values, beliefs, expectations and goals-shared by members of a particular group of people and that distinguish them from members of other groups. It is a product of "the collective programming of the mind", that is, it is acquired through regular interaction with other members of the group. What's more, Schein (2010) argues that culture is an abstraction, yet the forces that are created in social and organizational situations deriving from culture are powerful. If we don't understand the operation of these forces, we become victim to them. Cultural forces are powerful because they operate outside of our awareness. We need to understand them not only because of their power but also because they help to explain many of our puzzling and frustrating experiences in social and organizational life. Most importantly, understanding culture forces enables us to understand ourselves and others better.

However, what is the difference between culture and business culture? Culture itself is a broad and old concept, but business culture is a relatively new concept which has a trend to be especially significant in nowadays society. National culture surely plays an important role in the established of business culture. Business culture is kind of social phenomena that are established when commercial trade is made during a long period. Business culture is always linked with commercial activities and may change according to the change of commercial trend in the long run (Xue, 2002). A good understanding of business culture can make business activities more efficient and active.

2.2 Japanese society in cultural perspective

National culture is the cornerstone of the establishment of national business culture. Therefore, understanding some facts of national culture of Japan will help to give a bird's view of Japanese business culture.

Hofstede's four dimensions

Between 1967 and 1973 Hofstede for the first time made a survey among 116,000 IBM employees in 40 different countries using a questionnaire containing about 150 questions enquiring about their preferences in terms of management style and work environment (Hofstede, 1980). Out of 150 items were 32, which Hofstede labeled as work-related values. For each of the 40 countries he calculated an average mark in relation to each of the 32 work-related values. Taking the 32 "average-nation" values he generated a correlation matrix, which was then factor analyzed (Gooderham & Nordhaug, 2005). The initial analysis revealed three factors, the largest of which Hofstede sub-divided thereby creating four value dimensions: Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Individualism-Collectivism and Masculinity-Femininity. So he compared each of the 40 national cultures in his sample. But these dimensions are not intended to describe individuals but are descriptions of national norms, that is to say, descriptions of a group of people who share similar culture background. The four dimensions give a hand to have a good understanding of a country or an organization in a culture perspective. And it also helps those management level to understand their employees' feelings as well as for entrepreneurs when they want to go abroad.

Power Distance

This dimension shows a society's degree of expecting and accepting a high degree of inequality in organizations. In a society with a large power distance, organizations are more likely to be operated with strict hierarchies and characterized by subordinates who are unwilling or do not dare to challenge their superiors, which means, the boss is always the boss. Instead, in a society with a small power distance subordinates are expected to be consulted by the boss and the ideal boss is a resourceful democrat rather than a benevolent autocrat (Gooderham & Nordhaug, 2005). The table given shows examples of small and large power distance.

Small Power Distance	Large Power Distance
Those in power should try to be less powerful than they are.	Those in power should try to look as powerful as possible
People at different power levels feel less threatened and likely to trust people	Other people are a potential threat to one's power and can seldom be trusted

Uncertainty avoidance

This dimension indicates the extent to which a society prefers predictability, security and stability. In societies with strong uncertainty avoidance written and unwritten rules are emotionally needed. Therefore organizations in these societies always set formal rules in order to guide people. What's more, work situations are highly structured with

clearly defined task roles and responsibilities. And societies with weak uncertainty avoidance have the opposite image (Hofstede, 1994). The table below shows some differences between weak and strong uncertainty avoidance.

Weak Uncertainty Avoidance	Strong Uncertainty Avoidance
There is more willingness to take risks. Uncertain situations are acceptable	There is great concern with security in life and career stability is needed.

Individualism-collectivism

This dimension refers to the extent to which people in a society are likely to care about themselves and their family members or close friends rather than some wider collectivity such as an entire organization or the whole society. In a society with high collectivism, people prefer to distinguish work life from private life sharply and individuals prefer in work settings where they can make their own decisions (Hofstede, 1991). The table shows what individualists and collectivists insist respectively.

Individualist	Collectivist
Identity is based in the individual. Autonomy, variety and pleasure are sought in the system	Identity is based in the social system. Order is provided by the organization.

Masculinity-femininity

In a masculine society, assertiveness, competitiveness and materialism are valued whereas values of relationships and the quality of life count for more in a feminine society. In terms of career life, people in a masculine society are task-oriented and motivation more materialistic. However, people in a feminine society will aim for harmonious relations with a strong emphasis on social partnership (Hofstede, 1994). The table shows some typical characteristics of both masculine and feminine societies.

Masculine	Feminine
Money and things are important. Performance is what matters. Ambition drives actions. People are likely to admire successful achievers.	People and the environment are relatively important. Quality of life matters more. Service provides the drive. One shows sympathy with the unfortunate.

Hofstede's four dimensions in Japan

According to Hofstede's rankings among 50 countries and 3 regions (East Africa, West Afroda and Arabic countries) in 1993 in terms of the four dimensions, the analysis for Japan is dramatically different from other Asian Countries such as Korea or India(See appendix 1). In Japan Masculinity is the highest characteristic which ranks the first among all 53 countries or regions. The lowest ranking factor is power distance, ranking 33 out of 53. The uncertainty avoidance ranks relatively high as well which is 7th. And Japan is a more collectivist culture that avoids risks and shows little value for personal freedom. Therefore, we can say that the masculinity and uncertainty avoidance in Japan are very high while the power individualism is relatively low or medium. Below is a table showing Hofstede's four dimensions in Japan.

Power Distance	Low
Uncertainty avoidance	Very High
Individualism-collectivism	Neutral
Masculinity-femininity	Extremely Masculine

2.3 Japanese business culture

During the past century, a number of worldwide popular Japanese enterprises have been established and they share very similar business culture. A lot of research has been done both in western and eastern perspectives. Therefore, after a detailed comparison of different research results, I sum up some typical Japanese business culture from different researchers.

Significance of belonging: work is life

Japan is a country in lack of natural resources in order to maintain and develop a modern economy, so the Japanese people have to sell products throughout the world which makes Japanese people have to dedicate most of their life into working (Price Waterhouse, 1994). And the sense that work is life and life is work has deeply settled down in most of Japanese people. In this way it is not strange that most Japanese people regard their companies as large families or clans in which all members share a common identity. It is quite common that people talk about work in their social or family life. The fact that roughly 30% of all employees of large corporations find jobs through personal contacts suggests the importance of personal recommendations and connections prior to employment (Alston & Takei, 2005). Moreover, lifetime employment is still fairly common in Japan which means that many employees start to work in an organization since they graduate from school until they retire and never change jobs. What's more, Japanese organizations are community style, not functional style which means that people do not distinguish work life from private life clearly and it happens that those who have retired are still involved in the organizations (Guirdham, 2009). Furthermore, it is quite common for Japanese to go to socialize when off work together with colleagues where work is still the main topic on the table (Debroux, 2003)..

Equality

In both Japanese society and business there is a strong feeling in favor of equality in spite of strict social hierarchies with different levels of prestige and decision making capability. Equality can be found in all fields of life in Japan since conformity plays a central role to the Japanese personality. Equality in Japanese business means both equal in economic and mentally. One of the facts can be that all new employees of graduates would have the same salary five years after entry and afterwards different levels of positions may be assigned (Guirdham, 2009). However, equality in gender does not have a good example in Japanese companies. Alston and Takei (2005) argues that women have fewer chances of gaining a lifelong time employment status than men and few women work in high levels of a company that offer them any authority or decision making ability. What's more, women are also more likely to work part-time and get retired to be a full-time housewife after marriage although a law bans gender discrimination in Japan.

Decision-making process

Decision-making in a Japanese organization is almost always a cooperative outcome. Managers in the high level usually have the authority to make decisions but it is seldom done in this way. However, Decision-making is always bottom up which is known as the ringi system. A junior in the low level writes a proposal to be admitted by the higher level and the process is followed the same until decided by the decision level. The process is long and troublesome but when a decision is made, people are committed to it and actions follow in a fast speed (Schwartz & Sagiv, 1995). However, decision making within a Japanese company may take a long time because consensus usually has to be obtained among competing groups.

Networking: Win-Win approach

Maintaining harmony among people is so significant in a Japanese company which may dominate all business decisions. Therefore, relationship plays an important role in Japanese business, both inside or outside an organization which means guanxi counts in Japanese business as well like in other East Asian countries. Nothing in Japanese business is finished without strong networking and consultation which results in the importance of the ability of relating to others and being part of extensive communication channels. The person who can develop the best private and public relationships will always bring a success (Debroux, 2003). Japanese people always try to avoid conflicts in business but it may occur sometimes due to the clash of interests of both parties. When conflicts happen, win-win approach will always be the way of negotiating. It is important not to make others lose face in Japanese business culture.

Loyalty

As mentioned above, relationship is important in Japanese business and lifelong employment is still common. So loyalty must play a significant role. Japanese business interpersonal relationships are based on cooperation that in turn is established by the development of loyalty through mutual interests and identification. Japanese corporations employ mostly on the basis of personal character and especially on the potential for company loyalty and the ability of cooperation (Nottage, Wolff & Anderson, 2008). So most Japanese employees have a strong sense of loyalty to their companies.

The hierarchical rule

Deference to sniors and superiors in Japan is very high. One of the most persuasive facts is the language. The Japanese language is conveyed in different ways when you speak to your boss and your colleagues. Employees in low levels are expected to use very polite forms of speech when talking with managers or seniors. Instead, managers use less polite ways of language with speaking with lower levels (Nottage, Wolff & Anderson, 2005). Guirdham (2005) argues that even one year age gap is very significant in traditional Japanese companies. Employees in low levels always have no authority to make important decisions which must be guided by their managers. Usually, in a Japanese organization, senior executives meet on a monthly basis to determine policy, divide contracts among themselves and allocate resources and then give instructions to lower levels of managers (Alston & Takei, 2005).

Lack of innovation and entrepreneurialism

Most researchers take a negative view on innovation and entrepreneurialism of Japanese business in recent decades. Few new businesses appear and most businesses are those worldwide famous businesses that were founded more than half a century ago. Since the lost decade happened, innovation and entrepreneurialism in Japanese business have suffered a tough period (Nottage, Wolff & Anderson, 2008). Guirdham (2009) also did a research among Japanese employees and concluded that creativity is harmed in Japanese business. He also argues that Japanese companies have to adopt new values of innovation and creativity while retaining their core values. One of the reasons of lacking of innovation can be the worry of risk. Because after the World War II, Japanese business grew fast and there was no real need for radical decisions and the goal was simply not to make mistakes (Nottage, Wolff & Anderson, 2008).

Lack of clarification of individual responsibilities

As mentioned above, Japanese organizations mostly operate like families. So In most Japanese organizations roles and responsibilities are not clearly split up by functions. There is a lot of overlap in Japanese organizations. Therefore, it takes up to two years before a new employee becomes effective. According to Froomin (1964), in Japanese corporations new employees are hired as general members but no specific assignments will be given and knowledge of how to solve a specific job is always taught in many years. What's more, employees always work from one department to another to generalize all knowledge needed. This is a good explanation to the reason why many Japanese have never changed any jobs.

2.4 A summary of Japanese business culture

Elements of Japanese business culture	Perceived characteristics
Personalism in employment and work relations	Organizations are communities of their employees. Work is life and life is work.

Organizational structure	Not determined by function. Stuff are generalists rather than specialists
Equality and Hierarchy	Deference to seniors and superiors is very high. Gender discrimination exists in work.
Basis for decision-making	Consensus; information is widely dispersed. Bottom up process.
Attitude to risk	Risk averse
Innovativeness Entrepreneurialism	Low(Except in technological products) but good modifiers
Business norms	Delivering on undertakings is normative;
Business communication style	Low-key, high context, conflict avoided
Change	Need for change is widely recognized and some is happening but there is resistance.
Personalism in business control and decision-making	High personal relations outweigh systems
Governance	Weak
Business relations with government	Minor
Negotiation style and approach	Negotiations are part of a relationship-balanced approach

2.5 The post-80s generation

The definition of "post-80s generation" will be given in details in this session and typical characteristics the post-80s generation possesses which distinguish them from other generations will be explained as well.

Definition of generation

Generation is a frequently used term in marketing management to identity certain subgroups in order to set different marketing strategies. Rogler (2002) defines generation as a classification of people born in the same year or in a certain period of time sharing similar values, attitudes, and life styles shaped by the particular outside environment. Different generations have different symbols and different characteristics that connect

them to the one group and differentiate them from the other group (Rogler, 2002). The members of each generation are bound together by an intricate network of perceptions, judgments, feelings, and aspirations (Johanna, 1988).

Definition of post-80s generation

The term I use in my thesis post-80s generally means the generation that were born between 1980 and 1989. One of the reasons why I am interested in this target generation is because I am one of them and this generation is the major fresh flow of blood in Japanese enterprises and will take over more important positions in the coming decade as well. What's more, the way of education and obtaining information for this generation is totally different from the past generations because of the fast development of IT technology and method of news spread. Therefore, the post-80s generation posses some significantly different characteristics form other generations. Some researchers also divide the post-80s generation into three sub-groups, namely, late post-80s generation meaning those born between 1987 and 1989, middle post-80s meaning those born between 1984 and 1986 and early post-80s meaning those born between 1980 and 1983(Imanashi, 2005).

Typical characteristics post-80s generation possess

Although living in different parts of the world, post-80s generation shares many similarities in terms of habits and personality characteristics. Since the post-80s generations were growing up in a richer and more diverse society than before, they behave more open-minded and better educated than the generations before. Some researchers have concluded that youth share more things in common than other age groups and thus can be considered as a global market segment (Parmar, 2002; Tully, 1994). Young people all around the world show amazing similarities in taste, language and attitude. They have similar shopping habits such as music, fashion, film, video games, and sports products (Parmar, 2002). An example can be that it has been a trend that post-80s generation around the world like Apple products, Nike clothing, drinking coke etc. An experiment by an advertisement company in the USA videotaped post-80s rooms in 25 countries and found out that from the gear and posters on display, it was difficult to tell whether the rooms are in London, Mexico City, or Tokyo (Tully, 1994).

The Otaku (お宅) generation: The home and indoor generation

Otaku in Japanese language can mean home, indoor, room and so on. But in recent years it generally means those people who mostly stay indoors playing video games, blogging, watching cartoon, chatting online and so on but do not go out that often. It was a negative word but it becomes neutral since there is a serious phenomenon in Japanese society that the post-80s generation is the biggest group of people that stay indoors most of the time. They are crazy for electronic devices and they spend a lot of time and money on the renewal of these stuff. They prefer to chat online but not talk in person as the means of communication (Imanashi, 2005). This phenomenon has resulted in bad communication skills the post-80s generation posses and the weak ability of shouldering responsibilities and facing difficulties (Kiyoka, 2009).

Individualism and in search for freedom and adventure

Japan is always described as a very collective society because it has a long tradition for Japanese to have family and society as the basis of their values. However, it has not changed so much on the post-80s generation. They still share the basic values with the older generation, but a survey research by Imanashi (2005) has shown that some points need to be highlighted. The research shows that the post-80s generation in Japan are more martial driven and they have a more strong sense of individualism and independence. It was quite common in Japan that children lived with parents all the time, even when they started to work and got married. But changes have occurred on the post-80s who prefer to live in the dormitory provided by their employers (Kiyoka, 2009).

Furthermore, the technology has never been so rapidly developed before, so the world is becoming much smaller than before. Travelling, doing business, studying across boundaries has been pretty common among the generation of post-80s which give them a broad perspective of the world. The means of obtaining knowledge, information and news have changed from passive receivers to active searchers. One phenomena can be the widely and popularly use of Google, Facebook, twitter and any other kind of information database or social networks. So the post-80s generation is more interested in searching for freedom, adventure and uncertainties rather than conservativeness which the past generations of Japanese people always keep.

Therefore, the general characteristics of the post-80s generation different from other generations can be summarized as more independent, better education, worse communication skills in person, searching for freedom and adventure.

3. Method
3.1 Research Approach: Deductive or Inductive?

Easterby-Smith et al. (2002) argue that knowledge of the different research traditions enables researchers to adapt research design to cater for constraints. According to Saunders et al. (2007), two approaches are commonly used by researchers, namely deductive approach and inductive approach or combining research approaches. In this session I will explain both approaches and gives explanations to the approach adopted in my research.

Deductive approach is usually adopted to test theories by building hypotheses and to search to explain the casual relationships between variables. The deductive approach dictates that the researcher should be independent of what is being observed (Saunders et al., 2007). According to Saunders et al. (2007), quantitative data collection is preferably adopted used than qualitative but it is not impossible. However, one disadvantage of this approach is that it may not permit alternative explanations of what is going on (Saunders et al., 2007).

An alternative choice of research approach is inductive approach, which means to build theories. Theories will follow data rather than vice versa as with deduction (Saunders et al., 2007). Inductive approach is always associated with qualitative data collection to understand better the nature of a problem. But researchers adopting inductive approach

probably also take the risk of resource consuming and it is possible to result efforts paid in vain.

Both approaches have advantages and disadvantages. Therefore, choosing a suitable approach for my research design would be the first important step to move forward about methodology. Considering the fact that I will find out the relationship or clash between the Japanese business culture and the post-80 employees, so I think deductive approach is better in my research. And I think this approach will help my research result in a more efficient and more appropriate way.

3.2 Research purpose categorization

According to Saunders et al (2007), the purpose of a research can be categorized as exploratory study, descriptive study and explanatory study. And in some cases, the purpose of a research can be more than one. Also, Robson (2002) points out that the purpose of enquiry may change over time.

I would like to categorize my research purpose as an exploratory study because an exploratory study is always employed to understand a problem and to assess phenomena in a new light (Robson, 2002). However, Robson (2002) argues that an explanatory study's emphasis is on studying a situation or a problem in order to explain the relationships between variables and the object of a descriptive study is to portray an accurate profile of persons, events or situations, neither of which suits my research purpose. My research purpose is to identify Japanese business culture and post-80s personality and find out the clash between the two concepts which is to understand a problem and throw light on this phenomenon. Therefore, an exploratory is suitable for my research purpose.

3.3 Research Strategy: Survey

Research strategy is chosen based on research approach and research purpose. The survey strategy is usually associated with deductive approach and exploratory purpose (Saunders et al, 2007), so I choose survey strategy to conduct my research. The survey will be conducted among the post-80s employees in Hyogo Prefecture in Japan to find out the clashes between Japanese business culture and post-80s employees' personality characteristics. Surveys are popular as they allow the collection of a large amount of data from a sizeable population in a highly economical way (cited from cited in Saunders et al., 2007, P138).

The population I would like to investigate is the whole population of the generation of post-80s employees in Japanese enterprises. Therefore, the population is very large. So I believe survey is the best research strategy I can choose. What's more, the purpose of my research is to identify the clashes between Japanese business culture and post-80s employees' personality characteristics, and the survey strategy allows me to collect quantitative data that I can analyze quantitatively using statistics tools. In addition, the data collected using a survey strategy can be used to suggest possible reasons for particular relationships between variables and to produce models of relationships (cited in Saunders et al, 2007, P138), so the survey strategy gives another advantage of analyzing the two variables in my thesis research.

3.4 Research Method: Quantitative and qualitative methods

There are two types of data collection methods when conducting a research, namely quantitative method and qualitative method. Saunders et al. (2007) argues that one way of distinguishing between quantitative data and qualitative data is the focus on numeric or non-numeric data. Different types of data will decide different choices of data collection techniques. Quantitative method usually employs the technique of questionnaire to obtain numeric data while qualitative method usually employs interviews to get descriptive data such as words. Both methods have advantages and disadvantages, but clear research questions and objectives can help researchers to ensure the suitable method.

The purpose of my thesis is to identify the clashes the personality characteristics of post-80s employees and Japanese business culture, so the population is the whole post-80s employs and it is relatively very large. So I think it is more suitable to adopt quantitative method which can help me get numeric data that can be analyzed with statistical tools.

3.5 Data collection and analysis: Primary data and secondary data
Generally there are two ways of collecting data in the process of research, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data are those data that are collected and published for the first time and for some specific purposes. There are many means of collecting primary data as well, like interviews or questionnaires which are mostly popular used (Saunders et al, 2007). Secondary data are those data that have been collected and published for some purposes by other researchers. Some examples of secondary data can be documentary data and survey-based secondary data.

In my thesis research, I used both primary and secondary data collection. Primary data would be collected from survey to answer my research questions by questionnaire. I used both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics as the tools to analyze the primary data collected by questionnaire. With the help of SPSS (Statistical Product and Service Solutions) software, graphs and tables will be displayed to convey empirical findings and statistics concepts such as mean, frequency etc were analyzed as well. And secondary data were used to understand typical Japanese business culture and post-80s personality characteristics mainly by literature review both in paper and online. Because a lot of research has been done in terms of the two areas, I think enough information and evidence can be got by literature review. With the help of Jönköping University Library, I have successfully found out enough secondary data by means of books, journals and online materials. I used several key words to find secondary data out, and the key words are "Japanese business culture". " Japanese corporate culture", "Business culture in Asia", "Japanese human resource management", " Post-80s", "Generation Y", "Organizational culture and so on.

3.6 Sample size

Calculating the sample size is crucial to a research because it is the first action step to get close to the research method. Many approaches are available to calculate the sample size and Sapsford & Jupp (2006) points out that adequate sample size can minimize

type and type II errors when conducting data analysis, which is very significant to my research. Based on the formula suggested by Creative Research Systems:

$$SS = \frac{P * (1 - P) * Z^2}{C^2}$$

Where:

SS: Sample Size

Z = Z value. The Z value is decided by confidence level, which is always set to be 95% in business research. Therefore Z value is 1.96 according to index.

p = percentage picking a choice, expressed as decimal. Since our scale is from 1 to 5, the percentage of picking one scale in a question is 20% = 0.2.

c = confidence interval, expressed as decimal. Confidence interval is chosen as 5% = 0.05. Therefore, the sample size is calculated to be 246.

Taking the low response rate of online questionnaire, I decided to conduct paper questionnaires. Because I was not in Japan where the survey was conducted, I requested four Japanese friends to help me do the questionnaire distribution tasks. All of them live in single apartments where many young employees can be easily got in touch with, and each of them was given the task to reach a number of questionnaires which meant he or she would stop doing the task when his or her quantity was reached. The questionnaire was distributed in Hyogo Prefecture in Japan in a period of two weeks from November 5, 2011 to November 19, 211. What's more, gender was also taken into consideration when the survey was conducted which meant that distributors of the questionnaire tried to balance the female and male respondents.

3.7 Sampling method

There are generally two basic sampling methods: probability sampling and non-probability sampling methods. According to Burn and Bush (2000), for probability sampling, the elements' chance of being selected from the population is known and is usually the same for all elements. Instead, for non-probability sampling, the probability of each element being selected form the population is unknown and list of all elements are not available (Burns, A. C., & Bush, R, F.). The population of my research is the whole population of post-80s employees, so it is impossible to obtain a sampling frame. Therefore, non-probability sampling method is better to be chosen in my research.

Non-probability sampling method includes quota sampling, purposive sampling, snowball sampling, self-selection sampling and convenience sampling. Convenience sampling will be adopted in my case because of time and economic limitations. An advantage of convenience sampling is that it is usually easy to be conducted and data are obtained more quickly. And one of the major disadvantages of this approach is that it is prone to bias and influences that are beyond control. However, these problems are less important where there is little variation in the population (cited in Saunders et al, 2007). This is a good aspect in my case, because I regard the population of post-80s employees

as a big unit since they share typical personality characteristics. Therefore, I believe sampling method can still help represent the whole population in my research.

3.8 Questionnaire Design

Taking the relatively large sample size into consideration, I decided it should not take longer than 3 minutes to finish answering the questionnaire by the respondent. Also, considering the bad English knowledge normal Japanese possess, the questionnaire was totally in Japanese language. The questionnaire consists of four general descriptive questions concerning about respondents' general information, 9 rating questions and one choice question about Japanese business culture which can be chosen from the rating answers, that is to say, from strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree. The four general descriptive questions are raised to obtain general information of the respondents, respectively, the year of birth, gender, years of working and their education background. The 9 rating questions are raised to ask respondents' general perceptions of the current Japanese business culture from the scale of strongly disagree to the scale of strongly agree.

Question one and question two are based to get the respondents' perception of company as family because it is believed that sense of belonging is one of the most important component of Japanese business culture. Question two is used to capture the respondents' feeling of equality in their companies. From question three to question nine, questions are raised in order to get the respondents' perception of significance of belonging, equality, decision-making process, importance of relationship, loyalty, the hierarchical rule, lack of innovation, and lack of clarification in Japanese companies respectively. The last question is a choice question to be selected by the respondents which existing component of the current Japanese business culture needs to change most badly.

3.9 Pilot test

Thomas (2004) describes that a pilot test is always important before the questionnaire is distributed, which means that some tests among a small number of people can give positive or negative feedbacks in order to improve the quality of the questionnaire. Therefore, the pilot test was conducted among the four Japanese distributors before sending out the questionnaires to respondents. Generally positive feedbacks were given because of the easy understanding of the questions listed. But when the large sample size and time limit were taken into consideration seriously, at last I decided to decrease the rating questions from 15 to 10 and add one choice question after discussing with the four distributors.

3.10 Reliability and validity

Reliability is the extent to which an experiment, test, or any measuring procedure yields the same result on repeated trials (Saunders et al. 2007). Robson (2002) lists four general threats to reliability, namely, subject or participant error, subject or participant bias, observer error and observer bias.

Validity refers to the extent to which a research accurately reflects or evaluates the specific concept that the researcher is attempting to do (Sauders et al. 2005). Researchers should concern about both external and internal validity. According Sauders et al. (2007), external validity refers to the extent to which the results of a study can be generalizable or transferable. And internal validity states the "true" causes of the results that you observe in your research.

The best way of making my research reliable is to send out as many questionnaires as possible in many different regions but it is not possible due to the limitations of all kinds of resources. So I have to say my research may have been restricted in a certain group of people located in a certain area. Therefore, I doubt about the external validity of my research to some degree since I did not use probability sampling due to the pretty large population. But as stated before, it has been proven by many different researchers that he youth generation of post-80s all over the world shares a lot in common. Therefore, I still believe the result of my research is relatively reliable.

What's more, the purpose of my research is to ask personal feelings, so the respondents' perceptions are what I am concerned for. But their feelings can be different in different time. For example, a Friday afternoon is always happier than the Sunday morning to most youth generation. Moreover, if the respondent was scolded by his or her manager on the day when the survey was conducted, his or her opinions about the business culture might be quite negative. In order to minimize this threat, the survey was conducted anonymously in different time of a day and different days in a week by different distributors which can help to decrease the threat of subject or participant error and bias. Furthermore, the quantitative method itself has limitations that may decrease the reliability of the search due to the lack of personal interpretation. But the questionnaire was designed strictly connected to the purpose so that I believe the threat of observer error and bias is low as well.

3.11 Limitation of methods

Different method chosen in a research may result in a different result. However, there is no absolute correct or wrong method chosen. Quantitative research was conducted in my research but quantitative data itself has several disadvantages. For example, the respondent can only answer the questions listed on the questionnaire and it is designed by me but they are not able to give detailed information and explanations. But the sample size of my research is relatively large, so a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods would cost much more time. Another limitation is probably the misunderstanding of the questions in term of translation since the survey translation is expected to stay close to other features of the source text (Janet Harkness 2003) which means respondents may not be able to get the correct information when giving an answer.

What's more, in the beginning, I believed quota sampling would suit my research best because different groups of respondents would be obtained to draw a more accurate result. However, reality is not always the case. I failed to find out detailed data of distribution of different age groups working in different companies in Japan. And I believe quota sampling would cost too much time. So I decided to use convenience sampling which may result in bias and can be less representative. Furthermore, the actual size of sample is smaller than expected.

4.0 Empirical findings
4.1 Demographic facts of respondents

In this session, I will present the data collected from the first section of the questionnaire, which were designed to get the general information of the respondents. Answers can be different from people of different ages, gender, education, career length. So the gender, year of birth, education background and years of working were asked in order.

Figure 1

Gender

Female
Male

53.30%   46.70%
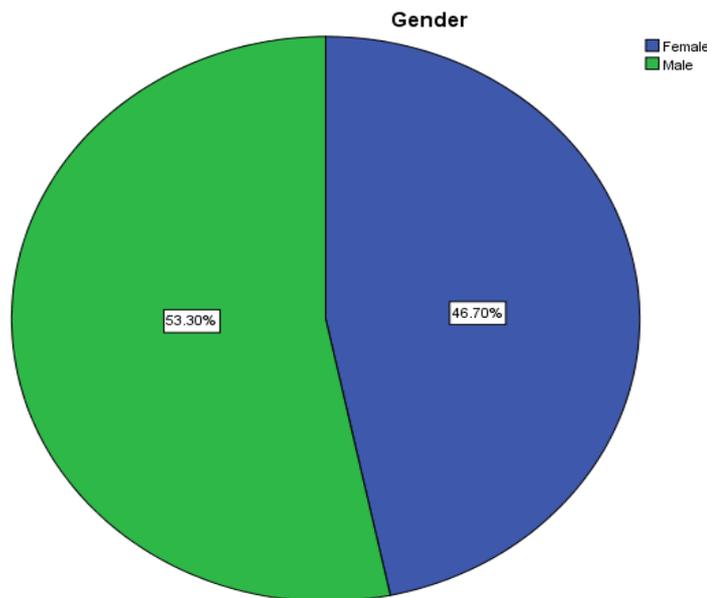
Gender

Figure 1 shows the gender distinction of the 197 respondents. Out of 197 respondents, 92 of them are female that occupies 46.7% of the total. 105 of 197 respondents are male that takes up 53.3% of the total. The proportion of male respondents is 6.6% larger than the female respondents, but the size of respondents is still large enough to obtain reliable statistically analysis.

Year of birth and age group category

Figure 2 below shows the different years of birth of the respondents. Among 197 respondents, 11 respondents were born in the year of 1980; 22 respondents were born in 1981; 26 respondents were born in 1982; 31 respondents were born in 1983; 24 respondents were born in 1984; 25 respondents were born in 1985; 12 respondents were born in 1986; 20 respondents were born in 1987; 14 respondents were born in 1988; 12 respondents were born in 1989. The mean value of the year of the birth of all the respondents are 1984.16, that is to say, the average age of the respondents are 26.84 years old. The figure also indicates the percentage each group takes up.

At the same time, based on the data collected, I divided respondents into three groups according to their year of born, namely early post-80s, middle post-80s and late post-80s as discussed before. So the early post-80s takes up 45.6% of all the respondents, middle post-80s takes up 31% and late post-80s takes 23.4% of the all.

Figure 2

Birthyear
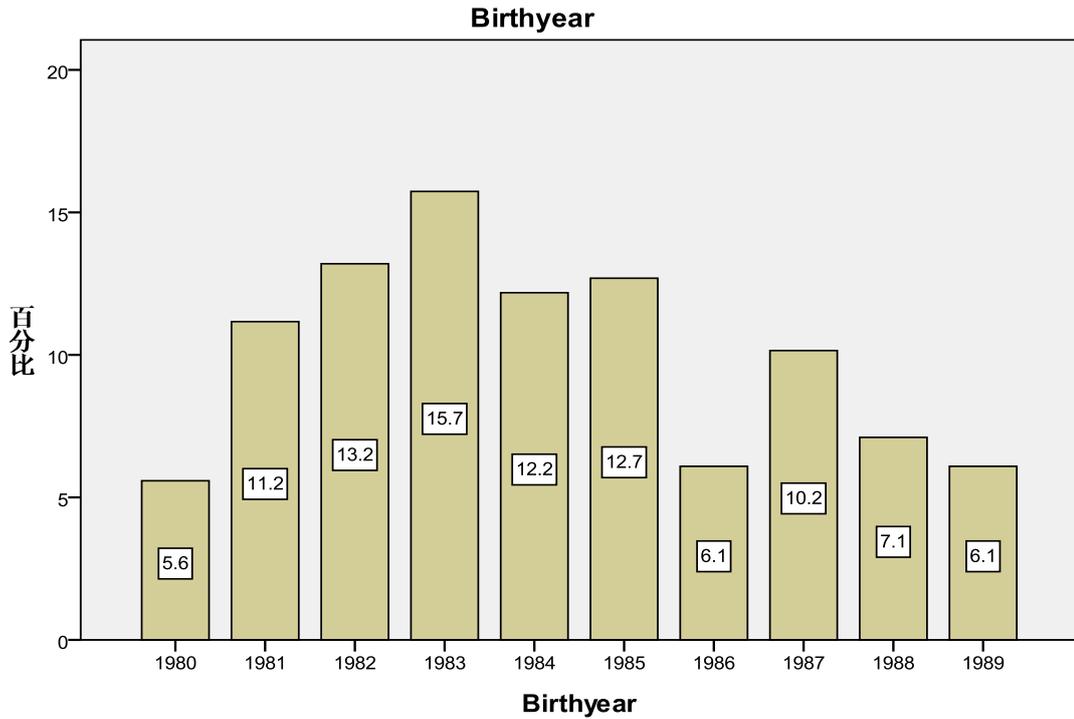
Education background

Figure 3 below illustrates the different backgrounds of the respondents. According to the data collected, 8.1% has an education background of high school or lower. 58.9% of the respondents have a bachelor degree and 30.5% holds a master degree. What's more, the rest of 2.5% of the total has a PHD degree or higher. Therefore, more than 90% of the respondents have a relatively high education background which means they are well educated and higher awareness of the professional knowledge.

Figure 3

Education

Chart showing Education percentages (百分比):
- High school or lower: 8.1
- Bachelor: 58.9
- Master: 30.5
- PHD or higher: 2.5

Education
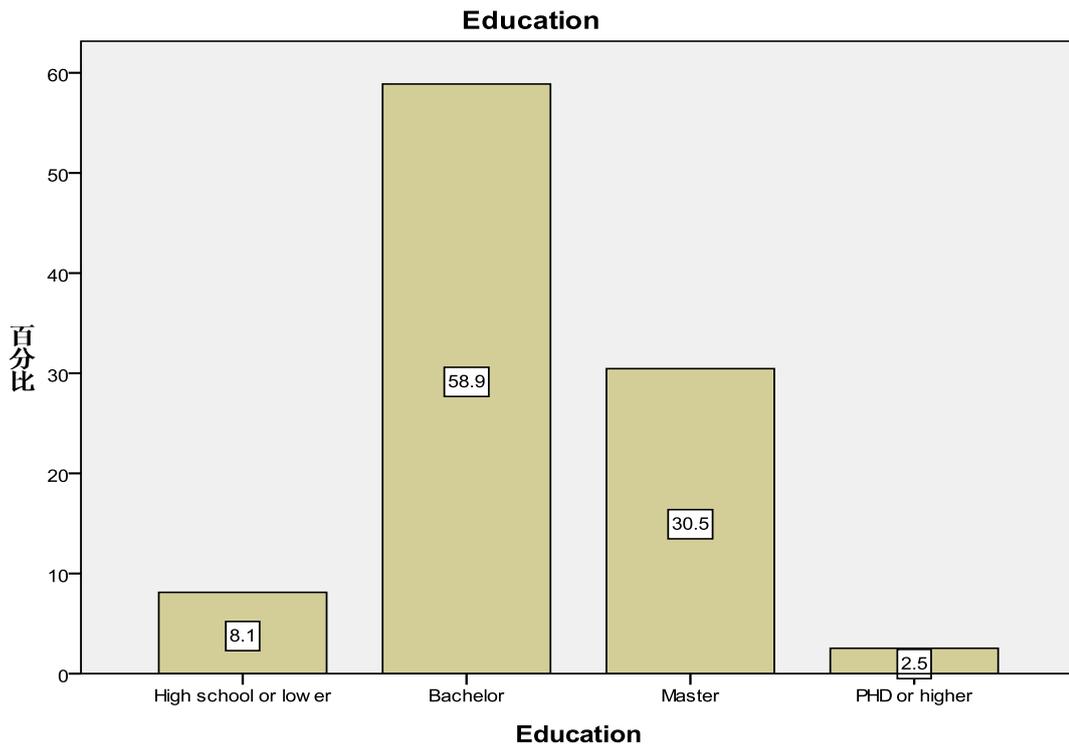
Years of working experience

Figure 4

Workingyears
- Less than 2: 21.8%
- 2-------5: 57.9%
- More than 5: 20.3%
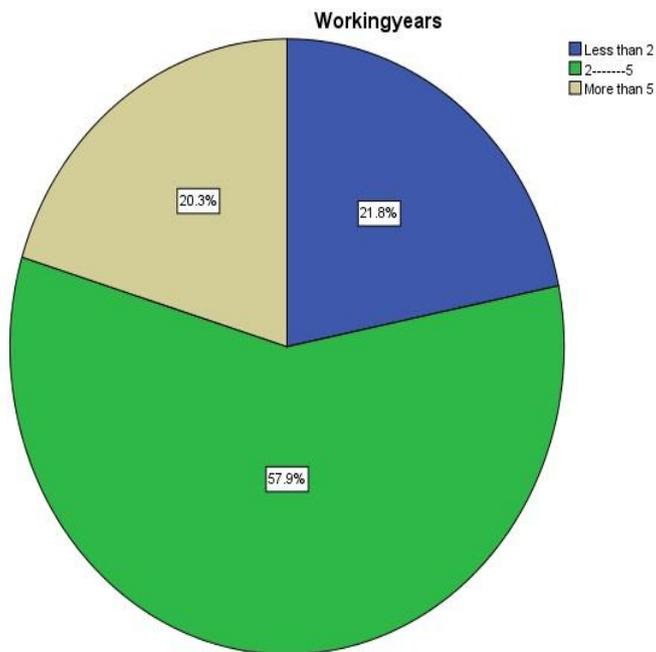
The last question asked in part one in the questionnaire was about how many years the respondents had been working so far since they graduated from school. As seen from figure 4 above, 21.8% of the respondents have working experiences fewer than 2 years, 57.9% of the total have been working between 2 and 5 years, and 20.3% have working experiences of 5 years or even longer. Therefore, 78.2% of all the respondents, which is a very high rate, have a relatively long enough working experience to examine and give reliable feedbacks to the Japanese business culture.

4.2 Respondents' perceptions of current typical Japanese business culture

The second part of the questionnaire was based on 10 questions, most of which were rating questions to ask the general perceptions of the respondents of Japanese business culture. Answers were given from strongly disagree to strongly agree meaning from the scale of 1 to 5. Statistics of questions that got more negative answers which meant clashes might occur would be analyzed more specifically.

Sense of belonging

Question one and questions two are based to identify the respondents' perception of the most unique Japanese business culture nowadays, that is, the significance of belonging. Question one is set to gain the respondents' feeling of company as a big family as a whole unit, and question one is raised to ask the respondents' perceptions of interactions with colleagues or managers as family members. From the data collected of question one, the majority, which takes up 50.3% choose a negative attitude towards this aspect and even 8.6% of the total disagree strongly. 11.2% of the respondents are neutral about this question and 38.5% of the total tends to take a positive attitude where 15.7% agree totally. According to the data collected from question two, an absolute majority, that is, 71.1% of the respondents tend to disagree or disagree strongly with the current trend. Only 16.7% agree or agree strongly and the rest of 12.2% of the total are neutral about this topic. What's more, the mean values of question one and question are 2.95 and 2.18 indicating that respondents' average perceptions of question one are generally neutral and the average perception of question two has a trend of relative negative.

Degree of equality

Question three is a half open question which combines a normal rating question and an open question to gain respondents' perception of degree of equality in their companies or organizations. The respondents are requested to write one aspect of inequality if they do not think they are equally treated in their companies or organizations. From the data calculation, the mean value is 2.68, which reflects that the average view of this issue of the respondents is between neutral and slightly opposite. 105 out of 197 disagree or disagree strongly with the aspect of equality, taking up 53.3% of the total. 31 respondents are neutral about this issue and 61 respondents agree or strongly agree with the issue of equality, which occupies 31.2% of the total. On one hand, figure 5 below illustrates that out of the 105 respondents who disagree or disagree strongly with the issue of equality extent, 58 are female and 47 are male. On the other hand, 59 of the 105 have answered the open question with a response rate of 56.19% and the answers are various but the most frequent answer is gender discrimination taking up to 63% of the total who have answered this open question and 95% of them are female. Unfortunately most male res-

pondents who disagree with this issue did not answer the open question, so there is no way of estimating their perspective in terms of inequality.

Figure 5
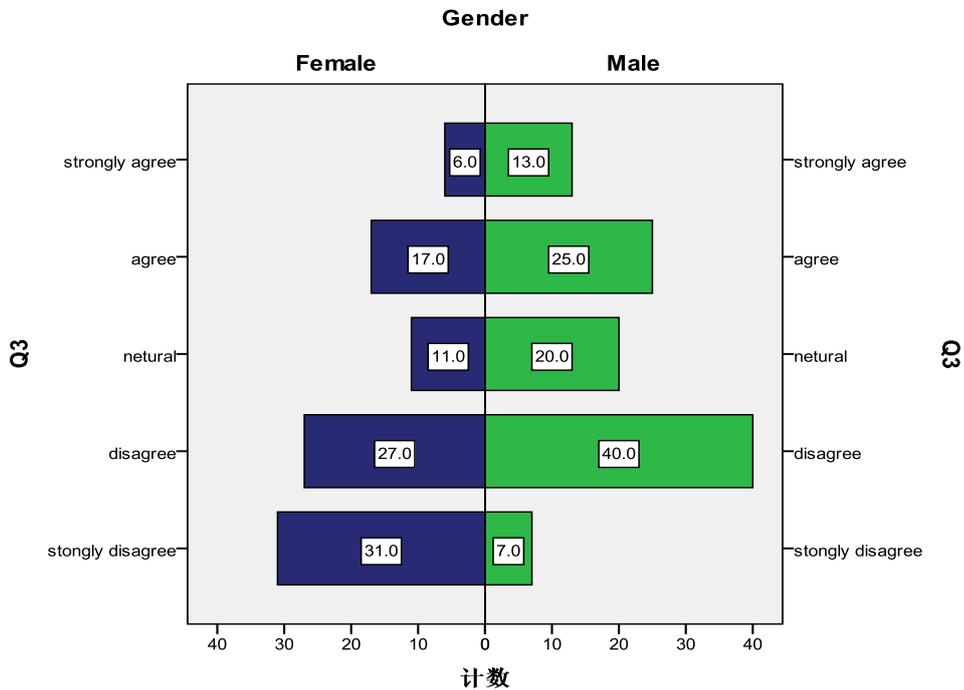
Decision making process
Question four is raised to get the respondents' perception of the typical Japanese business decision making process which is called Ringi system. The mean value of question four is 4.4, indicating that respondents' perceptions of this issue are very positive, that is, between "agree" and "agree strongly". 88.3% of the total has a positive view of this issue where 56.3% of the total tends to agree strongly. The percentage of those who disagree or disagree strongly about this issue takes up 3% and 1% of the total respectively which can be seen as a very low rate. What's more, 7.6% of the respondents are neutral about this issue.

Importance of relationship
Question five is established to ask the respondents' view of relationship importance. Similar to question four, the respondents' views of question five are very positive as well. The mean value of question five is 4.56 which is even higher than question four, indicating that the average perception of all the respondents tends to agree strongly. In details, the rates of respondents who disagree strongly, disagree, neutral, agree, and agree strongly are respectively 1%, 2.5%, 5.1%, 22.3% and 69% of the total.

Loyalty to company
Question six is about respondents' views of loyalty to their companies in terms of life-long employment system. The mean value of this issue is 2.98 which mean respondents' average view of this issue tends to be neutral. More specifically, 48.8% of the total is likely to disagree or disagree strongly with this issue, which almost balances those who take a positive view with a rate of 42.6% and the remaining of 8.6% of the total are neutral about this issue (Figure 6).

Figure 6

Q6

■	stongly disagree
■	disagree
■	netural
■	agree
■	strongly agree

10.2%

14.2%

28.4%

38.6%

8.6%
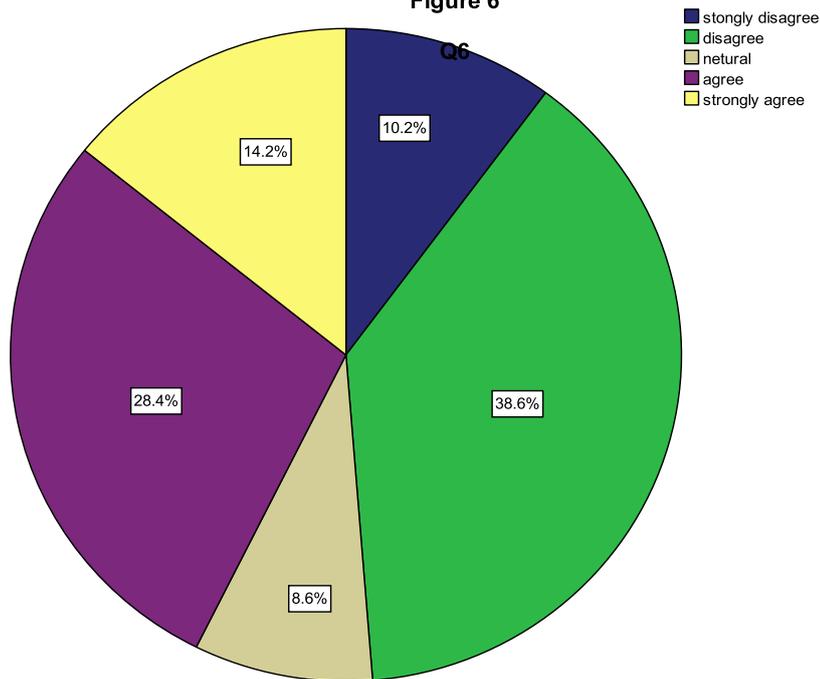
The hierarchical rule

When asked about the traditional hierarchical rule in their companies in question seven, the result tends to be quite similar to the result of question six when asked about the issue of loyalty. The percentage of those who agree or agree strongly with this issue is slightly larger than those who disagree or disagree strongly, with a percentage rate of 50.8% and 42.7% respectively, while the remaining of 6.5% holds a neutral view. What's more, the mean value of this question is 3.08, which also indicates that the average perception of respondents towards this issue is rather neutral.

In lack of innovation and in lack of clarification of work

Question eight and question nine are respectively set to ask respondents' perceptions of the current Japanese business culture in terms of the lack of innovation and lack of clarification of work. The results of the two questions are similar in a way. The majority of the respondents take a negative view of both issues, which means they are not satisfied of both components of the current culture. In details, for the aspect of lack of innovation, 64% of the total takes a negative view in terms of this issue, of which 25.9% disagree strongly. Only 29.6 of the total agree or agree strongly with the current trend of lack of innovation of all the respondents and the rest of 6.6% holds a neutral perspective.

For the aspect of lack of clarification of work, that is to say, the lack of clarification of job roles, the percentages of those who disagree or disagree strongly are 23.9% and 47.2% respectively. Therefore, 71.1% of the total is not satisfied with the current trend which is an absolute majority. Only a minority of 23.4% of the total are satisfied or happy with the current trend of this issue. And the rate of those who are

neutral takes up 5.6% of the total.

Ratings of the biggest clash

Figure 7

Q10
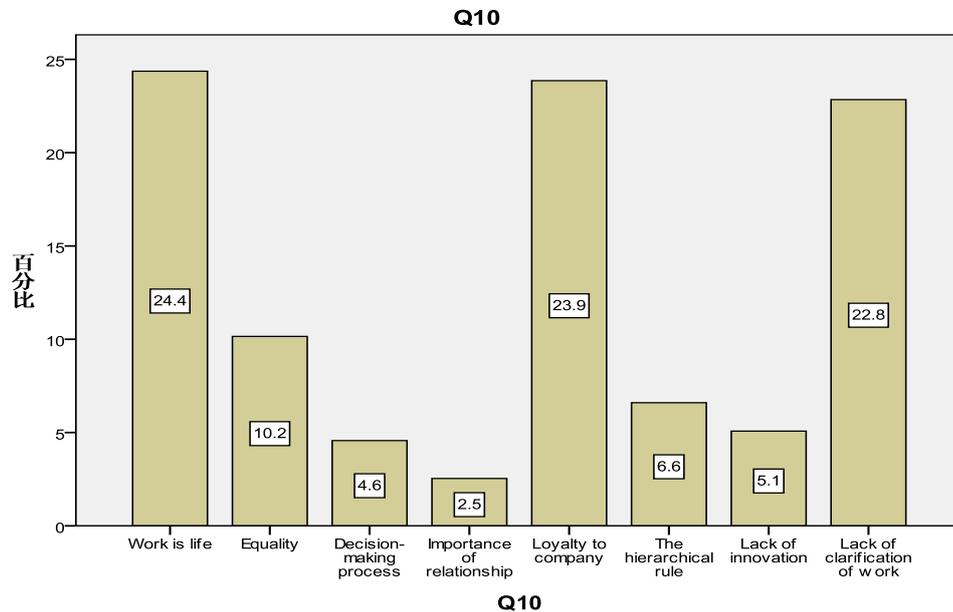
The last question of the questionnaire, question 10 is a choice question to be chosen from eight culture issues by the respondents to identify which is the biggest clash the respondents perceive. From figure 7, it can be seen that three components of the current business culture are selected almost equally high. The philosophy of "work is life" is chosen to rank the first with 24.4% of the total. Loyalty to company is chosen to be the second with a percentage of 23.9%. And the third one is the lack of clarification of work with 22.8% of the total. Issues of equality, the hierarchical rule, lack of innovation, decision-making process are ranked from fourth to seventh with a low rate around 10% or lower. The one ranking in the last is the importance of relationship which is chosen by only 2.5% of the total, indicating that this issue is almost not a clash at all.

4.0 Analysis
Typical Japanese business culture in post-80s employees' perspectives
If the result of the survey shows a positive or neutral perspective of the respondents, it is believed that the respondents are satisfied or not interested in the change of the component of the typical business culture. Instead, if the majority holds a negative attitude with a high rate of "disagree or disagree strongly", it can be explained that clashes have occurred between the characteristics of the respondents and the Japanese business culture. Therefore, the analysis is divided into two parts, namely, positive or neutral perceptions of the respondents and clashes which mean negative views of the current business culture

Positive or neutral perceptions
Decision-making process
The majority of the responds still believe they have no problem in terms of decision-

making process in their companies. According to the research by Hofstede(1991 and later), the power distance in Japan is relatively very low, which indicates that people at various power levels feel less threatened and more prepared to trust people. And views or opinions in lower levels are always highly respected and can be passed from lower levels to higher levels in order to get decisions made. This may be the reason why post-80s generation holds a positive attitude about the decision-making process and why they think it is still efficient.

Social Network: Relationship matters
According to the survey, the mean value is 4.56, which is very high. So post-80s generation still think relationship in harmony is very important as a component in Japanese business culture. But according to the research by Hofstede (1991), Japan ranks in the first as the most masculine society which means people are searching for money and performance instead of environment in harmony and peaceful relationship. An explanation can be that, people think relationship is important, but when there is a conflict between relationship and personal interests, personal interests always come first.

The hierarchical rule
The result of survey is very neutral towards this issue. The mean value is 3.08 and only 6.6% of the total chose this as the biggest clash. Therefore, respondents are quite neutral or not concerned about this issue. What's more, based on the small power distance and the efficient decision-making process, the issue of hierarchical rule is believed to have no impact on real decision making process. It is rather believed as a history tradition with no real significance. Therefore, even though young employees are searching for freedom, independence and equality, they still have no absolute bad or negative attitude towards the hierarchical rule in the society.

Clashes between the respondents and the current Japanese business culture
Sense of belonging: Work is life
According to the data collected, the mean values of both question one and question two are less than 3, that is to say, the post-80s generation are tired of the life style that have been established by the past generations. One of the major characteristics that post-80s generation has is that they are seeking for more individualism and freedom. What's more, according to the research by Hofstede (1991), Japan ranks medium in terms of collectivism versus individualism. So we can say that Japan is a more independent society and the post-80s generation has a trend of more independent and seeking for more freedom. So they have different perspectives of the philosophy of company as a family. They may believe that family is a place where comfort, support and love come from while company and work give them tasks and pressure for most of the time. What's more, when asked to pick up the biggest component they are not satisfied with the current business culture, 24.4% pick up this issue, ranking the first. Therefore, this component is believed to be one of the clashes between the young employees and the business culture in Japan.

Equality
Japan is always said to be an equal country in terms of many areas. However, it might not be the case in terms of gender. It was not common for women to work in Japan before. Even if some had a job, they would immediately dedicate themselves into house-

wives after they got married and had children. However, according to our survey, almost half of our respondents were female and many of them hold the view that they have encountered gender discrimination in their job. According to Jon P and Isao (2005), it is not easy for women to get lifelong employment or work in high level in a company. Due to the better education of post-80s, female post-80s take a negative perspective of their gender discrimination in their job. This can be said as a clash between the female post-80s generation and the business culture.

Loyalty to company
Loyalty has been a very significant aspect in typical or old Japanese enterprises and many researchers have seen that lifelong employment has been quite similar and many employees have very positive attitudes towards this issue. What's more, Hofstede's research has also shown that Japan is a society with a very strong uncertainty avoidance which means that great stability in job is needed. However, as can be seen from the result of my survey, it is not absolutely true among the post-80s employees. The result should have been more positive or at least more neutral if the issue were highly valued by the post-80s employees. The mean value is 2.98 and there is a tendency that the number of people who disagree with this issue is slightly bigger than those who agree. Therefore, the characteristic of more adventurous and seeking for change makes the post-80s employees less interested in lifelong employment and stability in job. What's more, it ranks the third in the survey when asked about the dissatisfactory of the current business culture. Therefore, those who have a clash of this component of Japanese business culture are likely to be very aggressive about this issue.

Lack of innovation
As known to all, Japan experienced a lost decade, after when, few new enterprises were established. Almost all the famous Japanese companies were established half a century ago. One major characteristic of post-80s generation is searching for adventure and change. Change and adventure make innovation. From the survey result, 64% of the total is not satisfied with the current trend. But only 5.1% of the respondents select it as the biggest clash they encounter. Therefore, I would like to explain that lack of innovation is a clash between the young employees and this component, but it is not the key clash that exists.

Lack of clarification of job roles
This issue ranks third when asked to pick up the biggest clash by the respondents with a rate of 22.8%. The absolute majority of the respondents are not satisfied with the current trend of lack of clarification of job roles in their companies because it is believed that post-80s employees pursue more freedom and independence. Therefore, a disclarified role of group work is not welcomed by post-80s employees. This is also one the biggest clashes that is believed to exist between the post-80 employees and Japanese business culture since most typical Japanese enterprises are famous for group work and roles in experience but not in function.

5.0 Conclusion

My purpose of this research was to identify and post-80s employees' perceptions of typical Japanese business culture and find out clashes if they exist. Since the typical Japanese business culture was established by the past few generations and the post-80s generation is a completely fresh group that has just dedicated themselves to career life. Conclusions are drawn based both on analysis and theories interpreted above.

Therefore, based on the empirical findings and analysis, I think both research questions are answered. There are certainly some factors that post-80s employees are less satisfied with in terms of typical Japanese business culture. The post-80s employees are generally, or at least, the majority has no problem or even agrees with some components of the current Japanese business culture such as the decision-making process, the importance of relationship and the traditional hierarchical rule. The reasons are mainly that these components of the business culture are mainly historically established and the post-80s generation was educated and raised up in the similar background. So both parties have no major conflicts, or the slight conflict does not have a real significant impact on their life.

However, clashes do exist between the post-80s and typical business according to our survey. Some are relatively less seriously while others appear to be very critical. The philosophy of "work is life" and the lack of clarification of job roles can be said to be the two most critical clashes between post-80s employees and the business culture. Gender inequality is another issue that most female respondents are not satisfied with but the issue of inequality of male respondents' perspective was not able to obtain. Another two culture issues that have slight clashes with post-80s employees are their loyalty to company and lack of innovation of their companies because most post-80s employees are in search for more freedom, changes and adventures. These factors are going against with people's traditional views of Japanese enterprise that are traditional, stable and even conservative

7.0 Discussion and further study

This thesis provided readers with the post-80s employees' perceptions of typical Japanese business culture. The purpose of this research was to identify major clashes so that it could give a hand to help Japanese companies to solve problems when they employ young employees or when they find difficulty getting post-80s employees involved

However, as a sole author with very limited sources and time, my contribution can be quite restricted. Also, both methods used and theories interpreted have their own limitations as mentioned before. If more time and sources permit, I believe more work can be done to find more reliable result. One recommendation for further study can be that the mangers' perception of the post-80s employees, that is to say, the clashes between the typical Japanese business culture and the post-80s employees in the managers' perspective. My research was restricted with employees only but their opinions were from one side only, so views from the company's side should have been evaluated as well in order to balance and compare both parties to draw a more reliable and constructive conclusion

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9. Appendices
Appendix 1 Hofested's four dimension rankings

Table 4.5 Hofstede's rankings

Country	Power distance Index	Power distance Rank	Individualism Index	Individualism Rank	Masculinity Index	Masculinity Rank	Uncertainty avoidance Index	Uncertainty avoidance Rank
Argentina	49	35–6	46	22–3	56	20–1	86	10–15
Australia	36	41	90	2	61	16	51	37
Austria	11	53	55	18	79	2	70	24–5
Belgium	65	20	75	8	54	22	94	5–6
Brazil	69	14	38	26–7	49	27	76	21–2
Canada	39	39	80	4–5	52	24	48	41–2
Chile	63	24–5	23	38	28	46	86	10–15
Colombia	67	17	13	49	64	11–12	80	20
Costa Rica	35	42–4	15	46	21	48–9	86	10–15
Denmark	18	51	74	9	16	50	23	51
Equador	78	8–9	8	52	63	13–14	67	28
Finland	33	46	63	17	26	47	59	31–2
France	68	15–16	71	10–11	43	35–6	86	10–15
Germany (F.R.)	35	42–4	67	15	66	9–10	65	29
Great Britain	35	42–4	89	3	66	9–10	35	47–8
Greece	60	27–8	35	30	57	18–19	112	1
Guatemala	95	2–3	6	53	37	43	101	3
Hong Kong	68	15–16	25	37	57	18–19	29	49–50
Indonesia	78	8–9	14	47–8	46	30–1	48	41–2
India	77	10–11	48	21	56	20–1	40	45
Iran	58	19–20	41	24	43	35–6	59	31–2
Ireland	28	49	70	12	68	7–8	35	47–8
Israel	13	52	54	19	47	29	81	19
Italy	50	34	76	7	70	4–5	75	23
Jamaica	45	37	39	25	68	7–8	13	52
Japan	54	33	46	22–3	95	1	92	7
Korea (S)	60	27–8	18	43	39	41	85	16–17
Malaysia	104	1	26	36	50	25–6	36	46
Mexico	81	5–6	30	32	69	6	82	18
Netherlands	38	40	80	4–5	14	51	53	35
Norway	31	47–8	69	13	8	52	50	38
New Zealand	22	50	79	6	58	17	49	39–40
Pakistan	55	32	14	47–8	50	25–6	70	24–5
Panama	95	2–3	11	51	44	34	86	10–15
Peru	64	21–3	16	45	42	37–8	87	9
Philippines	94	4	32	31	64	11–12	44	44
Portugal	63	24–5	27	33–5	31	45	104	2
South Africa	49	36–7	65	16	63	13–14	49	39–40
Salvador	66	18–19	19	42	40	40	94	5–6
Singapore	74	13	20	39–41	48	28	8	53
Spain	57	31	51	20	42	37–8	86	10–15
Sweden	31	47–8	71	10–11	5	52	29	49–50
Switzerland	34	45	68	14	70	4–5	58	33
Taiwan	58	29–30	17	44	45	32–3	69	26
Thailand	64	21–3	20	39–41	34	44	64	30
Turkey	66	18–19	37	28	45	31–3	85	16–17
Uruguay	61	26	36	29	38	42	100	4
United States	40	38	91	1	62	15	46	43
Venezuela	81	5–6	12	50	73	3	76	21–2
Yugoslavia	76	12	27	33–5	21	48–9	88	8

Appendix2 Questionnaires

Japanese Version (the original and distributed version)

こんにちは、スウェーデンの Jönköping 大学の学生です。『80 年代生まれた社員の日本企業文化に対する観点』というテーマの卒業論文を書いています。この度の『アンケート』にご協力を、どうぞよろしく お願いします。

セクション I: 基本情報

1. 私は ＿＿＿＿＿女性　　　　＿＿＿＿男性　　です.
2. 生まれる 198＿＿＿＿年
3. 最終学歴＿＿＿＿＿
A. 高校　　　　　　B. 大学学部　　　　　C. 大学院　　　　　D.博士
4. 仕事の年＿＿＿＿＿＿
A. 2 年未満　　　　　B. 2----------5 年　　　　　C. 5 年以上

セクション II: 最も当てはまる点に「×」をつけてください

1. 会社は一つ大きな家庭だと思い、社内活動を楽しめる。
   1.強く反対　　　　2.反対　　　3.保留　　　4.同意　　　5.非常に同意
2. 仕事終わったら、同僚や上司との社交活動が好き
   1.強く反対　　　　2.反対　　　3.保留　　　4.同意　　　5.非常に同意
3. 性別、給料、経歴、年齢などの面で公平な待遇が与えられると思う
そうではない場合、具体例を書いてください＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿。

   1.強く反対　　　　2.反対　　　3.保留　　　4.同意　　　5.非常に同意

4. 稟議制というシステムを知り、このシステムが実際の会社運営で使われていると思う。

   1.強く反対　　　　2.反対　　　3.保留　　　4.同意　　　5.非常に同意
5. 人間関係は非常に大切で、どんなこと会っても、衝突を避けたほうがいいと思う。
   1.強く反対　　　　2.反対　　　3.保留　　　4.同意　　　5.非常に同意
6. 終身雇用制度に賛成する
   1.強く反対　　　　2.反対　　　3.保留　　　4.同意　　　5.非常に同意
7. 先輩社員に尊敬し、先輩社員のミスを指摘しない
   1.強く反対　　　　2.反対　　　3.保留　　　4.同意　　　5.非常に同意
8. 保守的な人であり、リスクを避けたほうがいいと思う。
   1.強く反対　　　　2.反対　　　3.保留　　　4.同意　　　5.非常に同意

9. チームワークが望ましい
   1.強く反対　　　　2.反対　　　3.保留　　　4.同意　　　5.非常に同意

10. ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿という日本の企業文化は自分に合わないので、改善し

たほうがいいと思う。

A. 生活と仕事はっきりする

B. 平等

A. 決定過程

B. 人間関係

C. 忠信度

D. 上下関係

E. 創造性不足

F. 仕事はっきりさせない

最後に　　　　非常に再びありがとう

Appendix 3: Questionnaire: English Version

Hello, I am a student at Jönköping University, Sweden who is doing my thesis at the moment in the topic of post-80s employees' perceptions of Japanese business culture. Please help me answer the questionnaire if you are an employee in a Japanese company and you were born between 1980 and 1989. This survey will cost you no more than 3 minutes to finish. Thanks very much for your precious time!

Section I: Please tell me a little bit about yourself:

1) I am   Female _____   Male_____

2) I was born in the year of 198_____

3) My highest education background is _____
   A. High school or lower   B. Bachelor   C. Master   D. PHD or higher

4) I have been working in my current company/organization for_____ years.
   A. Less than 2   B. Between 2 and 5   C. More than 5

Section II: Please cross (X) the answer that matches your view most closely.

1) I regard my company as a big family which means I would always take part in the social or leisure activities held by my company..
   1. Strongly disagree 2.Disagree   3.Neutral   4. Agree   5.Strongly agree

2) I prefer to go to socialize with my colleagues or senior managers when off work instead of going home or do my own leisure activities.
   1. Strongly disagree 2.Disagree   3.Neutral   4. Agree   5.Strongly agree

3) I think everyone is treated equally in my company, in terms of gender, income, working experience, age and so on. If no, please write one aspect of inequality or discrimination _____
   1. Strongly disagree 2.Disagree   3.Neutral   4. Agree   5.Strongly agree

4) I know what Ringi system is and I think it is still efficient enough for the process of decision making in my company.
   1. Strongly disagree 2.Disagree   3.Neutral   4. Agree   5.Strongly agree

5) I regard that interpersonal relationship and harmony are very important in my company when involved in work and conflicts should always be avoided.
   1. Strongly disagree 2.Disagree   3.Neutral   4. Agree   5.Strongly agree

6) I like the lifelong employment system and prefer not to change my job all the time.
   1. Strongly disagree 2.Disagree   3.Neutral   4. Agree   5.Strongly agree

7) I would like always to respect my boss and seniors and keep to their decisions even though they are seriously wrong sometimes.
   1. Strongly disagree 2.Disagree   3.Neutral   4. Agree   5.Strongly agree

8) I am conservative and careful with the principles I have to keep in my job, so I am not willing to try something new or innovation.
1. Strongly disagree   2.Disagree   3.Neutral   4. Agree   5.Strongly agree

9) I prefer to work in a group and tasks do not need to be clarified and distinguished from person to person according to their advantages and disadvantages.
1. Strongly disagree   2.Disagree   3.Neutral   4. Agree   5.Strongly agree

10) I think _____ is the biggest clash between my personality and current Japanese culture that need to change in some way, that is to say, the one I do not like very much (Please choose one only).

    A. Work is life
    B. Equality
    C. Decision-making process
    D. Importance of relationship
    E. Loyalty to my company
    F. The hierarchical rule
    G. Lack of innovation
    H. Lack of clarification of work

The End   Thanks again