How Transformational Leadership can be used in Japanese University Classrooms to Increase Authentic Learning, Student Motivation, and Positive Learning Outcomes

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Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative study was to gain insight on the lived experiences of six Japanese university students and their impressions of leadership as displayed by their instructors in order to better understand how the Japanese university experience may be enhanced to promote positive learning outcomes. A conceptual framework was utilized in this study to explain relationships between various variables which drew from an in-depth examination of the foundations of authentic learning, student engagement theory, and theory of transformational leadership. Interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) was chosen as the research methodology for this study due to its emphasis on how individuals make sense of their lived experiences through careful examination of personal accounts (Smith et al., 2009). An analysis of the data was carried out using a hybrid of emotion coding, evaluation coding, and holistic coding. Through this data, the researcher looked for trends and generalizations related to authentic learning, engagement, motivation, and transformational leadership. Results showed that the four seminal aspects of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration were applicable to the Japanese university classroom in limited regard to authentic learning, student engagement, and student burnout.

Key words: transformational leadership theory, Japanese higher education, Japanese student disengagement, transformational leadership theory in an East Asian context, authentic learning in Japanese university classrooms, Japanese university student disengagement, Japanese university student burnout
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Many laud the Japanese educational system, as it is regularly high in international rankings for literacy, math, and scientific literacy. In 2015, the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) placed Japanese 15-year-olds as second in scientific literacy, eighth in reading, and fifth in math (Deguchi, 2018). However, upon closer examination, the university system paints a much different picture; according to a report by The Times Higher Education (2018), only two Japanese universities were ranked within the top 100 in the world in 2018. Part of this disparity may be attributed to what many scholars claim is an ineffective higher educational system (Amano & Poole, 2005). Other critics of the Japanese educational system argue that the system is simply a revolving wheel, producing generic graduates with obsolete skills. An article by the Japan Times stated that “Even up to the most rarefied ranks, some universities may engage in a kind of token academia, offering all but a time-out between entrance exams and employment, the re-disciplining after playtime. Their real energy is put into part-time jobs, clubs, and sports” (Gattig, 2012).

One of the underlying causes of the crisis in higher education in Japan is the issue of teaching quality amongst its professors (Okada, 1999; Goodman, 2001; Hall, 1998; McVeigh, 2002). The quality of instruction is often seen as the most important factor in positive learning outcomes (Wallace Foundation, 2012). This dissertation seeks to contribute to the scholarly body of knowledge surrounding the lack of authentic learning and student engagement in many Japanese university classrooms. Specifically, the purpose of this qualitative study is to better understand the phenomena that inhibit authentic learning and promote classroom disengagement and burnout in the Japanese university system. Through an in-depth analysis of the lived experiences of Japanese university students, the aforementioned problems will be examined
through the lens of transformational leadership and its component parts. Moreover, this study is important, as it will contribute to the body of knowledge surrounding teaching methods and leadership styles in the Japanese university system.

**Context and Background**

Drawing from the conceptual framework of authentic learning, student engagement theory, and the theory of transformational leadership, this dissertation will look at the personal experiences of six Japanese university students to gain better insight into how teaching methods are related to learning and engagement problems within the Japanese higher educational system. The Japanese university system is based largely on the American model, with all students attending for four years. Classes are set at 90 to 100 minutes, with a total of six possible periods throughout the day. Students usually take anywhere from 15 to 19 classes a week in their first year, and then around five to eight by their senior year. This is to give time and priority to job-hunting, which will be discussed in the following paragraph.

Two overarching differences between the US and Japanese university systems lie in the practice of *juken* or entrance examinations and *shushoku katsudou* or job hunting. Japanese students must take an entrance examination to enter a certain faculty and are required to take the curriculum set by the individual departments. There is no way for students to change majors without quitting school or going through the process all over again. While there is a chance of transferring into a university from a community college, the process is tedious and undertaken less than in the United States. Japanese students in their junior year of university enter a job-hunting phase, in which they attend job fairs and interviews with companies they are interested in, in the hopes of finding a job after graduation. This often translates into many students
neglecting their studies for better chances at landing a job at a big-name company (Nishiyama, 2000).

The university discussed in this dissertation was founded as a Buddhist university, but all participating students are from the School of English Literature, majoring in British or American English Literature. Particular focus will be devoted to teachers’ teaching styles, school climate, and learning outcomes as perceived by the students. All students will be juniors or seniors at the time of data collection. Their perspectives on their past three or four years at the university will offer important insight into how students perceive their experiences at university. Interviews will be examined to see whether characteristics of transformational leadership were present in teaching and, if they were, how they manifested themselves to contribute to authentic learning and increased student engagement.

**Problem Statement**

There is a teaching crisis at many Japanese universities, which is causing Japan to fall behind other highly developed countries (Cutts, 1997; Hall, 1995, 1998). Namely, the Japanese education system relies on rote-memorization and traditional models of education that result in a lack of authentic learning and student engagement (Shimura, 2009). Dr. Hidenori Fujita, the Dean of the University of Tokyo, mentions that with the advent of educational reforms plans implemented in 2012, the Japanese educational system has failed to improve the learning experiences of its students through institutional changes. He goes on to state that there is a mismatch between those guiding the curriculum change and the realities of what is being taught in classes (Fujita, 2010). Much of these problems may, therefore, be attributed to a lack of effective leadership throughout the educational system.
Of the four types of educational leadership styles — servant leadership, transactional leadership, emotional leadership, and transformational leadership — Japan currently implements mainly a one-sided servant/transactional leadership style, which many could argue is stifling its youth. How can Japanese institutions of higher education better equip their professors to display characteristics of transformational leadership to foster authentic learning and increased engagement? What are some concrete examples of teachers and professors taking into consideration the context of Japanese culture? The body of research in this dissertation will seek to serve not only the specific classrooms in the study, but also many others where transformational leadership may offer a way to increase learning outcomes and student engagement.

Another major problem with the current higher educational model in Japan is that there is a gap between the skills needed by companies and those being developed in universities (Ito & Kawazoe, 2015); graduates often cite teachers’ poor leadership and teaching skills as the main causes. In another study conducted by Ito and Kawazoe (2015), the authors noted that there was a mismatch in the skills companies and industries seek from new graduates and the ones being developed in university classrooms.

In 2012, Japan’s Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) set forth a new set of guidelines, developed together by 147 universities in Japan, in order to enhance the curriculum and teaching practices at Japanese universities. However, scholars have argued that many of the changes implemented were superficial and resulted in no new curriculum or teaching practice improvements (Kitamura, 2001). Focusing on employability skills, a study by Ito and Kawazoe (2015) examined what kind of teaching styles were being used to help foster certain skill sets. Results showed that teachers who took a more active
learning strategy as opposed to a more passive one had an increased number of research as well as communicative skills. The authors then went about making recommendations to increase learning depth through the use of small class sizes and deep discussions in more intimate settings. Currently, many Japanese university classrooms implement a transactional leadership style, which may be exacerbating the problem of disengagement.

In Japanese higher education, much of the learning that takes place has little to do with actual real-world skills. In an article written by Shimura (2009), which examined the differences in geography curricula in the UK and Japan, the researcher noted that the Japanese curriculum tends to be focused on general knowledge, and that the process of remembering it is the most important. Meanwhile, the more task-based UK curriculum focused on understanding the curriculum and not simply remembering it (Shimura, 2009). One could thus argue that the Japanese educational system, which exhibits a more transactional, rote-memorization method, may inhibit authentic learning, which is rooted in discovery and intrinsic motivation.

In regards to the Japanese professors and their teaching methods, Amano and Poole (2005) write that they have to be both scholars and leaders in the classroom. This is problematic as many teachers and professors report being overworked, resulting in teacher burnout. They are expected to produce research and forward the advancement of their specialty fields, while simultaneously teaching and passing on the knowledge they have gained to their students. However, professors will naturally feel more loyalty to their chosen field of study, as that is what they are passionate about. While there is a large body of research on K-12 teacher burnout, there is scant research about professor and adjunct-lecturer burnout in the university setting.

Amano (1999) further argues that while Japanese teachers are aware of the research crisis within Japanese higher education, they are not aware of the ongoing teaching crisis within their
own classrooms. Teachers tend to utilize the educational models they have experienced; namely, rote memorization and teacher-based curricula. There has also been very little motivation to remedy this problem. Unless there is external impetus for change, many teachers assume that the problem is too big for them to handle and thus brush it off. One of the goals of this dissertation is to search for and describe specific Japanese teachers who exhibited transformational leadership qualities in their classes, to see whether it impacted authentic learning and student engagement. How Japanese students perceive their teachers through this lens is a narrative that has yet to be discussed.

**Rationale and Significance**

According to the Wallace Foundation (2012), teacher quality is regarded as the top priority of a good school; however, school leadership is a close second and has garnered much attention recently. The purpose of this study is to examine the lived experiences of Japanese university students to gain a better understanding of the problems of a lack of authentic learning, disengagement, and student burnout through the lens of transformational leadership. Specifically, the study will examine the traits of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration as perceived by six fourth-year Japanese students at a four-year university. The lived experiences and analysis carried out in this dissertation will be of significant importance to scholars and practitioners examining the usage of leadership styles and teaching methods within classrooms. Its results and implications will also benefit universities and teacher training programs, especially in Japan; its importance in this regard cannot be understated. Moreover, it could specifically contribute to the scholarly body of knowledge concerning disengagement and teaching skills in many Japanese university classrooms.
Research Question

This qualitative study, based on in-depth interviews with Japanese students will be guided by the overarching question: How do students at a Japanese university perceive transformational leadership qualities in their professors or instructors? This topic is important, as there is a teaching crisis in many Japanese university classrooms. By continuing with the current model adopted by many teachers, students feel they are not learning or gaining any skills for their future jobs. Moreover, many students claim that increased apathy towards classes and burnout is the result of poor teaching practices and leadership skills by their instructors. The sub-questions that will guide this study are:

1. What aspects of transformational leadership do Japanese university professors engage in that contribute to authentic learning?

2. What aspects of transformational leadership do Japanese university professors engage in that contribute to engagement?

3. What aspects of transformational leadership do Japanese university professors engage in that contribute to increased intrinsic motivation?

Definition of Key Terminology

Japanese university – a university located in Japan, with primarily native Japanese students.

Entrance examinations – a test that Japanese students take in their senior year of high school to enter a specific university. This test is extremely important as it is the main determining factor of whether a student will gain entrance into a university.

Transformational leadership – a type of leadership characterized by a leader who creates a vision, inspires, leads, and executes change in a moral way so that followers may be transformed through their learning.
Idealized influence – the idea that the leader will be a role model for followers and be able to demonstrate apt ability with regards to content of teaching.

Inspirational motivation – the idea that the leader can inspire and motivate their followers by effective clear communication, a shared vision/goal, and common values.

Intellectual stimulation – the idea that the leader constantly challenges followers to be creative and innovative.

Individualized consideration – the idea that the leader knows the background and context of each individual follower and helps to lead by a more personal style.

Entrance examinations – Tests taken by Japanese students everywhere that are administered by the individual departments at each university. Students may or may not be admitted depending on the test results.

Job-hunting custom – A Japanese social custom that has its roots in big-name companies wanting “fresh” graduates to hire. Japanese society has long promoted life-long employment, where workers stay at one company for their entire lives. Companies are responsible for molding new graduates into the type of workers they want. This job-hunting custom occurs in university students’ junior to senior years, in which they attend job fairs, interviews, and other meetings in the hopes of gaining a full-time position at a famous company.

**Conceptual Framework**

A conceptual framework utilizes a more explanatory research method to explain relationships between various variables, as opposed to a theoretical framework which utilizes a certain theory to frame the research. The conceptual framework in this dissertation will draw from an in-depth examination of the foundations of authentic learning, student engagement theory, and theory of transformational leadership.
**Authentic Learning**

The first section of the conceptual framework in this study will utilize the concept of authentic learning. Many scholars who advocate educational reform argue that many higher education classrooms are inauthentic (Nicaise, Gibney, & Crane, 2000). This implies that learning contexts, activities, and content are structured around tasks that only superficially engage students. Authentic learning revolves around the idea that learning involves authentic tasks that teach problem-solving skills while simultaneously building students’ self-confidence in their own learning abilities (Bruner, 1966; Helgeson, 1992; Perkins & Blythe, 1994). Authentic learning tasks, debate, and discourse also promote social interactions among students, which in turn help them examine phenomena from multiple perspectives, while challenging them to analyze their own viewpoints (Brown, 1992; Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Vygotsky, 1978; Wiburg & Carter, 1994).

There is no one set definition of authentic learning that scholars may draw upon. It is the responsibility of the individual teacher to determine what is authentic and inauthentic. Many educators thus point to a spectrum of authenticity for tasks. The most important aspect of authentic learning involves having students be active participants in their construction of knowledge (Maina, 2004). Learning is student-centered, with teachers serving as facilitators rather than knowledge dictators. Bennet and Hedberg (2001) also mention that authentic learning tasks require learners to address a problem with their own symphony of knowledge and skills they have developed. In cooperation with a diverse group of people and methods, students work through their problems while managing relationships with fellow students and the instructor.
Khamasi (2004) states that encouraging students’ voices in the classroom is also pivotal to authentic learning as it helps to encourage ownership of knowledge. A student’s voice is heavily centered on student identity and resistance in the classroom. Burroughs (2007) notes that student resistance promotes a decrease in cognitive and affective learning. One could thus argue that inauthentic learning tasks may result in more apathy and less engagement.

Authentic learning also has the ability to encourage professional identity development in students (Sutherland & Markaukaite, 2012). In a study conducted by Hunter (2007), undergraduate students were given the opportunity to participate in summer research experiences, in which authentic learning tasks were embedded throughout the curriculum. Results showed that students who participated in the program had a higher level of understanding of a scientist’s job. They also reported that they began to see themselves as real scientists. One can thus see that authentic learning has multiple benefits, such as increased positive learning outcomes, motivation, and engagement (Unwin & Caraher, 2000).

**Student Engagement**

The next scholarly body of knowledge that this conceptual framework will utilize comes from the concept of student engagement, which suggests that students who are more engaged report learning more, learning better, and having a more overall positive view of their educational experiences (Kuh, 2000). Vygotsky’s (1978) Social Development Theory states that learning happens socially, and that the community plays the decisive role in whether a student learns or not. Vygotsky’s theory maintains that there is a need to create a classroom environment in which teachers and students cooperate, providing learning outcomes for all parties involved.

On the topic of engagement, many university students around the world react very much in the same way to a less-engaging curriculum. According to a study conducted by Mann and
Robinson (2009), students were surprised by the amount of didactic classes they were taught while at school. They also found that when they polled 211 students at a UK university, over half described ordinary class lectures as boring. Fallis and Opotow (2003) take this a step further and state that when students describe their learning experiences as boring, it relates to a sense of disappointment, which in turn encourages class cutting.

In the case of engagement and its relationship with leadership, many researchers have argued that the dichotomy between transformational and transactional leadership becomes problematic (Avolio & Bass, 1988; Bass, 1985; Bryman, 1992; Pettigrew, 1987). The utilization of one type of leadership model limits its scope and effectiveness. In the case of the classroom, transformational leadership must take into consideration the context of the organization and the inherent culture of the surroundings. However, in the case of the Japanese classroom, there is a natural tendency to utilize more of a transactional leadership style, as that is the social norm. This is related to cultural and sociological factors that have shaped Japanese classrooms for approximately the last 100 years. The concept of contextual receptivity is a useful way in which to measure the role of engagement with leadership style.

Pettigrew (1992) argues that the concept of receptivity relates to how open to change the context is. This is especially important in the case of Japan, where social norms and traditions are maintained in order to facilitate more group consensus. Sashkin (1992) mentions that, in order for change to take place, there must be agreement on a shared vision by “senior executive” leaders. This especially rings true in the Japanese educational system, where seniority and other social rules play a huge role in policy making. Pawar and Eastman (1997) outline four major contextual influences on organizational receptivity to transformational leadership activities.
1. Organizations will be more open to transformational leadership activities when there is a mismatch between actual and desired performance.

2. Organizations will be more open to transformational leadership activities when there is more external impetus vs. an internal struggle based on technical rationality.

3. Organizations will be more open to transformational leadership activities when there is a simple structure or adhocracy vs. bureaucracy.

4. Organizations will be more open to transformational leadership when the vision of the organization and that of personal interests are more aligned.

**Transformational Leadership Theory**

The final body of knowledge that this conceptual framework will draw upon centers on the theory of transformational leadership, a phrase coined by MacGregor Burns (1978) in his book entitled *Leadership*. Burns (1978) lays out an interesting framework in which transformational leadership seeks to not only lead, but also enlighten. Both the leader and follower increase their understanding and benefit from it. Bass (1985) embraced this idea of transformational leadership and expanded the theory around it. He adds that the follower and leader share a value system by engaging in transformational leadership, and that this will take them to the next level of awareness. Bass, along with Reggio (2006), identifies four components of transformational leadership that most researchers use today: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

There has also been extensive research conducted on transformational leadership in learning situations. In an interesting study performed by Leithwood (2006), a model was
developed to measure the effects of transformational leadership in an educational setting. The researchers looked at how the four characteristics of transformational leadership were applied to help define the school mission, manage the instructional program, and create a positive school culture. These three objectives were further made up of seven subcategories which, in a way, dealt with the four characteristics of transformational leadership. The school mission was defined as building and framing a consensus concerning clear school goals and priorities. Managing the instructional program had to do with holding high performance expectations, providing individualized support, and supplying intellectual stimulus. Creating a positive school culture entailed modeling organizational values, strengthening a productive school culture, building collaborative cultures, and creating structures for participation in school decisions. Using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire developed by Bass (1985), results showed that transformational leadership qualities were much more conducive to creating positive learning outcomes for both teachers and students, as opposed to a laissez-faire or transactional leadership style.

Research has shown that teaching and leadership styles have some of the biggest effects on learning outcomes (Wallace Foundation, 2012). Transformational leadership is a type of leadership that produces positive organizational change by encouraging followers to become change agents (Bass, 1999; Burns, 1978; Burns, 1979). Transformational leadership works on the theory that leaders are able to inspire followers using intrinsic motivation to transform into better versions of themselves (Bass, 1985). Burns (1978) lays out an interesting framework in which transformational leadership seeks to not only lead, but also enlighten. Both the leader and follower increase their understanding and benefit from it. Bass (1985) embraced this idea of transformational leadership and expanded the theory around it. Bass and Reggio (2006), identify
four components of transformational leadership that most researchers use today: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. These four components will play a pivotal role in this dissertation. They will be explored in depth as they provide the theoretical backbone of transformational leadership theory.

School climate and culture influence student learning perceptions and outcomes through charismatic leaders. Upon examining the effects of transformational leadership on classroom climate, many researchers have concluded that its qualities may play an important role in promoting positive learning outcomes (McCarley, 2016; Tajasom & Ahmad, 2011; Moolenaar, 2010). It also has the power to help decrease student resistance in the classroom, which in turn leads to positive student learning perceptions (Goodboy & San Bolkan, 2011). One of the most powerful effects of transformational leadership is its ability to produce and encourage charismatic teachers. According to Groves (2005), charismatic leadership has a big impact on students and their time in classrooms because of its ability to make students change. Namely, students who are inspired by a charismatic teacher may become more open to new ideas and knowledge.

In another study by Tajasom and Ahmad (2011), they examined the influence of transformational leadership on four aspects of a school environment: affiliation, professional interest, innovation, and resources. This study was performed in Penang Malaysia, in 16 high schools, with the participation of 10 teachers in each school. The results of the study showed that transformational leadership qualities had positive effects on all four aspects mentioned above. While this dissertation will primarily examine the students’ perceived experiences of their classes, it will also explore whether teachers displayed any affiliation, professional interest, innovation, or dedicated any resources to their classes.
The concept of leadership differs according to context. According to Fidler’s Contingency Theory, the most effective leadership style is dependent on two factors: the preferred behavioral style of the leader and the contextual circumstances within which the group operates (Nahvandi, 2006). The effectiveness of a leader will also depend on whether the task is people-oriented or task-oriented, which is contingent on the circumstances of each. It would be problematic to state that transformational leadership may be effective in every situation and task. However, it is often cited as a way by which to raise intrinsic motivation, which in turn enhances follower performance and satisfaction. Furthermore, Gill (2006) claims that transformational leadership has a positive impact on empowerment, motivation, and morality. Through a more consultative, participative, directive, and delegating style, transformational leaders are able to instigate inspirational learning.

**Cultural Impacts on Learning and Leadership**

There is a wide body of research on the effects of culture on leadership and learning. Culture is made up of certain learned customs that are based on beliefs, values, and attitudes shared by a group of people (Daniels, Radebaugh, & Sullivan, 2007). Leadership involves many facets of social interactions, such as communication, motivation, and sets of behaviors (Mullins, 2007). The manifestation of each facet relies on the cultural context of the participants. Phatak (2009) states that there are indeed certain characteristics of leaders that are common across cultures. However, one cannot deny that there are still transformational leadership aspects that are acceptable in one culture but may not necessarily translate to another. This is largely the same for cultural impacts on learning.

In regards to Japan, it is important to note that there have also been many studies about how Japanese cultural behaviors influence leadership and learning. Earley and Ang (2003) state
that culture influences information processing and cognition and, thus, learning. According to Hofstede (1997) and Kerr (2004), culture socialization has a big influence on learning preferences. Concerning Japan, a meta-analysis study done by Yamazaki and Kayes (2005) showed that Japanese and American managers tend to display behavioral traits associated with each cultural type that might help to influence certain learning preferences. By creating culture typologies from the fields of anthropology, cross-cultural management, and cross-cultural psychology, the researchers identified examples of seven cross-cultural knowledge absorption abilities. In the case of managing cultural differences, many scholars have noted that the key is to raise cultural awareness (Harris, 2004; Schein, 2004).

In the Japanese higher education scene, much of the learning that takes place has little to do with actual real-world skills; thereby, one could argue that there is a lack of authentic learning. In an article written by Shimura (2009), which examined the differences in geography curricula in the UK and Japan, the researcher noted that the Japanese curriculum tends to be focused on general knowledge, and that the process of remembering it is the most important. Meanwhile, the more task-based UK curriculum focused much more on understanding the curriculum and not simply remembering it (Shimura, 2009). One could thus argue that the Japanese educational system, which exhibits a more transactional, rote-memorization method, may inhibit authentic learning, which is rooted in discovery and intrinsic motivation.

Transformational leadership also has a great potential to foster student engagement (Goodboy & Bolkan, 2011). The current models of leadership in Japanese higher educational settings rely on more traditional models of leadership such as top-down management, bureaucracy, communism, and managerialism. These models rely on the idea that leadership is power (Tost, Gino, & Larrick, 2011). The social mechanisms in Japan, where many younger
members of society are expected to automatically trust elders and those in power, is a primary example of how transactional leadership and absolute leadership are dominant.

**Critics of Transformational Leadership**

Many critics of transformational leadership note that there is a risk of bias, which may lead to abuse and manipulation, especially in the realm of morals. This stems from the transformational leadership characteristic of idealized influence. Buchanan (2003) and Burke (2006) theorized that leadership, including transformational leadership, can promote an unhealthy type of dependence by imbuing certain special powers and ideals regarding the leader. Leaders, like Adolf Hitler, who have charisma and are idealized, have in the past used this influence for causes that turned out to be heavily immoral. Due to the fact that transformational leadership assumes that the morals and goals of the leader and follower are the same, there remains a risk that the leader will use his/her power for personal gains. There have been attempts to differentiate self-serving (pseudo transformational leadership) and ethics (authentic transformational leadership); however, the problem surrounding the ethics of transformational leadership still lingers (Bass & Stiedlmeyer, 1999; House & Howell, 1992).

Other critics of transformational leadership point to the notion that its definition is not as concrete as many would like it to be. Kelloway (2005) makes the claim that many aspects of transformational leadership use qualities and skills found in transactional leadership to make it successful. Starting in the 1990s, transformational leadership became a buzzword and was hailed as the savior of many leadership problems. However, it did not prove to be a one-size-fits-all solution. Hartley and Bennington (2010) also state that the type of leadership that should take precedence depends on the context and activity in question.
Finally, one more interesting criticism of transformational leadership revolves around gender. Many of the characteristics associated with transformational leadership, such as charisma, are heavily biased towards males (Sinclair, 2005). Men and women may exhibit different characteristics in terms of leadership style. In the case of Japan, this is especially relevant as gender roles and stereotypes of working men and women are heavily ingrained in society. Men work hard, put in long hours at the office, and help build a company, while women play a more supportive role, doing paperwork and taking care of logistics. According to a Japan Times newspaper article, “women currently hold only 10.1% of Lower House member seats in parliament” (Baird, 2018). Moreover, according to the same article, only 7% of women hold senior management (CEO/ Board of Directors) positions in Japan. Many would thus argue that transformational leadership would prove difficult in Japan, where only men are thought of as charismatic leaders.

**Conclusion**

The Japanese education system is seen around the world as one that creates top class citizens in terms of reading, science, and math. However, this hides the reality that there is also a teaching crisis at many Japanese universities. Many students are disengaged, professors lack training, and many schools “allow mechanical graduations without requiring scholastic achievements” (Gattig, 2012). This all results in a mismatch of skills being developed in many classrooms with what is needed for Japan to successfully maneuver the current global work environment. Traditionally implementing a transactional and servant leadership-centric model, the Japanese university classroom would stand to gain significantly by utilizing transformational leadership more. Students who are actively engaged in learning tend to learn more, learn better, and have more overall positive attitudes towards the learning experience (Park, 2003). While
transformational leadership may offer insight into how to increase student engagement and authentic learning, it is also worth noting that culture is a very strong context through which leadership and identity are interpreted (Barmeyer, 2004). This dissertation will focus on the lived experiences of six university students in a Japanese university, in order to gain insight into what kind of transformational leadership behaviors can be used to increase authentic learning outcomes, engagement, and to reduce burnout. The next section will focus on the literature review of authentic learning through an examination of its seminal authors.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The concepts and theories that guide this study are drawn primarily from three strands of overlapping literature: authentic learning, student engagement, and transformational leadership. Moreover, the effects of culture on leadership and the concept of receptivity will also be discussed as they relate to the three overarching themes. The reviewed literature comes from relevant articles, books, and other scholarly bodies of knowledge, as well as newspaper articles and statistical evidence supplied by the Japanese government. The first section looks at authentic learning and pertinent aspects, such as how it is measured and its use in Japan. Next, student engagement is examined, with a discussion on the lack of student engagement in Japan and how the concept of receptivity plays a vital role in helping to change policies used by the Japanese government and upper level academic institutions. Finally, perspectives involving transformational leadership in education, and its implications for Japan will be explored. Since leadership is heavily contextualized in culture, literature based on collectivism vs. individualism theories of culture will be examined in order to gain a better understanding of how
transformational leadership in Japan may be influenced by social behaviors. Finally, a summary of the literature is presented.

The following literature review addresses the need for improved scholarly knowledge of authentic learning, student engagement, and transformational leadership in Japanese university classrooms. Special attention is paid here to the four seminal characteristics of transformational leadership as developed by Bass and Riggio (2006), as they serve as the basis to examine how Japanese professors and instructors may or may not demonstrate transformational leadership behaviors that contribute to authentic learning and student engagement. The search words used to obtain the literature consisted of terms such as “authentic learning in Japan,” “transformational leadership Japan,” “Japanese teaching styles,” “Japanese leadership culture,” and “cultural effects on leadership.”

**Japanese Educational System**

During the late 20th century, the Japanese education system was celebrated for its high test scores and accomplishments (Willis, Yamamura, & Rappleye, 2008). Utilizing a model based on the British and American models, Japanese students go through six years of elementary school, three years of junior high school, three years of senior high school and two to for years of tradeschool, college or university. Japanese society regularly uses terms like *gakurekishakai* which translates to “placing a heavy emphasis on famous universities to gain good positions at companies.” Another term that defines Japanese education is *juken jigoku* which translates to “entrance examination hell.” Heavily centered on test-taking and memorization, the Japanese educational system uses a teacher-centered style curriculum which creates a hyper-competitive environment. This has led to a dichotomy in terms of skills; with many students having a large amount of general knowledge surrounding a topic but very little critical thinking skills (Willis,
Yamamua, & Rappleye, 2008). According to Kariya (2001), this dichotomy has also created an increasing gap in student levels with some students not being able to gain the fundamental skills necessary to compete in the work force.

The Japanese elementary school system, in which students are paired with a homeroom teacher for their whole elementary school careers, is often lauded by many for its emphasis on growing students’ humanity as well as general knowledge (Nishimura, 2001). Students are encouraged to work together and play while learning. The curriculum is set and revised every year by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) with input from the Central Council for Education. According to a 2010 report by the OECD, Japanese elementary students rated themselves as some of the happiest students in the world (OECD, 2010). Many of these positive traits can be traced to authentic learning, and transformational leadership behaviors exemplified by teachers and educators. Students are happy and motivated to learn.

The Japanese junior high school and senior high school systems place greater emphasis on rote memorization and test taking, which results in lower levels of student happiness (Willis, Yamamura, & Rappleye, 2008). Students are paired with a homeroom teacher who is responsible for ensuring that the student graduate and hopefully enters a university program. Ijime or bullying, and gakkou hokai or students who do not come to school, are becoming bigger problems. Also the demanding and comprehensive national curriculum becomes more difficult and places greater demands on students to memorize information. Teachers along with other school officials and coaches work together in a very intimate environment to help students navigate junior and senior high school.
University education is seen in Japan as a necessary step to gaining a job. Rather than being a place where learning is fostered many have argued that it is merely a place to have fun after high school and before working (Deguchi, 2018, McCrostie, 2017, Oba, 2005). The Japanese university system is modeled after the American and British ones, with students studying four years to gain a Bachelor’s degree. Students take a wide range of subjects in addition to their chosen field of study. One thing that separates Japanese from western upper educational systems is the existence of shuushoku katsudo or job hunting. This phenomenon starts in their junior year of university and may last until they graduate. Students attend job-hunting fairs and basically start looking for a job so that upon graduating they may seamlessly start working. Students who graduate from top universities, regardless of their grades or performance in school tend to get the best jobs. This creates an environment in which students rarely study and place much more importance on gaining a better job. There is a lack of authentic learning and transformational leadership, which results in low motivation. Paired with a heavily entrenched system, the Japanese university environment is failing its students.

**Authentic Learning in the Japanese Educational System**

Many Japanese students graduate from universities having learned few skills that are applicable to their future jobs (Ito & Kawazoe, 2015). Scholars could argue that Japanese students suffer from a lack of authentic learning during their time in university. While there is no concrete definition of authentic learning, scholars have come up with several characteristics. First, according to Nicaise, Gibney, & Crane (2000), authentic learning includes the idea that learning is centered around authentic tasks, which mimic real-world problems and situations encountered by those in the field of study. Scholars argue that having authentic tasks helps
impart an increased sense of meaningfulness and relevancy to the field of study (Newmann, 1991).

A study done by Paul et al. (2001) looked at the use of authentic-context learning for a music teacher undergraduate program at the University of Arizona to find a correlation between authentic-context learning and initial teaching performance among student teachers. Four activities designed specifically to mimic the real-world environment of a music teacher were given to the student teachers. Initial teaching performance was then measured after three weeks using the Survey of Teaching Effectiveness (Hamann & Baker, 1996). Results showed that three of the four authentic-context learning activities produced significantly higher scores on the survey among teachers that completed a high amount of the activities associated with it. Thus, it could be argued that authentic learning is a viable way to solve the teaching crisis in Japanese universities that has resulted in Japanese students graduating with few practical job skills.

The second characteristic of authentic learning is that there is a high degree of learning autonomy for students (Schank & Cleary, 1995). While many inauthentic classrooms involve extrinsic motivation such as grades or degrees, authentic learning utilizes a more intrinsic motivation model. Students help decide what should be learned, so the primary vehicle of learning is inquiry and discovery. Entwistle (1998) argues that goal type affects the type of learning that ensues. Surface learning—learning that is not deep and may not be stored in long-term memory—is associated with extrinsic motivation. On the other hand, intrinsic learning, which develops from an inner need or personal goal, is more likely to be stored in long-term memory. Many Japanese companies argue that there is a gap between the skills students bring to their workplaces upon getting hired and what is required (Ito & Kawazoe, 2015). It could be argued that this is partly due to the superficial learning that takes place in universities.
Debate and discourse among peers and teachers are also two characteristics of authentic learning (Nicaise et al., 2000). These types of social interactions help to stimulate students to approach and perceive situations and problems from different perspectives. This not only broadens a student’s horizons but also helps to facilitate transformational growth (Chi & Van Lehn, 1991). Carroll and Rosson (2005) argue that “authentic activity involves establishing and maintaining a community effort. Groups must self-organize, analyze ill-structured problems to identify tractable sub-goals, and plan and manage work-flow dependencies” (pp. 8‒9). Having students share and form a consensus not only mimics real-life work situations, but it also helps teach empathy and cooperation.

Finally, the last characteristic of authentic learning involves the role of the teacher. Teachers shed their roles as information-givers and assume the role of facilitator or guide; therefore, the flow of knowledge ceases to be one-way. In the case of Japan, where teacher-centered lessons are undertaken, this is especially problematic. Shimura (2009) points out that Japanese teachers stress the importance of recalling information given during class and that general knowledge of the subject is more important than knowing details. This is problematic, as it results in only surface-level learning. Many students also are overwhelmed by the amount of information given to them. Research has been conducted on the behavioral patterns around personal agency or the will to complete a task based on the perceived outcome of failure or success. Bandura (1997) argues that this may be conceptualized as expectancy, which is the idea that people are in control of their own destinies. Many Japanese university students may have low personal agency based on the type of teaching style implemented by their teachers. Authentic learning, which stresses more active input by students and less one-way information flow, may increase personal agency and expectancy within students’ minds.
Authentic Learning in Japan

In the case of Japan, there is a lack of knowledge surrounding learning topics such as active or authentic learning (Nakai, 2015). According to Mizokami (2014), these terms attracted attention from the public eye in 2010, with much of the related literature being published from 2015 onwards. Ito (2016) states that many Japanese university instructors consider active learning to be a set of instructional methods rather than an overarching methodology. Thus, many Japanese instructors lack knowledge of such concepts such as levels of engagement or deep vs. surface learning.

There is also scant literature surrounding the use of authentic learning in the Japanese education system. Ito (2016) illustrates this fact by the language in which these terms are thought of in Japan. Instead of using native Japanese words, many of the terms and vocabulary items used to describe different educational methodologies are written in their English equivalents. In the case of authentic learning, the term does not exist in Japanese and has to be written in *katakana*, the alphabet used to write foreign loan-words. This is also shared by active learning. According to Bonwell and Eison (1991), active learning is learning where students are involved rather than just listening. It places more emphasis on developing students’ skills. Students are involved in higher order thinking and engaged in authentic activities. Greater emphasis is also placed on students’ exploration of their own attitudes and beliefs. While there are differences between active and authentic learning, both share several common characteristics, such as the rejection of the didactic, lecture-based model of learning.

Ito (2016) also points out that Japanese university instructors have few opportunities for interactive engagement and elaboration regarding different types of learning techniques. Nishikawa (2015) argues that Japanese teachers only think of what methods to use for certain
subjects, without thinking of deeper learning goals. The Japanese Ministry of Education has also failed to clearly define what is active or authentic learning. These conditions have led to many university instructors not being exposed to these types of learning approaches. Unless the teachers go abroad and are involved in an extensive educational program, many will go through their teaching careers only teaching in the way that they were taught.

**Culture and its effects on learning and leadership**

Although the concept of culture is multidimensional, many scholars use theories of individualism vs. collectivism to distinguish between learning styles. According to Anderson and Hiltz (2001), individualism and collectivism are the more conceptually- and empirically-developed theories used to investigate the effects of culture on learning. Both individualism and collectivism have their roots in social identity theory. Social identity theory evolves around the hypothesis that behaviors are based on cognitive determination of self in terms of membership to a certain social group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). In an individualistic culture, individuals perceive themselves more as interchangeable and derived from maximizing positive distinctness within a certain group. However, collectivistic individuals see their own goals and the goals of the group as the same and make no distinction between themselves or the group. In the case of Japanese culture, where collectivism is the favored social construct for learning, there is a tendency among students and teachers to create a classroom harmony rather than engage in constructive criticism or debate. These characteristics must be taken into consideration when ascertaining the effectiveness and implications of implementing different learning styles or teaching methods.

The difference in culture between East Asians and the West results in different learning styles, and teaching practices. In his book *The Geography of Thought*, cultural psychologist Richard Nesbett shares the idea that different cultures reason and perceive life in diverse ways.
He argued that Chinese and other East Asian cultures believe in constant change and life is determined by the relationships between things and contexts. Nisbett argues that cultural influences may be measured by looking at epistemology, metaphysics, attention, social structure, economy, and ecology. His conclusion was that differences in cultural socialization influence learning preferences and styles (Nisbett, 2003). Other researchers on culture have reached similar conclusions - that cultural contexts play a vital role in the way learning and teaching take place (Hofstede, 1997; Reynolds, 1997; Kerr, 2004).

One of the most contentious facets of Japanese culture is “gakureki shakai”, which is the phenomenon where people are judged based on what university or school they attended. This practice has far-reaching consequences because it is used to make important decisions like employment, promotions, marriage, and even where people live. Amano and Poole (2015) point out that “gakureki shakai” is one of the causes of ineffective reforms to Japan’s university system. Reforms that have been posited, such as the corporatization of Japanese universities, have only strengthened “gakureki shakai”. This has led to a hyper-competitive society where students compete to gain entrance to the best universities. According to Johnson and Johnson (1989), learning is more effective when the methods that are used are interpersonal or cooperative rather than competitive or individualistic. Furthermore, Chang and Lim (2002) state that, “Learners from collectivistic cultural context are likely to have more positive interdependence since they may care more about the group’s success than individual success” (p. 95). Thus, when thinking about reforms to the Japanese learning environment, it is important to remember that Japanese culture puts a heavy emphasis on not only individual learning but learning from a group context as well.
When it comes to the classroom, specifically, Amano and Poole (2015) comment that there is a mismatch between expectations among professors and their students. Japanese universities are under pressure from the Ministry of Education to produce more research articles since this boosts the country’s prestige. Thus, professors spend most of their time on research instead of developing engaging lesson plans and courses for their students. Professors also have greater allegiance towards their field of specialty, which may magnify the lack of enthusiasm for better teaching methods, especially since there is little accountability in terms of teaching practices. For a vast majority of Japanese universities, the only time students voice their opinions regarding their instructors’ teaching practices are during student surveys, which are given once a semester. Furthermore, these results are only seen by the instructors themselves. Due to the fact that Japan as well as other East Asian countries can be characterized as having a more collectivistic cultural model, leaders and teachers must pay extra attention to not only themselves by also the group they are members of (Yuki, 2003). The teaching and learning practices that those in power choose to implement will have important ramifications on student engagement in the classroom and other measurements for successful learning outcomes.

**Student Engagement**

Parsons, Nuland, and Parsons (2014) note that the definition of student engagement is complex, as it involves cognitive, behavioral, and emotional constructs. Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris (2004) draw from Bloom’s (1956) definition of the three aspects of engagement to state that behavioral engagement involves students’ behavior, such as attendance or class behavior, and other physical aspects of involvement. Emotional engagement involves students displaying interest in an activity based on their reactions, enjoyment, and overall positive attitudes, Finally, cognitive engagement involves students being academically challenged and enjoying the
intellectual stimulus of a task. However, it is important to note that while some students may be engaged from a behavioral perspective, they may not be as engaged from a cognitive or emotional standpoint; thus, there is a spectrum of viewpoints from which engagement may be examined (Axelson & Flick, 2011).

Terenzini et al. (1994) noticed that there is a need for greater specificity in defining engagement. Student engagement has also been defined as the amount of active student involvement in a certain learning goal, learning context, or learning task. Kuh (2001) argued that the responsibility for student engagement lies not only with the student but also with the educational organization and teacher providing the learning task.

The next question that arises is why, or under what circumstances, do students engage? The bulk of student engagement research focuses on improving student learning (Coates, 2005). Additionally, student engagement is largely based on a constructivist point of view, wherein engagement is viewed as how students engage with a learning activity. Other research has looked at how engagement maintains or increases retention rates at schools (Kuh, 2008). This subject has been researched extensively in recent times, as more and more academic institutions look at ways to keep students in school to complete programs. Along these same lines, engagement for social justice has received increasing attention in academic circles as a way to bridge the gap between disenfranchised students and those that are more privileged (Krause, 2005). More and more schools are looking for ways to distribute resources more equitably so that students feel safer and more secure in their learning environments as there is a huge disparity among white and black students’ achievement levels.
Japanese Student Engagement and the Concept of Receptivity

In the case of Japan, there is yet another gap in the literature, as many studies on student engagement center on learning tasks and whether students were able to memorize the information. While there has been little research about the types of student engagement in Japanese university classrooms, there has been some research about how open universities are changing their curriculum to allow for better learning (Kitamura, 2012). That is to say that how willing are universities to implement new meaningful policy changes defines how open a university is. Open universities such as Akita International University have embraced diversity and change and offer a slightly different model of the Japanese learning experience to students, by having a more racially diverse faculty, encouraging students not to engage in the traditional job-hunting custom, and accepting a wide-range of foreign exchange students to encourage global communication skills. As Kuh (2001) mentioned, student engagement depends not only on individual students, but also on universities providing a positive learning environment. The concept of receptivity is an integral part of the organizational leadership process, as it signals how receptive organizations are to change. While this is not necessarily the same as engagement, it can be argued it is one of integral aspects to facilitating organizational change.

The concept of receptivity concerns how open an organization is to change. Japanese people typically make decisions collectively after extensive consultation with who? (Babu, 2011). In the case Japanese university systems, a major hurdle to opening the door for increased student engagement and other types of learning deals with having those in power accept and embrace the idea that change needs to occur. Thus, it may be argue that the concept of receptivity is a catalyst to initiating change within university classrooms in Japan. Sashkin
(1992) notes that for change to take place, especially within an environment with a top-down leadership style as is the case in Japan, leaders must have a positive opinion of change.

Depending on the context and group, people work critically with ideas concerning power and emotion, reflecting on and experiencing how structural bases of power exert pressure and encourage self-policing of identities (Sinclair, 2010). Babu (2011) notes that Japan is ranked high on uncertainty avoidance, so that the Japanese tend to form rules and regulations to avoid ambiguity. Thus, interpersonal relationships within Japanese society tend to be structured by a very strict set of rules and guidelines that regulate how organizations are managed. This largely applies also to schools and classrooms, as teachers and professors prefer to do what they have been told by people above them.

**Transformational Leadership**

As mentioned in Chapter 1, transformational leadership denotes a type of leadership which motivates, raises morale, enhances motivation, and increases job performance (Bass, 1985). According to Burns (1978), there are three overarching characteristics of transformational leadership:

1. Transformational leaders use their power to direct followers and interact while recognizing their goals, motives, feelings, and needs;
2. Transformational leaders have an innate sense of purpose, which helps them guide followers to a new understanding;
3. There are two levels of leadership: *transactional*, where there is an exchange of something between leader and follower and *transformational*, which engages the leader and the follower to raise awareness in each other; and
4. Transformational leaders genuinely care about the needs and feelings of followers, which help to establish trust between the two.

While there is a large body of research regarding the use of transformational leadership in an educational setting, there is little that has been found to relate Japan schools or universities.

Most of the seminal research on transformational leadership is credited to researcher Bernard M. Bass (1985). Bass (1985) extended the work of Burns (1978) to include psychological factors and a more concrete theoretical framework. He also made the argument that leadership can be transactional and transformational at the same time. It is imperative that the four characteristics of transformational leadership be looked at through a multicultural lens, as Japan’s culture and context influence how the four characteristics are interpreted. Idealized influence is undoubtedly one of the most important aspects of transformational leadership as it serves to create a role model for which people may emulate. This theoretical framework utilizes the four characteristics to examine the literature on how transformational leadership may be applied to the Japanese university setting. Next, this theoretical review discusses in greater detail the four individual characteristics of transformational leadership.

**Idealized Influence**

Idealized influence denotes transformational leaders who become role models for followers through evoking admiration, respect, and trust. Not only do transformational leaders place followers’ needs above their own, but they also display behavior that is consistent with the values and principles of the group (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Idealized influence is among the most important factors for transformational leadership in Japan. The concept of idealized influence is intertwined with the notion of charisma, an important word that continues to be mentioned in the literature on transformational learning. It is vital that the definition of charisma is dependent on
context and culture. Japanese society still places great importance on age, which can be evidenced in both its language of honorifics and social customs. This, in turn, creates an aged-based hierarchical system, where more respect is given to older members of society. Scholars on leadership in Japan have identified this trait and note that older members of society model behavior that is mimicked by younger members. By mimicking their elders, younger members of society show not only respect for older members, but also skills they need to succeed in certain social contexts such as at work. There are many examples of this, such as in sports, where younger members of teams must show extreme respect and are expected to emulate the hard work put in by seniors.

However, Taka and Foglia (1994) state that authoritative leaders risk being misused since people without morals or those who skimp on doing things properly set a precedent where such behavior can be emulated by juniors, or those who are in a lower social standing based on age or power. Bass and Riggio (2006) point out that for idealized influence to occur in transformational leadership, there is an assumption that high ethical and moral conduct is present. For Japanese students, whose natural tendency may be to respect everyone at face value and emulate those in power around them, idealized influence presents one of the most sought-after characteristics to initiate change. Leadership is also a state of mind, and studies have shown that in order for transformational leadership and idealized influence to have an effect, those in power need to be aware of their role model status and understand that the way they present themselves and their ideas will likely be passed on to their followers (Schyns & Schillings, 2013).

**Inspirational Motivation**

Transformational leaders motivate followers by providing meaning and challenge to tasks. They do not simply give tasks, such as homework and exchange them for something else
such as points towards a grade but they also encourage team spirit (Bryman, 1992). In doing these things transformational leaders are enthusiastic and optimistic while helping followers develop a desirable vision for the future. As mentioned in an article by Amano and Poole (2015), the time spent by Japanese students at universities mainly serves to prepare them for job hunting, thus generating apathy towards class content and learning. This further leads to a transactional-style relationship between students and teachers, where as long as students come to class, then they may gain credit. On the other hand, Japanese high schools may be more inspirational since teachers and students work together to help students gain entrance to universities. However, much of this spirit is lost when students go to a university since many students prefer to fill their time with part-time jobs, clubs, and social circles.

Inspirational motivation is connected to follower’s attitudes. Transformational leadership is also lauded for its ability to impact attitude. While transactional leadership uses the idea of getting something in return for an exhibited behavior, it could be argued that transformational leadership utilizes the concept of intrinsic motivation, thereby increasing chances for a sustained, positive impact on long-term behavior. Koh, Steers, and Terborg (1999) sought to find out how transformational leadership behaviors by school principals related to organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, teacher’s satisfaction with the leader, and student academic performance. The researchers examined the idea that transformational leadership can have a positive, indirect impact on subordinates (Bass, 1985; Vroom & Jago, 1988). Results showed that there was an increase in positive attitudes and learning outcomes when principals displayed a more transformational leadership style.

In a similar study, Organ and Konobsky (1989) looked at how transformational leadership could improve satisfaction and attitudes towards leaders while reinforcing a positive
environment. The authors also mentioned OCB, or organizational citizenship behavior. OCB represents a series of constructive or cooperative acts that are not mandatory but seek to reward encouraged behaviors (Organ & Konovsky, 1989). These results showed that transformational leadership behaviors had a marked impact on the measured indicators, especially for attitude. However, results did not show that transformational leadership behaviors had any impact on students’ academic performance. This may be because while principals were engaged in transformational leadership, teachers were not. Thus, while the impact may not be direct, transformational leadership behaviors can have a strong impact on the attitudes and behaviors of people in educational organizations.

**Intellectual Stimulation**

Transformational leaders stimulate innovation and creativity. They do so by encouraging followers to question assumptions, reframe situations, and approach old problems from new perspectives. As Japanese universities and professors continue to conduct research, scholars cannot deny the fact that teachers present students with intellectually stimulating content. The problem does not lie in the absence of content, but rather in the fact that teachers and professors are not giving the intellectual knowledge they have to their students.

**Individualized Consideration**

Transformational leaders act as coaches or mentors who foster personal development. They provide learning opportunities and a supportive climate for growth. Their coaching and mentoring are tailored to the individual needs and desires of each follower. In many cases, Japanese high schools display many characteristics of transformational learning, while universities do not. Unlike American high schools where students change classrooms throughout the day, Japanese high school students stay in one classroom where teachers, who teach different
subjects, come to administer lesson. A homeroom teacher is assigned to “take care” of the students and is even in charge of ensuring that students pass all their classes and prepare for university exams. Often, this involves a close working relationship with parents and other faculty members to ensure that students can enter their first choice of university. Slavich and Zimbardo (2012) state that, teachers and schools should treat students as individuals. This entails asking questions and connecting to students’ personal experiences through assignments and the curriculum. Furthermore, “the context in which people live and work should be examined in an effort to understand individuals’ perspectives; power and positionality exist within a social context” (Kezar & Lester, p. 168).

By examining the framework set forth by Bass and Avolio (1994), idealized influence and inspirational motivation are two critical characteristics of transformational leadership that deserve further analysis in Japanese higher education. While transformational leadership is touted for its ability to change behavior in followers, it is important to realize that leadership is fluid and changes based on context.

Zagoršek, Dimovski, and Škerlavaj (2009) conducted a study that showed how one leadership style may not be effective at all the times. The researchers sought answers to three critical questions:

1. Does transformational leadership contribute to learning in organizations?
2. Does transactional leadership contribute to organizational learning?
3. Is the influence of transformational leadership stronger than the influence of a transactional type of leadership?

Results of the study showed that both transactional and transformational leadership acts were effective in creating desired performance behavior. Depending on the context, a blended method
was also found to be effective. Thus, it would be wrong to state that only one style of leadership should be implemented in the university classroom. This study applied the "full-range leadership theory" as conceptualized by Bass (1985) and developed by Avolio and Bass (1991). They distinguish between three major types of leadership behaviors: laissez-faire (non-leadership), transactional, and transformational leadership.

Transactional leadership theory states that leaders offer rewards or threaten punishment in order to receive a desired action. Meanwhile, transformational leadership theory states that in order to maintain a positive innovative environment, leaders must encourage open, honest communication and collaboration. Members must also be encouraged to express their views and ideas to the team. Results showed that transformational learning and transactional leadership had equally positive benefits on organizational learning, especially in the areas of cognitive and behavioral changes. Transactional leadership may be more beneficial at first, but leaders may gradually move to a more transformative leadership role after a solid base has been established. For the purposes of the Japanese university classroom, one could argue that while transactional leadership may be easier, transformational leadership encourages positive learning behaviors in the future. Thus, the appropriate leadership style must be implemented or changed according to the organizational context.

From Transformational Leadership and Teaching to Authentic Learning

Many studies surrounding transformational learning in an educational setting tend to look at the role of principals in leading schools. However, researchers could also argue that transformational leadership can be observed in the classroom with professors and teachers. This type of leadership manifests itself in methods of instruction. Slavich and Zimbardo (2012) presented the idea that different methods of instruction such as authentic learning, student-
centered learning, collaborative learning, experiential learning, and problem-based learning are merely components of a method of instruction called transformational teaching. Rosebrough and Leverett (2011) defined transformational teaching as "an act of teaching designed to change the learner academically, socially, and spiritually". According to Slavich (2005), transformational teaching involves not only providing students with mastery of key course contents, but also transforming learning-related attitudes. Transformational teaching promotes meaningful change in a student’s life by having a teacher act as a role model to establish a shared vision with students. Many of transformational teaching are based on the theory of transformational leadership. Slavich and Zimbardo (2012) suggest that “transformational leadership is a critical feature of transformational teaching and that, when applied successfully, transformational teaching can maximize students' potential for academic success, and significantly enhance students' attitudes, beliefs, and skills” (p. 580). Transformational leadership, and therefore transformational teaching, is conceivably one way to increase authentic learning and student engagement.

Transformational leadership is rarely used to explain the teacher-student relationship; many of the characteristics of transformational leadership are the same for what many would describe as good teachers. Anding and Quinn (2005) describe transformative teachers as positive deviants who “call ordinary students to embrace their greatness” (p. 488). They go on to argue that transformative learning takes place when students realize that they can empower themselves. A teacher cannot go into a classroom and simply tell students they have power; the students need to realize this for themselves. Slavich and Zimbardo provide six characteristics of a transformative teacher. The first is establishing a shared vision of a course or class. This shared vision sets out goals for what students and teachers want to accomplish. The second characteristic is that
teachers or instructors provide modeling and mastery experiences. This is related to Bass and Avolio’s (2006) idealized behavior and transformational leadership. The teacher must show students what they are capable of by serving as a role model. Third, teachers must be intellectually challenging and encouraging to students. Fourth, teachers must provide personalized attention and feedback, which may be difficult in classes with a high teacher to student ratio. Making time to individually address students sends them a message that instructors care. By giving students more than just a number on a paper or assignment, teachers can show that they are committed to helping their students master course content. The fifth characteristic is teachers must create experiential that engage students with interesting and relevant content. Finally, the sixth characteristic of a transformative teacher is promoting prefection and reflection. Preflection is serious, careful thought about an event before it occurs. Anding and Quinn (2005) posit that reflection is one of the greatest tools that a transformative teacher has. By reflecting not only on the class or learners but also past transformative experiences, people have a plethora of untapped experiences from which to draw inspiration.

**Transformational leadership and school culture**

Transformational leadership occurs when leadership behaviors create positive change in a setting while developing awareness between leader and follower (Bass, 1999). Transformational leaders motivate their followers to acquiesce around one vision and goal, which can impact the climate of the class or school (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

One interesting study that examined the use of transformational leadership on school climate was conducted by Pagador-Garcia (2017). This research looked at empirical data from a wide range of elementary schools with regard to the effect of transformational leadership on academic and teacher beliefs. Ross and Gray (2006) viewed commitment to organizational
values through three lenses: commitment to school mission, commitment to professional community, and commitment to community-school partnerships. The findings showed that schools with higher levels of transformational leadership behaviors by principals reported increased levels of teacher efficacy, teacher cooperation, school community, school community partnerships, and higher student achievement. An analysis of data from 205 elementary schools supported this hypothesis. We may conclude that while transformational leadership may not directly influence curriculum-based evaluations, it may contribute to a more positive learning environment that encourages better academic achievement. This indirect influence may take the shape of idealized behavior and inspirational motivation, thereby creating an internal type of motivation.

Sarros (2008) performed a qualitative study to examine how transformational leadership interconnected with organizational goals. The biggest takeaway of the study was that transformational leadership helped to encourage innovation in educational settings. Tajasom and Ainam (2011) undertook another qualitative study on 17 high school environments seeking to examine how school teachers’ perceptions are affected by principals’ leadership and school climate. The big takeaway here was that transformational leadership affected school climate in four ways: affiliation, innovation, professional interest, and resource adequacy. The interactions between those in leadership roles in educational settings can either help to create an open or closed school climate, which impacts student achievement. While these studies focus primarily on a high school setting, the implications may be applied to a university setting as well.

Studies have shown that schools with an open climate tend to have positive learning outcomes (Tajasom & Ainam, 2011). Many Japanese universities have a closed school climate, which contributes inauthentic learning and low student engagement. Because of their top-down
leadership style, many university officials lack authentic awareness when it comes to school climate. Therefore, transformational leadership may offer a way for Japanese universities to create an open school climate. McCarley (2016) conducted a quantitative analysis to look at teachers’ perceptions based on principals’ displays of transformational leadership behavior. The results showed that transformational leadership had a direct impact on school climate and that principals who had dictatorial leadership behaviors did not exhibit transformational leadership qualities, so their schools had a negative school climate. In the case of Japan, there is a leadership style where heads of departments make all the important decisions which leads to generic changes and ill-informed school policies. Authoritative leadership styles may be easy at first; however, when a school has an established school culture, transformational leadership offers more in terms of promoting positive school growth and openness.

Thus, while most Japanese universities have educational goals in a school’s charter, many lack leadership that can make this happen, which results in resistance to change and a lack of educational innovation in the school. Many Japanese universities lack knowledge about different learning methodologies (Ito, 2016). These all create for a paralyzing educational environment in which change becomes extremely difficult to undertake and any changes that do happen are only surface-level that result in very few positive outcomes.

**Conclusion**

The study done in this dissertation will help to offer support for studies that investigate the unique nuances of Japanese student experiences through the lenses of transformational leadership, authentic learning, and student engagement. Authentic leadership, intrinsic motivation, and the concept of receptivity along with the theory of transformational leadership offer a unique and relevant aspect to examine the Japanese educational system. This is due to the
fact that many of these educational methodologies have not been discussed or experimented with in Japan. As transformational leadership offers a multitude of ways in which to improve student motivation, learning outcomes, and school climate, it is important that scholar practitioners investigate the ways in which it can be implemented in classrooms. In the case of university classrooms in Japan, transformational leadership methods may offer more insight into how to improve on the current system. However, as this literature review has pointed out, special consideration must be taken of the context of Japanese culture. The literature review revealed that Japan utilizes a more transactional leadership style in the classroom, which reflects its collectivistic culture and hierarchical relationships. However, simply mimicking transformational leadership behaviors that may seem to be the standard in western cultures will not necessarily translate into success for Japanese and East Asian cultures. Research has shown that in many educational settings, what is good in one part of the world may not be effective in another part (Han, 1996). Special consideration and understanding must be devoted to be able to fully determine what transformational leadership behaviors are relevant in a Japanese context. This is one theme from the strands of the literature discussed in this theoretical framework. The study done in this dissertation will help to offer support for studies that investigate the unique nuances of Japanese student experiences through the lenses of transformational leadership, authentic learning, and student engagement.

**Chapter 3 Research Design**

This qualitative study focused on the lived experiences of six Japanese university students and their impressions of leadership as displayed by their instructors. This chapter will explain the study’s research design and the justifications for the methodological choices made by
the author. First, the research question will be restated, followed by an explanation of the qualitative research approach and its methodologies. Next, the philosophical implications and its rationale will be explained, followed by an overview of the participants, procedures, and data analysis. In the final section, ethical considerations and potential research bias will be explained, concluding with a summary.

**Research Question**

The main question asked within this study was: How does transformational leadership affect the lived experiences of Japanese university students with regards to their impressions of authentic learning, student engagement, and motivation? One of the sub-goals of this study was also to see how transformational leadership may be defined and utilized in a Japanese university setting. This study was grounded in the theories of authentic learning, the three aspects of student engagement as put forth by Bloom (1956), and transformational leadership and its four guiding tenants by Bass and Avolio (2004): Individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized behavior. It also drew from the idea that learning and leadership are heavily contextualized by culture and thus Japanese learning and leadership may differ from that of western countries.

**Qualitative Research Approach**

This study utilized a qualitative approach to gain better insight regarding the problem of leadership in the Japanese university classroom. According to Creswell (2012), qualitative research deals with the descriptive nature of observation to draw conclusions regarding a certain phenomenon. While quantitative studies put more focus on numbers and data, qualitative research relies more on in-depth research, focusing on experiences and observations. Thus, qualitative methodologies tend to focus on the exploratory aspect of research rather than just
explaining. As a result, study samples are usually small and put more emphasis on depth and context, answering questions that begin with “what” or “how” (Creswell, 2012).

Anfara and Mertz (2015) claim that theory in qualitative research depends on the methodology and epistemology that the researcher chooses to implement. (Giorgi, 2012) supports this by mentioning that methodology plays a very deep and ever-changing role in the theoretical stances that researchers take while examining their subjects. Qualitative research brings its conclusions and findings through the lens and context of individual researchers. Thus, the choice of theory in research design is crucial to understanding how the study is to be interpreted (Creswell, 1994, 1998).

Kerlinger (1986) defined theory as “a set of interrelated constructs, definitions, and propositions that presents a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables, with the purpose of explaining and predicting phenomenon” (pg. 9). In the case of quantitative research, Ankara & Mertz (2006) note that the role of theory is very clear and defined. However, in the case of qualitative research, the roles are less defined and become more intertwined with methodology and epistemologies. As the methodology will go on to help determine which theories will be used, there is the need to fully understand the characteristics of each one.

Overall, there are five types of qualitative research methods: Ethnography, narrative, phenomenological, grounded theory, and case study. Ethnography has its roots in anthropological research, which relies mainly on observation. Creswell (2012) states that the key characteristics of ethnographic research are “cultural themes, a culture-sharing group, shared patterns of behavior, belief, and language, fieldwork, description, themes and interpretation, context or setting, and researcher reflexivity” (pg. 472). It sets out to present a reliable
description of the behaviors and attitudes. A narrative research method involves telling a story. According to Reissman (2008), a narrative research design seeks out to convey the lived experiences and attitudes of individuals through the writing of personal narratives. According to Creswell (2012), it “focuses on the microanalytic picture-individual stories, rather than the broader picture of cultural norms” (pg. 504). A phenomenological research design relies on a combination of methods, such as conducting in-depth interviews, reading documents, making observations, and visiting places to gain a better understanding of the participants’ place. Emphasis is placed on the participants’ own perspectives to help researchers interpret trends and draw conclusions. Grounded theory research design relies on the researcher to generate a set theory in order to test a process, action, and interaction regarding a certain topic (Creswell, 2012). This type of research design is usually utilized when researchers want to study a specific process, such as how students learn a certain subject. Finally, a case-study research design involves the study of one or two events. Through the use of multiple data sources to examine a single event, researchers are able to analyze it in order to gain a deeper understanding of it. In many cases, there are times where these methods are mixed and, in some studies, the researcher must change from one research design to another, thereby blending them (Creswell, 2012). The next section will talk about the philosophical assumptions of the study in question.

**Philosophical Assumptions**

This study utilized the phenomenological research method, which seeks to raise the voices of its participants. One could argue that phenomenological research methods set out to describe the living experience of a phenomenon (Dowling, 2007). Originating from the work of Husserl (1970), phenomenological research methods set out to use psychological and philosophical contexts to understand the perceptions, perspectives, understandings, and feelings
of those who have experienced a phenomenon. Phenomenological studies focus on four aspects of a phenomenon: Lived space, lived body, lived time, and live human relations (Giorgi, 2012). Due to the fact that the data collected is usually through extensive personal interviews in a small sample size, the researcher attempts to identify themes or make generalizations based on how the phenomenon was experienced by the participants. Giorgi (2012) also makes the important point that phenomenological studies “do not automatically want to say that something ‘is,’ but it wants to understand what motivates a conscious creature to say that something ‘is’” (pg. 239). It is also important to note that the researcher must bracket past their own preexisting knowledge and experiences regarding a phenomenon in order to newly describe and experience it to be able to precisely apply research generalizations. The next section will discuss the different paradigms of research.

According to Schwandt (2001), a paradigm is a worldview that represents the beliefs and values in a discipline that will inform the researcher how to interpret results. According to Ponterorro (2005), the four main paradigms are positivism, post-positivism, constructivism, and critical theory. Ponterotto (2005) also states that positivism involves a set of observations and deductions based on it. It recognizes only facts that can be scientifically proven.

Post-positivism involves understanding that humans can never fully understand something because of their own personal views. Ponterotto (2005) states that, “While Positivism is about theory verification, post-positivism is about theory falsification” (pg. 129). The post-positivism paradigm is the basic scientific “form of a hypothesis and test the hypothesis” type of scientific research. Ponterotto (2005) also states that it was born out of the research question and hopes to draw conclusions from scientific observation. However, researcher bias may distort these results. Post-positivists draw conclusions but recognize that these may not necessarily be
true for all populations. The strength of it is that it seeks to be purely scientific and unbiased, however, at the same time, the weakness is that it may not take context into consideration.

Constructivism has to do with the context of the researcher and the “lens” through which they analyze data. It relies heavily on context and the positionality of the researcher to draw conclusions. All things and observations are relative to each other, and thus they may not produce the same results each and every time. Merriam (1998) mentions that this movement grew out of a dissatisfaction with the post-positivism movement when researchers wanted something that was more personalized and context-based. The strength of it is that it is takes into deep consideration the contexts and positionalities of the researchers, but its weakness is that it may ignore quantitative data.

Finally, the critical-ideological paradigm has to do with social justice and understanding that society always creates winners and losers and that all results have to take this into consideration. Ponterotto (2005) describes it as a way for researchers to liberate oppression. Everything is, in a way, the result of some kind of social construct and hierarchy. Thus, in order to accurately interpret research results, one must understand this sociological aspect. The strength of it is that it relates heavily to society and takes that into consideration. However, that may also be its weakness and it may concentrate too much on a societal point of view. It is important that many of the paradigms are interrelated, and it is problematic to implement just one paradigm when performing research. Lincoln and Guba (2000) state that the search for truth, also known as axiology, forces us to, in a way, blend the paradigms. When researchers look for the truth, the way in which the researcher navigates the paradigms will change and flow.
Rationale

As mentioned earlier, qualitative research focuses on deep contextual analysis that helps to make sense of a phenomenon (Creswell, 2012). The problem of practice within this study dealt with how transformational leadership and its qualities affect perceived authentic learning, student engagement, and motivation. As the study was non-numerical and focused more on the lived experiences of the student, the researcher chose to implement an Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) research methodology.

According to Giorgi (2007), phenomenological research not only seeks to state a phenomenon, but rather to ask the question of what and how it happens. As mentioned earlier, IPA research utilizes in-depth interviews using very open-led questions that allow the participants the freedom to express their thoughts and opinions through unique viewpoints (Giorgi, 2012). IPA also tends to utilize purposive sampling and semi-structured interviews, which enable the participants to provide fuller, richer accounts of their experiences. It also requires that the researcher add his/her own perception to the data. One could thus argue that IPA is the best fit as the research questions themselves are open-ended and seek to explore rather than just state how transformational leadership can be used to promote authentic learning, student engagement, and intrinsic motivation.

Specifically, the study in question set out to examine how Japanese students at a university responded to certain transformational leadership behaviors; namely individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, idealized behavior, and intellectual stimulation. An IPA research approach allowed the researcher to perform an analysis and make generalizations based on how these behaviors affected the lived experiences of the students. One could also argue that authentic learning, engagement, and motivation are also very hard to measure, and a more
qualitative approach allowed the researcher to make more generalized conclusions based on the interviews, thus making an IPA methodology the most suitable.

Grounded theory focuses more on the constructivism vs. objectivism perspectives. Objectivist grounded theory looks to uncover what is thought to be there. Meanwhile, a constructivist grounded theory believes that there are multiple realities and that the context of the person experiencing that will dictate the conclusions. A case study methodology, on the other hand, looks to examine how a certain event influenced a certain phenomenon using documents, observations, questionnaires, and interviews. An ethnographic approach relies on the researcher to immerse themselves in the research environment and rely strictly on observations to draw conclusions. A narrative approach to qualitative research tends to utilize the experiences of one or two persons to form a cohesive story from which to draw conclusions. Due to the fact that this study is not just one person or event but rather the lived experiences of six Japanese university students, IPA seems to be the most rational methodology. One could thus argue that IPA is the best fit as the research questions themselves are very open-ended and seek to explore rather than just state how transformational leadership can be used to promote authentic learning, student engagement, and intrinsic motivation.

Participants

According to Giorgi (2012), in the case of phenomenology, the sampling size is usually small, no more than 20 people. In the specific case of IPA, it generally uses even smaller numbers, which are below 10. This IPA-led research study utilized six homogeneous Japanese students that were either in their junior or senior years from one academic department at a private university in Tokyo. All participants were native Japanese, in that they had spent their whole lives in Japan and went through the Japanese educational system. It is important to note that the
students’ average TOEIC score (Test of English for International Communication) was 550, meaning that students had an intermediate to upper-intermediate level of English. To ensure that there was no gender bias, the gender makeup of the study included three boys and three girls. Students were told that their answers and cooperation in the study would in no way affect their grades or personal standing at school. These students also did not know the researcher previously and had no connection in terms of classes.

Creswell (2012) also mentions that it is ideal to keep the sampling as homogeneous as possible to ensure reliability of the study. Several other considerations have been made to ensure that the sample set shares a number of important characteristics. In order to maintain a cultural homogenous sample, all students were native Japanese students aged 21 to 23 years old and belonged to the same department within the university. Students were able to speak English to a varying degree, however, the interviews were conducted in both Japanese and English. The researcher is fluent in both English and Japanese and was able to translate what was said in all interviews.

**Sampling Procedures**

The sampling procedures involved finding students that were able to purposefully and deeply answer the questions based on their lived experiences. According to Smith (2009), IPA research usually utilizes purposeful sampling in order to gain participants that may add meaningful content to the research question. Thus, for the purposes of this research study, purposeful sampling was utilized to find participants that were able to deeply reflect on their experiences while at university. The following steps were carried out to find the six participants:

Step 1: An email was sent to the head of the academic department in order to gain help in finding students who he/she thought would be able to contribute to the study. This email contained a
brief description of the study (see Appendix A). It also explained many details regarding how the study would be used and that all precautions would be taken to ensure the privacy and safety of all students involved.

Step 2: Upon gaining a list of names of possible students from the head of the department, the researcher then sent a targeted email to the students followed by a copy of the questions that were asked (see Appendix B) and a consent form (see Appendix C). If students had questions, they had the option of being given the contact info of the researcher to inquire about any concerns they might have had.

Step 3: Students that positively responded to the study were invited for a short talk in which the researcher described the study in depth and the steps that were taken in order to protect their privacy. Students again were able to voice their concerns or ask questions.

Step 4: Screened students that agreed to do the study were asked to sign the consent form and asked to set up their respective interview times. Interviews were done in a private room on school campus and took about 60 to 90 minutes. The researcher used a recorder to record all interviews.

Step 5: Students with interviews that went over the 90-minute mark were asked if they would like to continue in another session. Students who agree were then asked to set up another interview. Students who felt they needed more time to think about answers to the questions were also asked to set up another interview time. However, no interview times went over 90 minutes in length.

Step 6: Once all the students felt that they had adequate time to answer the questions, the researcher then thanked them for their cooperation and offered his contact information for any follow-up questions or concerns that students may have had.
**Procedures**

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, this study utilized an IPA-style of research design, which sought to explore the lived experiences of Japanese university students. As in-depth interviews of around six students were the main source of data, IPA was deemed to be the most appropriate research design method. Creswell (2012) states that there are five overarching steps to collecting data in a qualitative study. The first step is to utilize purposeful sampling to identify possible participants based on the places and people that can best help to shed light on the phenomenon in question. The second step is to gain permission from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and research site. The third step involves carrying out interviews with all of the participants revolving around open-ended questions that will allow the researcher to explore rather than test. The fourth step involves recording the information using self-designed protocols, which will help the researcher to organize the data gathered from the interviews. Finally, the last step involves ensuring that the safety and privacy of the participants and that their data is kept safe. As the interviews involved deep questioning, qualitative research interviews and questionnaires rely on a more intimate relationship between researcher and participants than quantitative ones. Using these five steps developed by Creswell (2012), the next section will discuss data collection methods.

**Data Collection**

After securing permission from the IRB and the research site, the researcher first carried out purposeful sampling by selecting students. Next, Creswell’s (2012) recommendations for carrying out qualitative research interviews were carried out. In this section, these methods will be explained in more detail. Interviews provide information and data regarding experiences and ideas that may not be observable. They are made up of open-ended questions which allow the
participant to answer in a way they feel most comfortable with. Creswell first notes that qualitative research interviews may either be performed in a one-on-one style or in a focus group. Due to the sensitive nature of the subject material and in respect of privacy concerns, all of the interviews were carried out in a one-on-one style. One-on-one interviews are especially good for individuals who are articulate and not hesitant to share their ideas. Thus, during purposeful sampling, these kinds of students were sought after.

**Data Analysis**

In a qualitative research design, coding presents as the main method to draw conclusions from interviews. To ascertain the findings of the interviews performed, a combination of coding techniques will be used. According to Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), coding involves assigning meaning to data chunks that exhibit a certain. This is especially useful for qualitative interviews as it can help “construct higher level meanings for assertion, proposition, hypothesis, and/or theory development” (pg.73). For the interviews in question, a hybrid of emotion coding, evaluation coding, and holistic coding were used to analyze the data. Through this data, the researcher looked for trends and generalizations related to authentic learning, engagement, motivation, and transformational leadership.

According to Miles, Huberman, and Sladana (2014), emotion coding seeks to find patterns in emotional responses by participants. While it is mainly used to examine relationships, it can also shed light on participants’ perspectives or opinions towards the subject matter. This will be especially useful during the interview to ascertain whether participants had an overall positive, negative, or neutral response to school climate, learning outcomes, their instructors’ leadership methods, and attitudes. It is important to note that emotional responses are also
heavily contextualized by culture, and thus this relied on the researcher’s knowledge of Japanese and western society to add his own perspectives.

Evaluation coding can be used to assign worth of a significant policy or theory (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). The researcher in this study examined whether aspects of transformational leadership are effective in creating positive outcomes in the Japanese university classroom. The questions asked in the interview, specifically number 4 “Can you think of anything that a teacher did in the classroom that really helped contribute to your learning the material” and 5 “What kind of activities or lessons did teachers do that made you think the content you were learning was applicable for when you get a job?” (seek Appendix C) sought to see whether students had any perceived experiences of transformational leadership with regards to authentic learning, which in this case pertained mainly to English, student engagement, and motivation. Thus, evaluative coding was paramount to interpreting whether students’ lived experiences coincided with transformational leadership behaviors that were or were not exhibited by their instructors.

Holistic coding can be useful to find trends in big data sets (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). Its goal is to capture the overall essence of the data set. This was especially useful to make overall generalizations of the data from all students. While emotion and evaluative coding may be used individually with each interviewee, holistic coding was used to tie all of the data together to make more overarching statements.

**Ethical Considerations**

Creswell (2012) describes several considerations that researchers must make when performing a qualitative research study, such as trustworthiness of the participants, potential research bias by the researcher, and ensuring that all participants are treated in the same way.
Due to the personal nature of the study, there was a risk that participants may name certain instructors for being bad teachers or having had bad instructional skills. For this reason, all names and information related to identity were kept confidential. The researcher took all the necessary precautions by first completing The National Institute of Health’s web-based training course in “Protecting Human Research Participants” on November 13th, 2017. The certification number is 2559250. The researcher also went through all of the necessary permissions to interview students by the university and was granted permission to perform the study on October 15th, 2018. The researcher also sought permission from the Internal Review Board (IRB) before starting to collect any data.

**Potential Research Bias**

According to Giorgi (2012), there is a risk of the researcher contaminating research conclusions in a qualitative study because of the personal nature the researcher takes in the study. Arnd-Cannigan and Pozutto (2008) conducted a study in which they looked at how teaching theory influenced how a social worker would interpret a certain case. They concluded that people form a professional practice conscious, which stems from an array of personal contexts and experiences. The researcher in this study identified as an American expat teacher in Japan. While he was racially half-Japanese and has a Japanese last name, he still identified as a foreigner in Japan. He had experienced the prejudice of not being native Japanese and understood the very homogeneous culture that Japan society has. The researcher had lived in Japan for a total of 10 years, of which he had spent nine years teaching English, with seven of those being in a university context. As such, he was very familiar with the Japanese educational system and teaching styles.
In this case, it was important to recognize that the researcher may have harbored some bias towards Western teaching styles. Being brought up in and attending only American schools throughout his academic career, there may have been a tendency to want to criticize Japanese methods. Nonetheless, the researcher had recognized his own bias and hoped to expand the knowledge of teaching practices in Japan by contributing more scholarly work to the field of transformational leadership.

Limitations

As Moustakas (1994) states, phenomenological research has its strengths in that it can provide for a deeper understanding of a phenomenon that quantitative research methods may not be able to generate. Also, due to its exploratory nature, it may help to contribute new details and information to already existing research methods. However, there are also limitations to phenomenological research, such as not being able to find credible participants, the subjectivity of the data, the necessity of redact themselves for risk of personal bias, or other pre-conceived notions (Giorgi, 2012).

There were three overarching limitations to this study. The first had to do with the risk of generalization. Giorgi (2012) states that unlike quantitative data, phenomenological research has the limitation of coming from a relatively small number of participants, which can result in statistically unreliable numbers. In this study, these were the lived accounts of six students, whose experiences could hardly speak for all Japanese university students. They were also selected from a specific profile, which they shared the characteristics of because they were from the same school, the same department, and from generally the same background in terms of education, social standing, and economic situation. Thus, while the accounts from these students were valuable in that they helped to understand the role of transformational leadership in the
Japanese upper educational system, they were in no way representative of all Japanese students as a whole. In other words, due to the sample size and scope of the study, there was a risk of generalization.

The second limitation had to do with the students’ responses. They may have not been fully aware of their learning experiences while at university, which may have limited the depth of the answers given. Giorgi (2012) states that participants must be able to clearly articulate their thoughts and experiences in a way that requires a high level of awareness of themselves and their past. While this may be prevented by the use of purposeful sampling, there can still be no way to be sure that participants were fully aware of what they had experienced.

Finally, the third limitation revolves around the idea that students may have felt differing degrees of comfort in their answers. Because Japan is a very age-based society, students may have felt an unconscious necessity to give answers that they felt elders or people of a higher status may have wanted to hear. This presented the risk of not having students give their earnest opinions. This again was circumvented by purposeful sampling to ensure that students were fully comfortable sharing their honest opinions. However, the cultural need to agree in social situations is quite strong and may have presented itself as a barrier to gaining fully realized responses.

Summary

This study set out to explore the personal experiences of six Japanese university students through the lens of transformational leadership, utilizing the theories of authentic learning, student engagement, and motivation. There is a teaching crisis in many university classrooms in Japan, which is resulting in a negative school climate, negative learning outcomes, and apathetic attitudes towards learning. This study set out to see if students whose instructors exhibited
transformational leadership characteristics had any influence on students’ authentic learning, engagement, or motivation. More specifically, the researcher aimed to see whether instructors who demonstrated idealized behavior, intellectual stimulation, individual consideration or inspirational motivation produced more authentic learning situations for students, raised their emotional, cognitive, and behavioral engagement, or increased their intrinsic motivation to learn more. The IPS methodology that was utilized in this study amplified the voices and experiences of these six students through in-depth interviews. According to Creswell (2012), IPA does more than just report on an experience, it also analyzes and interprets the experience through the eyes of the researcher. However, due to the fact that IPA risks the bias of the researcher taking away from the voice of the participants, precautions were taken to ensure that the researcher was aware of his own prejudices. Standard IPA methods were used and the data was analyzed with several coding techniques to generate findings. The overall advantage of IPA is the depth to which interviews may be carried out to amplify the voice of a person and their experiences.

Chapter 4 Findings and Analysis

This chapter contains the results of an Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) on the lived experiences of Japanese university students to gain better understanding of the problems from lack of authentic learning, disengagement, and student burnout through the lens of transformational leadership. The overarching research question that led the study was: How do students at a Japanese university perceive transformational leadership qualities in their professors or instructors? The study also set out to answer the sub-questions: What aspects of transformational leadership do Japanese university professors engage in that contribute to authentic learning? What aspects of transformational leadership do Japanese university
professors engage in that contribute to engagement? What aspects of transformational leadership do Japanese university professors engage in that contribute to increased intrinsic motivation?

This chapter discusses the IPA analysis and how IPA analysis is applicable to the research question and sub-questions. A three-phase process was used to analyze transcripts: (a) emotion coding, (b) evaluation coding, and (c) holistic coding. Emotion coding traced the patterns in the emotional responses of participants. While emotional coding is mainly used to examine relationships, it can also shed light on participants’ perspectives or opinions about the subject matter. In this case, it was used to find themes in their overall perceptions of lived experiences at a university. Evaluation coding is used to assign worth to a significant policy or theory (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). This study sought to discover if aspects of transformational leadership were effective in creating positive outcomes in Japanese university classrooms. Finally, holistic coding finds trends in big datasets (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014) while capturing the overall essence of the dataset. This was utilized to make overall generalizations from the acquired data sets. At each level of coding, the researcher looked for recurring themes or trends to help form conclusions. This chapter also includes data tables used to indicate key themes.

Six participants were interviewed for the study. The table below contains an overview of the students and their aspirations for the future. The researcher examined and analyzed participants’ backgrounds, learning experiences from K-12, reasons for going to university, learning opportunities while at university, and perceived experiences regarding assignments, instructors and academic burnout. Participants were asked to reflect on their experiences at university and answer questions to the best of their abilities. The participants also addressed common themes and problems experienced in Japanese university classrooms such as poor
teaching practices by instructors, a lack of learning practical skills for work, and the reliance on textbooks by teachers.

Table 1

*Participant Profiles*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Year in School</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Future Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taro</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Plans to be a junior high or senior high school English teacher. Is in the process of obtaining his teaching license.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuki</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Plans to be a junior high or senior high school English teacher. Is in the process of obtaining his teaching license.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taichi</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Plans to be a junior high or senior high school English teacher. Is in the process of obtaining his teaching license.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kensuke</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Plans on eventually becoming a junior or senior high school English teacher after working for a company to gain experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yumiko</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has secured a job at a famous company. Will start work in the Spring of 2020.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayako</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has no plans on future jobs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After analyzing the data, there were four superordinate themes and fourteen subordinate themes. The four superordinate themes were: a lack of authentic learning, disengagement,
student burnout, and raising intrinsic motivation. Each superordinate theme also consisted of subordinate themes that sometimes had limited relatability but were deemed worthy of discussion. The following table shows the superordinate themes and the corresponding subordinate themes.

Table 2
*Superordinate Themes and their Subordinate Sub-themes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lack of Authentic Learning</th>
<th>Disengagement</th>
<th>Student Burnout</th>
<th>Raising Intrinsic Motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of skills being taught</td>
<td>Sense of apathy in classes</td>
<td>Life outside of school</td>
<td>Importance of personal engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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This chapter presents interview findings in order of the superordinate themes listed above. The subordinate themes corresponding with each superordinate theme will be elaborated
upon using quotes directly from interview transcripts. At the end of the chapter, the researcher will provide a summary that leads to chapter 5.

**Lack of Authentic Learning**

The first superordinate theme, *lack of authentic learning*, examines why there is a major gap in skills taught in Japanese university classes and why participants believed that the knowledge they were learning was not useful for their future jobs. Authentic learning revolves around the idea that learning involves authentic tasks that teach problem-solving skills while simultaneously building students’ self-confidence in their learning abilities (Bruner, 1966; Helgeson, 1992; Perkins & Blythe, 1994). Authentic learning tasks, debate, and discourse also promote social interactions among students, which in turn help them examine phenomena from multiple perspectives while challenging them to analyze their own viewpoints (Brown, 1992; Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Vygotsky, 1978; Wiburg & Carter, 1994). Out of the six participants in the study, five remarked that, in some way, they felt that the classes and curriculum in their university experiences would not be useful in their future. However, of the six participants, four had already secured jobs and, of these, three were to become English instructors. One of the participants was midway through the process of getting his English teaching license. It is important to note that the department to which all the participants belonged is the logical choice for students who wish to become English teachers. Therefore, when gauging the usefulness of the classes for them, they may have been looking at the utility of the classes to them becoming teachers.

Many participants considered classes that were directly useful for them earning teaching licenses and said those classes taught them the necessary skills. However, classes unrelated to obtaining the teaching license were usually considered as not useful. One participant noted that
he had decided to become an English teacher after arriving at the school. However, the other five wanted to become English teachers before they had enrolled in the university. This leads to the conclusion that many Japanese university students have decided what kind of job they would like to do in the future then they select classes and spend time at university working towards that career goal. However, for those students who are undecided about the job they would like to do, there is the risk of taking classes that may not be related to future jobs. This may lead them to believe that classes were not useful at all.

**Lack of Skills Being Taught**

The first subordinate theme that emerged was the issue of skills not being taught in classes. Four participants made explicit remarks about the lack of authentic skills being taught in their classes. One of the participants, when asked to tell about an assignment that really helped him to learn, laughed and said that during his time at the university, he had never felt that any of the assignments really helped him to learn.

I: Ok so in terms of learning the most, what kind of assignment is the best? Like this class, or from this assignment I really felt like I learned something, have you ever felt like that?

P: Umm…… none….

I: None huh...

P: (laughing) none none. I guess none.

The participant’s laughter indicates that he considered the lack of learning at school to be comical. He even repeats to the interviewer that he has never had a real learning experience. This attitude of not learning anything in Japanese university is pervasive and reinforces the idea that time spent in Japanese university classrooms is not for learning, but merely is the time spent
before starting work. A university degree may not necessarily signify a learning experience but merely to show that the holder of the degree has gone through the necessary steps to get a job. A similar observation was made in another conversation by the same participant when asked why he attended this university.

I: So why did you decide to attend this university?

P: Well everyone around me was going to university, and I was like well I will go too. And you know in terms of the future, there is a big wage gap between a high school graduate and a university graduate, and if you’re a high school graduate the types of job you can do are limited.

However, about such opinion, Taro one of the participants, thought that the skills needed for work and the skills needed in university classes did not necessarily coincide. Ayako, a junior who was one of the two participants who decided not to become a teacher, expressed similar frustration at the lack of opportunities to gain practical skills. When asked the reason she thought group work was an important skill to learn for her future and though some of the classes in the university do involve group work, often the group work may be superficial and not create the opportunity for communicating with new people.

I: And do you think X University is providing you with enough opportunities to gain those skills?

P: I think maybe it's a little lacking.

I: Why do you think it’s lacking

P: That group work, for me and the classes I’m taking, there aren’t many opportunities, and when we do share opinions it always seems to be the same group so we are kinda
used to it and we just end up talking about other stuff, and we aren’t being stimulated and it’s not really helpful.

Authentic learning places an emphasis on cooperating with others to accomplish learning tasks. Learning is student-centered, with teachers serving as facilitators rather than knowledge dictators. Bennet and Hedberg (2001) also mention that authentic learning tasks require learners to address a problem with their own repertoire of knowledge and the skills they have developed. In cooperation with a group of diverse people and methods, students work through their problems while managing relationships with fellow students and the instructor. Ayako also noted that, along with group work, it was important to learn presentation skills for future prospects. Due to the nature of the teacher-centered curriculum in the entire Japanese education system, presentations and group work offer a welcome change from the mundane lecture-style work that characterizes most Japanese classrooms.

I: I see and from that presentation did you learn something about yourself? Or did you learn anything from that presentation?

P: We learned how to use PowerPoint, like not just doing it for the grade but for myself. I also learned about how to listen and it made me think about how to convey things in an easy to understand way, I think it was a very good opportunity.

Taro expressed a similar opinion when asked about the lack of opportunities for learning communication and presentation skills at the university. In the interview, Taro stated explicitly that he thought communication skills were important skills that he wanted to learn while at university, but the school was not providing enough opportunities to learn those skills.

I: What skills do you believe will help you in the future? How do you know this? Is the University helping you gain these skills? How or how not?
P: Uh… talking to people.
I: Talking to people?
P: Talking to people. Communication and being able to interpret and convey your will are skills that are extremely necessary in a job. I think they are necessary skills.
I: And do you think the university is helping you to gain those skills? Are they making that happen? X University, helping you to communicate with people.
P: I don’t really think so.
I: Could you tell me the reason?
P: Ah… well I think in class the time spent on talking to each other and presenting, like time where it is student-centered, I wanted more, more, and more of that, and if I had more and more of that it would have been better training.

An interesting point other participants noted about the lack of opportunities to learn skills was that this lack might be caused by the heavy reliance of the Japanese education system on testing to determine whether a skill has been learned or not. Kensuke opined that the university was failing in its duty of providing learning opportunities or chances for gaining skills in classes and that the classes were tailored too much to passing tests.

P: …but overall I would say that my learning experiences have mainly focused on tests for some kind of qualification…

When asked his opinions on practical skills for the future, Kensuke remarked that the skills taught may be sufficient for a career as a teacher; however, as for teaching other skills, the school was lacking.

I: The university, X University, do you think it's providing you with enough practical skills for your future?
P: Umm….. Practical skills… well I guess it depends on the department and of course what kind of job you pick. But if for example I’m in the English department, if I get a job that uses English then English skills are necessary. If I can get a job that uses English then I think that the things that I’m learning will help me… I guess…. (seems skeptical).

However, heavy reliance on passing tests is characteristic not just of Japanese universities, but also of the entire Japanese education system. Much of Japanese students’ time in their K-12 education is spent in a never-ending quest for higher scores on tests or qualification exams. Therefore, in Japanese society the tests a person passes and what schools a person attends are of great importance in deciding the type of job someone will get and the kind of future he or she may have. This was evident in a dialogue with Yuki.

I: I see. And um… I think you read that handout about transformational learning that I gave you. What do you think X University, or Japanese university system in general should do to get better?

P: (long pause) The universities…. The universities… that… I think just changing the universities is not enough. They have to change everything.

I: Change everything?

P: Change everything, everything, elementary junior high school, senior high school need to be flipped and if they aren't then probably nothing will be improved.

I: So, how should they be changed?

P: As for educational policy in elementary, junior high, and senior high, currently it’s thought of as like students sit in their chairs quietly, don't speak, and listen to the class. And that policy is continued in university, and of course speaking in class, of course sitting down quietly and just receiving the class has become the norm.
Yuki noted that the whole education system is characterized by a passive approach. To change the state of the Japanese education system, heavy reliance on tests built into the system must change.

Conclusion

In terms of lack of skills, a majority of participants stated that they felt that the university was not providing them with enough opportunities to gain skills, especially for group work, communication, and presentations. This may be caused by the teacher-centered, lecture style of teaching employed in many Japanese university classrooms. Also, skills and classes that were job-specific had the highest chance of being thought of as useful. The students who entered the university with their choice of the job in mind were more likely to find the classes they were taking or the skills they were learning to be useful than other students who were undecided about their choice of the job to be sought after graduation.

Classes aren’t useful

The participants’ considered what they learned in classes to be useful to some extent. The participants found the classes that were related to their careers to be the most useful. However, most of the classes were deemed as not useful. The following conversation with Yuki, who plans to be an English teacher, clearly demonstrates this point.

P: Well you know to get that teacher license I have to take certain classes and those classes are directly related to my job so they are quite practical.

I: Practical. And those classes, were they good?

I: Practical. And those classes, were they good?
P: They were good. For example, like demonstration, mock classes, we had those things and one by one, everyone had to lead a class in front of the other students. I think that will be very useful for when I become a teacher and I thought it was pretty good.

I: I see.

P: But my other classes in other departments like the Buddhist studies department, those classes, those classes I don’t think are useful for any jobs in the future.

It is evident that Yuki considers the classes related to becoming a teacher to be the most useful, but not the other classes. When asked if he thought this was the case with all Japanese universities and not just the one where he was studying, Yuki responded that the courses related to business may be teaching more applicable skills, but other liberal arts courses, he thought, did not teach anything that would be useful in the future.

I: So, do you think that is the case for all classes at Japanese universities, not just X university?

P: For example, perhaps for economics or business, those kinds of majors that connect to working at a company, they may be able to make use of the stuff they learn, but other majors like Literature, Psychology, Geography, and Buddhism, I don’t think we will necessarily use them in the real world.

Taro, who will obtain his teaching license and is also planning to teach English, was of a similar opinion. He observed that none of the classes he had taken so far seemed useful. However, he said he might change his opinion later when he actually began to work.

P: The things I am learning in class? Uh… the things I’m learning in class. As of right now I don’t know but perhaps when I start working and become a junior high school English teacher I will recognize that something was useful.
I: You mean the practice classes for your education classes? Oh you mean junior high school classes.

P: I mean the classes I will take from now on. Yeah, maybe I will understand more after I become an actual teacher, but as of right now I have not come to the realization that what I’m learning is useful.

Other participants, too, shared these opinions. Ayako, a junior, said that she felt that only 30% of the classes she had taken so far at the university were useful. When asked why she thought so, she answered because the classes were teacher-centered and presented few opportunities to engage with the material.

I: I see, so out of all the classes you've taken up until now, what percent would you say have been good? All of the classes you've taken, ten percent? 1? What percent would say have been helpful?

P: Umm… about 30% I guess, 30 or 40%.

I: Which means that the other 70% have not been useful you think?

P: Yes, that's right.

I: I see. And those classes that you don't think were useful were classes in which you just listened to the lectures and sat there? And the other 30 or 40% were a bit more active?

P: Yes, yes.

This problem of passive learning in Japanese universities is one that has been discussed in the previous section. Participants expressed that the lecture-style classes where they sit and listen to the teacher result in the highest degree of dissatisfaction. Kensuke, another junior, held a similar opinion when asked why teachers did not create a positive learning environment, Kensuke responded as follows:
P: Yeah, I guess my reasoning is that…. Umm… of course there have been really good classes with good teachers but…. Umm… the lecture style of class…. (pause) well… as I mentioned earlier, those classes in which students are just passive and the teachers just explain something one-way… there are ….teachers who teach like that and I don't really think they are useful.

Kensuke echoed the same sentiment when at the end of the interview he was asked if he would like to share anything further about his learning experiences at the university. He added that the classes are not just teacher-centered but also textbook-centered, which resulted in a similar level of disengagement and feeling of resentment towards classes.

P: Well I guess I’ll talk about something bad. I really don't like those classes in which they just follow the textbook and like the contents are super easy and it's like being in high school again. You know those classes are super boring and like when I’m taking them it doesn't even feel like I’m really in university. There is no fresh or new information. They’re not interesting at all, and I think the other students feel that way too. No one in the class is concentrating or paying attention and they’re all doing other stuff and the class isn’t being developed at all. I don’t like those classes.

Conclusion

A common trend that emerged from the data is participants not thinking that most of the classes they took were useful for them. The classes that specifically taught job skills were considered useful. Similarly, students viewed the classes that involved one-way communication or were ‘lecture-style’ as the least useful. These classes are characterized by being large, having mediocre textbook-based curriculum, or using a lecture-style teaching method that requires students to sit and listen to the teaching material. Related to this subject is the reality that
Japanese university students prefer learning materials that were authentic and represented more personal topics. The next section will talk about students’ views about authentic learning materials.

**Use of authentic learning materials and relatability**

According to Nicaise, Gibney, and Crane (2000), authentic learning includes the idea that learning is centered around authentic tasks that mimic real-world problems and situations encountered by those in the field. Scholars argue that the involvement of authentic tasks in teaching increases the meaningfulness and relevance of the subject to the field of study (Newmann, 1991). Since the participants in this study were students in English Literature department, and one of their main reasons for this choice was to gain fluency in English, authentic tasks may be thought of as materials that are not necessarily developed for EFL speakers; rather they are materials written in native English. Three of the participants in this study noted that they felt that having native English speakers as professors resulted in the most authentic learning because the participants thought that they were gaining actual English language skills. When asked about the best assignment she had received at the university, Yumiko answered that while she could not recall any assignment, ones that used authentic materials were the best.

P: There wasn't any particular assignment that really stuck out for me. Well, I guess if I had to say one then I would say the one in which English, everything was written in English and every week we would be given something new to read. And in that class we had to read it and comprehend it and I thought that class was very good. The materials were authentic.
As mentioned earlier, one of the main goals of these students was to gain fluency in English. Two participants mentioned that they thought having materials used for EFL learners was not necessary and materials that used natural English were the most engaging. In the following conversation, Ayako explicitly states that listening to native English from media types such as podcasts or Ted Talks were the best assignments:

P: Ah… umm... I guess videos or movies, using DVD’s makes it easier to understand, and I thought it was good. Oh, also Podcast and TedTalks and in those I could hear native English so I thought they were really good tools.

Similarly, when Taro was asked whether the learning environment at the university was good, he stated the availability of native English teachers as one of the reasons.

P: First of all, there are many native speakers and that's one very appealing point I think. English is a second language for us and the chance to learn that with people who are native and come from that home country is very uh… good. I think there were many opportunities for learning languages other than Japanese, and I think that's one reason I could say.

Kensuke gave a similar response as can be seen in the following dialogue about an assignment which he thought resulted in a positive learning experience.

P: Yea… ah… umm… I think it's hard to learn about the backgrounds of foreigners living in Japan, but through SKYPE, I could learn about the backgrounds of the native people by talking to them. So like foreign culture and religion and all kinds of things. I gained a lot from that.
Participants also expressed that materials that were personally made by the instructor or that included topics that had a high degree of relatability were the most useful. For many Japanese university students, the level of personal agency may depend on the teaching style used by their teachers. Authentic learning, which stresses more active inputs by students and less one-way information flow, may increase personal agency and expectancy in students’ minds. The following conversation with Taro about an assignment he liked, clearly showed how materials that had a higher degree of relatability resulted in a more positive learning experience.

P: There was one part-time teacher who was very interesting. The teacher would show slides and speak in English, of course because it’s an English class, about culture, and things that the students found interesting. How can I say? Like content? For example, the teacher made us think about Japanese university names in English; it was like a quiz and quite...

I: It was quite close to you in terms of relatability?

P: Yea, it was very relatable for students and the students were all engaged and guessing maybe it’s this or maybe it’s that, and even the teacher looked to be having a fun time.

Taro stated that the relatability helped to engage the other students. The contents, which were about Japanese university names in English is extremely relatable as the participants were all university students themselves. Other participants noted that the quality of materials made by the teacher were better, probably because such material contained a certain degree of personalization. In the following exchange, Yuki remarks that the suggestion that the assignments should be tailored to the students’ needs was good because that would help create better learning materials.
I: I see. Do you have any other advice or suggestions to make a good learning environment or good classes?

P: Also I think assignments that are tailored to the students are good. For example, like math questions that require you to think to solve them. More thinking I mean like ones that stimulate your desire to solve them, those are good I think.

These sentiments were echoed by Ayako, who said that slide shows which incorporated authentic materials and were personalized by the teacher resulted in the best learning outcomes.

P: The best materials…. I think a slide show plus YouTube videos in the slide show that were made by the teacher, and it also had movies, pictures and stuff like that I thought was really easy to understand and good.

In contrast with the authentic materials created by teachers, some participants noted that the materials which were based only on textbooks, such as in their high school and junior high schools, were not interesting. In the following conversation, Yuki said that in high school, the assignments were akin to work that did not seem to result in any sort of engagement.

I: And so in your elementary, junior high, and senior high school, you just stated it, but what kind of assignments were you given? Do you remember anything that left a lasting impression on you?

P: Ah… in terms of assignments….they were all the same. Do this page before next class, or do these math problems, and then in the next class we would go over the answers. That’s the kind of work that was given.

I: I see. And for you how were elementary, junior high, and senior high school? What were your overall experiences, good, bad?

P: Umm…. to be honest, it was...well quite a pain.
I: A pain in the ass.

P: Yea, there was a time when I really didn’t like it.

Finally, in one conversation Taro brought up the importance of giving students more autonomy to control the direction of their learning. One characteristic of authentic learning is that there is a high degree of learning autonomy for students (Schank & Cleary, 1995). Students participate in deciding what they should learn, so inquiry and discovery become the primary vehicle of learning. In his statement, Taro declared that student-centered courses that gave him the freedom to talk about what he wanted to talk about, resulted in a higher level of interest and satisfaction.

P: Yea yeah. We can talk about trendy Japanese slang words or like about research, and the 90 minutes of class always seem to fly by. In the class, it’s student-centered and the topics are centered around what we are interested in. There is no rule that we have to do the textbook pages whatever on a specific date so when we talk about something it feels like we completely discuss it until all members in the class feel satisfied. That makes us more interested in the topics and grows our knowledge.

Conclusion

Authentic learning is based around the premise that students engage in tasks that mimic real-world situations. One of the underlying problems with materials made by Japanese university instructors is that many times such materials are not based on practical skills that relate to students’ lives. From the interviews, it is evident that students do not find materials based on textbooks to be necessarily engaging and that handmade personalized materials that incorporate contents that have a high degree of relatability result in the most positive learning outcomes. The following section is focused specifically on one skill in which most participants said they needed more practice.
Presentations for the future

One skill that many students recognized as necessary for the future was making presentations. This was seen as not only a way to enhance communication skill, but also a way of creating confidence in the students. Authentic learning is characterized by a more intrinsic motivation model which seeks to have students inquire about the primary determinant of learning and discovery. In the following exchange, Ayako commented that the first presentation she ever made before the class resulted in much learning and gave her confidence. She also remarks on how she thought the use of PowerPoint was a good skill for her to learn.

P: Umm…. Yea I guess the presentation I did in class was good, it was a first time experience for me, giving a presentation having to stand up in front of everyone. I think it will be very useful and necessary in the future, and I think I learned a lot from it.
I: I see and from that presentation did you learn something about yourself? Or did you learn anything from that presentation?
P: We learned how to use PowerPoint, like not just doing it for the grade but for myself. I also learned about how to listen and it made me think about how to convey things in an easy to understand way, I think it was a very good opportunity.

In another interview, when Kensuke was asked what skills would be useful in the future, he responded that giving a presentation in English would be particularly useful for him.

I: So what kind of skills do you think will be useful for you in the future?
P: Um…. well first of all… umm… as I mentioned I’m from the English Literature department so… well I guess skills that use English will be necessary. And I think while I’m a student, giving presentations in English, and talking to native English teachers…. And all kinds of like those opportunities. I think those will be useful in the future.
Taro also echoed this thought and commented that he thought more student-centered communicative activities such as giving presentations would be better training for his future career as an English teacher.

P: Ah… well I think in class the time spent on talking to each other and presenting, like time where it is student-centered, I wanted more and more of that, and if I had more and more of that it would have been better training.

Taichi, when asked why he thought that skills he was learning would be useful for his future career, he replied that the presentations he made before the class were exactly the skills he needed to become a good English teacher.

P: Also, the opportunities to do presentations in class, and I think those are exactly what teachers do when they stand in front of a classroom, so I think those skills for being a teacher. I am learning those in my classes.

Conclusion

Five out of the six participants clearly stated that giving presentations was a skill necessary for their future. Giving presentations was seen not only as a communication activity and something useful to practice; it was also seen as a way of building confidence and gaining autonomy in the classroom. Similar comments were made regarding the usefulness of presentations that involved group work. Having students share and form a consensus mimics real-life work situations and teaches empathy and cooperation.

Disengagement

The second superordinate theme, disengagement, examined the reason why many Japanese university students reported being disengaged in their classes. Findings from the
interviews showed that all six participants reported that they had felt disengaged in classes in some way or another. Engagement is difficult to define; however, for the purposes of this study, engagement is thought of mainly as emotional engagement or an interest in an activity expressed through such reactions as enjoyment and an overall positive attitude towards the activity. Furthermore, since students come to university to learn, cognitive engagement would imply that students are academically challenged and enjoy the intellectual stimulus provided by an academic task. Thus, disengagement was defined as a state of lack of interest or passion that can sustain any kind of learning. This section will look at three subordinate themes that emerged from the results of the students’ interviews: a sense of apathy in classes, the feeling of not being challenged academically, and the use of media in classes.

**Sense of apathy in the classes**

The first and most noticeable theme that emerged from the results showed that participants felt that there was a sense of apathy that emanated from the teachers. The apathy displayed by teachers was through not interacting with students and having a low desire to teach. This resulted in a transactional type of relationship between the teachers and the students. Instructors went to classes, gave their lectures, and rarely interacted with students. Students went to classes, sat through lectures, and received the credit. This also resulted in little engagement. As the students remarked, they had little interest in the course contents. In the first exchange that best summarizes this theme, Taro was asked about teachers who he thought were helping to create a positive learning environment. When he could not name any teacher, the interviewer asked if he thought that there were many teachers who did a bad job of teaching. In response, Taro described how he thought that the majority of Japanese university teachers were not skilled
at teaching and the apathy displayed towards the classes was a great impediment for positive learning outcomes for the students.

I: And on the opposite side, were there any teachers who were really bad at teaching?

P: There were quite a bit of bad teachers. (laugh)

I: In what way was the teacher bad?

P: Like I think it’s a characteristic of university teachers but they just kind of talk and assume that students will catch what they’re saying, so they don’t really teach. Maybe it can’t be helped because it’s a lecture style course, but the teacher just stands in front of the class, holds a microphone and just murmurs away, and like none of the students are listening.

I: So, you mean like it’s the teacher just automatically assumes, thinks that the students will understand what they’re saying?

P: It’s like the teachers have no drive to teach at all I guess you could say?

I: Ah... They don’t have any drive to teach.

P: Yea, they have absolutely no passion to convey something with passion, and for 90 minutes they just sort of talk.

I: And that’s every time every time?

P: Every time every time.

The comment that there was no passion and that teachers just talked with no consideration for students indicates a sense of apathy. Yumiko felt that apathy was one of the main reasons why the quality of Japanese university classes was so low.

P: Yea they adjust to my needs, and like because it’s school we have this time to like… well I think the professors and the people working at the school are all trying their best to
help the students. I felt that way. I guess in terms of bad stuff, there is a lot of apathy in universities. I understand that the professors are also researchers and that's what they are interested in and they may not be so interested in their students but I think if they don't raise the quality of their classes and… then nothing will get better and many, like me won’t find them interesting and will quit the classes. Also, a lot of students are not aware of things. They have a low level of awareness. They need to be more aware.

Yumiko further explained that she disliked the superficial type of classes in which teachers came to class, talked about the contents of a lesson, and then went home. When asked about the assignments that she didn't like, Yumiko explained that “the process” of doing the class assignments resulted in a type of automation that is characteristic of a transactional relationship.

I: Umm… so in contrast, were there any assignments that you didn't like? For example, I don't like this kind of assignment, or I don't like the way the teacher is teaching this class.

P: Yea, of course there were classes I didn't like but the teacher’s time is limited and I know that the teacher has like a plan of what they need to do, so like I realize they can't help but to do class in the way they need to do it so that they get through all of the materials, even if that means not really listening to the students. I think these kinds of classes focus too much on the process. I think that teachers should make sure that the students are understanding and really deeply reflecting on the materials and assignments they are given. But sometimes teachers just wanted to be able to say that they covered this or did this in class so it’s too much like a process and I don't think that's really good.
Taichi, too, commented on the superficial treatment of the subject matter by the teachers in the classes. When asked why he gave his overall university experience a three, he responded as follows:

P: Yes, uh… Well the lectures being offered or that were offered to me were mostly from teachers who were very easy to understand, however there were also teachers who would not really look at the students and just stand up and talk during class. Also, I think also the way I took classes and my own way of thinking was kinda automatic. If the teachers were dedicated it made me want to try my best but on the other hand if I felt like the teachers weren’t really thinking about things then I would also lose my motivation and lack the passion to study. In that sense, part of the reason I gave it a 3 would be because of me.

Taichi remarked that the lack of passion was one of the main reasons for his loss of motivation to study in the classes. This theme about the teachers’ mechanical manner of taking classes was first brought up by Yumiko. When asked why they thought the teachers were apathetic, many of the participants defended the teachers saying that the large size of the classes made it virtually impossible for the teachers to engage personally with their students, which is an emerging theme. Yumiko also mentioned that a teacher’s time is limited. In a lengthy conversation, Yuki said that he thought the large class size was one reason for teachers’ apathy. When asked which of the teachers had motivated him or stimulated him to learn, he replied frankly that none of them had. Yuki further commented that he felt that due to the class size, teachers felt overwhelmed and didn't wish to be approached by so many students, not necessarily because of the contents of the course, but due to the sheer number of inquiries that may result.

I: I see. And at university? Have you had any teachers that motivated or stimulated you?
P: At X University. Honestly, no.....

I: none

P: none....

I: And why none? Why weren’t you motivated?

P: Well… hmm…. I don’t think the teachers really try to interact with the students and from a teacher’s perspective, there are so many students, the teacher doesn’t want the students to interact with her/him either. It’s really like on that class day, there is a big classroom, a big lecture hall and you just do class and then go home. That’s the basic way of classes

In another exchange with Yuki, he repeated this sentiment about teachers being overwhelmed by class size. When asked if any teacher tried to create a positive learning environment, he responded that none had made the attempt. He went on to remark that the teachers had such a sense of apathy that they didn't even care whether the students were learning or not. However, like the other participants, Yuki defended the teachers by giving large class size as the reason for the teachers’ apathy.

I: And did that teacher do something like those suggestions to create a positive learning environment?

P: Not really.....

I: Not really.

P : I didn’t feel any difference

I: I see. Ok so does that mean that the university teachers you have had until now don’t really give you a sense that they care about your learning?
P: Not really… I think there are so many students. I think from a teacher’s perspective the teacher just wouldn’t be able to get to every student. The teacher can’t talk one on one with the students.

This reason of large class size for teachers’ apathy was also advanced by another student. When the interviewer asked about feedback, Taichi replied that the reason why he did not receive feedback from his teachers was the large class size. However, he expressed his feeling that if he had received feedback, it would have resulted in a more positive learning outcome.

I: Did you have teachers who gave you more individual feedback or talked to you?

P: That uh... To be honest not really I think. But I think there is a good reason for that. The department simply has too many students and to be able to talk individually to each and every one of the students is difficult for the teachers.

I: If that feedback was given in a more individual way, do you think it would have resulted in better learning?

P: I think so.

Another theme, which shifted the blame away from the teachers, showed that the participants blamed themselves in some way for the teachers’ apathy. In the next quote, Yumiko says that students also need to be more active in their pursuit of learning. She remarked that the passivity exhibited by the students is one of the causes for the teachers becoming apathetic towards teaching.

I: Ok and I think I sent you an email with a file about TRANSFORMATIONAL LEARNING. How do you think the X University teachers, or Japanese teachers can, how can they adopt some of those ideas in their teaching? How can they be better? How can they provide a better learning experience? Do you have any suggestions?
P: Yea, I think as a whole, Japanese students are still too passive in university classes. I get the feeling that they're dead or cold or something. And I think it's also the teachers. Probably, I think the students and teachers need to be a little more active or aggressive towards each other, they need to be more active in terms of communications and have more awareness for the classes they are taking. I think.

I: So in other words you think the teachers and the students are both burnt out and that they are kinda just apathetic towards one another? Like they are just tired?

P: Yea yea yea.

Yumiko clearly stated that she thought that the students were partly to blame for the apathy exhibited by the teachers. Taro went a step further and said that it is the students’ responsibility to inspire themselves to learn. In the following exchange, when asked about a teacher who motivated him to learn at school, Taro replied that he had never felt any teacher was a motivator. He then went on to explain that he thought it was the students’ fault if they had no motivation to learn.

I: And just like that, tell me a story about a teacher at the University that inspired or stimulated your learning?

P: Desire to learn….. Desire to learn...

I: Like this class’ teacher was good and it made me want to study or learn more.

P: Umm…..I don’t think I have ever thought that way about a teacher. I think actually that the drive or inspiration to learn has to come from within the student. I think it’s exactly because they think it’s necessary that they start studying, they make a goal, and choose something. If they don’t choose to do it then….
Finally, in another exchange, Ayako remarked that she felt more engaged in high school classes because the goal that was set for her learning experiences was clearly defined. The tests that she took in K-12 not only helped her engage in the lessons more but also helped her to concentrate on the content of the courses.

I: And overall how would you say your learning experiences were in K-12? Good? Bad?

P: It was good.

I: It was good. Can you tell me why?

P: Uh…, compared to university, uh… I think I had more desire to engage in the assignments, and I had a goal with the tests. We were frequently tested and we had to give presentations in classes and that forced us to engage with the materials more. And like, I had that way of thinking so even at home I had more motivation to do work, and I could concentrate on classes more I think.

Conclusion

The teachers’ apathy was seen as the biggest contributing factor to student’s disengagement in classes. Five out of six participants in the study remarked that teachers’ apathy was a cause for them to lose motivation, which resulted in negative learning outcomes. Interestingly, many of the participants defended their teachers by saying that the apathy was largely the result of large class sizes. Other participants went even a step further to say that the students were partly to blame for the teachers’ apathy. They remarked that it was the duty of the students to learn more actively and approach the teachers more often if they wished to engage.

The next subordinate theme surrounding disengagement in Japanese university classrooms is that of not feeling academically challenged.
Student don’t feel academically challenged

A second subordinate theme emerged from the interviews was that many Japanese students don't feel academically challenged in their classes. This lack of challenge has resulted in many students feeling disengaged. From a constructivist point of view, engagement is viewed as how students engage in a specific learning activity. Students who do not feel academically challenged suffer a greater risk of disengagement from the learning task. In the first exchange, when asked why Ayako had given her overall academic experience at the university a three, she replied that the classes she took in her freshman year were basic English grammar, which she had already learned in junior and senior high school.

P: I still have just started my junior year and I don't have that much experience I think, but during my freshman year uh… the classes were like a lot of basic English grammar classes, but one thing that really stood out for me was that the classes actually felt like a lower level than my high school classes, and I wasn't really learning anything new. It felt like I was going backwards, but in my sophomore year I took a little more specialized classes about literature and research and reading and stuff like that and I felt like finally I had experienced university classes, so I gave it a 3.

Ayako mentioned that the classes she had taken thus far at the university were actually of a lower level than many of her high school classes. She remarked that her freshman year in the university when Japanese university students tend to take the most classes seriously, she actually felt as if she had regressed academically. However, in her sophomore year, as she took more specialized classes, her academic experience had improved. Kensuke, at the end of his interview, expressed a similar thought when he commented that the classes were boring and he felt as if he wasn't even in a university. Kensuke went a step further and remarked that this feeling was shared by other
students who took the same classes. Although the following quote was used before, it can be
used again to demonstrate that Kensuke felt that he was not being academically challenged.

P: Well I guess I’ll talk about something bad. I really don't like those classes in which
they just follow the textbook and like the contents are super easy and it's like being in
high school again. You know those classes are super boring and like when I’m taking
them it doesn't even feel like I’m really in university. There is no fresh or new
information. They’re not interesting at all, and I think the other students feel that way too.
No one in the class is concentrating or paying attention and they’re all doing other stuff
and the class isn’t being developed at all. I don’t like those classes.

As Japanese university students go through their required courses at school. It is not
uncommon to see a high degree of dissatisfaction, as these classes tend to be large lecture-style
courses or courses that cover basics in a certain subject to ensure that all students are largely at
the same level as they go on to study more specific courses. Japanese students tend to take
seminar classes in their junior and senior years at university. These classes are usually smaller
and related to specific fields of knowledge. Many of the participants in the study noted that the
best classes they had taken at university were their seminar classes. Taro made similar comments
as can be seen in the following conversation.

I: So on the opposite end, have you ever had a teacher who you like? Or like oh this
class’s teacher is the best.

P: Best class

I: You learned the most

P: I learned the most.......... I guess my seminar class

I: Seminar class
P: Yes, the teacher is a native English teacher

I: And why do you think that class is the best?

P: Um… The teacher is English, but at first she spoke really fast and I wasn’t used to the British accent, so I couldn’t really pick up what she was saying, but I have had the same teacher for 2 years. I first had her in sophomore year and then last year for my seminar class when I was a junior, and even now I talk to her. I am now able to pick up on what she is saying and I am able to express myself to her, so the distance between us feels…

Yumiko also commented that she enjoyed more difficult classes. She also expressed that more difficult assignments motived her more and led to positive learning experiences. The following conversation with Yumiko on what kind of teacher she thought was good demonstrates the above trend of thought.

I: So how would you say they were good? Could you give me an example how that teacher was good? Or how the class was good?

P: This is just an example but for example all classes have levels but in my case I liked teachers who were a bit difficult, who gave a little tougher assignments than other classes. Not that all of the assignments were tough, but the teacher would give hints and advice about how to go about solving it. And thanks to those hints I was able to organize, organize the stuff in my head and that made me want to study

Ayako expressed a similar opinion when asked which teacher helped her most to learn. Even though Ayako found the assignments difficult, she also noted that these assignments were on topics that interested her. This was one of the contributing factors to Ayako’s motivation to learn more.
P: Uh… in the case of Professor Suzuki, he did it every time, but he would give out pretty difficult assignments, and uh… he gave assignments that I was interested in, so I already had a desire to learn about those pieces, but he taught me the joy or fun of those pieces like the background or the organization, he explained about them and it made me want to read them and understand them. I think him making things fun was the most important. Teaching me that fun or enjoyment was the most important.

Conclusion

Four out of six participants in the study clearly stated that there had been a time when they did not feel academically challenged in the classes. Ayako and Kensuke went even further to state that they felt they had regressed when in some classes they had to learn what they had already learned in high school. This resulted in very negative learning outcomes and disengagement in classes. This was especially noticeable in the lower level lecture-style classes that were textbook-centered. However, at the other end of the spectrum were the small-sized classes that had a research approach in the contents, such as the seminar classes. Such classes resulted in higher levels of feeling academically challenged. The final subordinate theme around the issue of disengagement that will be explained in the next section has to do with the use of media in classes to help sustain engagement.

Use of media to maintain engagement

One of the trends that emerged from the interviews was that participants favored learning materials that included some type of media, especially videos or movies to sustain engagement in classes. Many of the participants had noted that their K-12 curriculum had been centered on textbooks and memorizing information. Movies and other forms of media, however, provided a
different way for them to interact with learning contents. In the following exchange, Yuki explained how his K-12 classes were conducted and what kind of assignments were given.

P: Uh… education, well elementary, junior high, and senior high (inaudible) umm…. I was able to seriously study and finish each level. And in terms of learning materials, it was like every day were promptly given homework and we were required to finish that before the next class day...

I: So you did quite a bit of following the text am I right?

P Yes yes yes, that way. There were a lot of classes that used a repetitive class style. There was a lot of homework. For example, Kanji drills, mathematic equation problems, and of course copying and rewriting English words, copying we were told to do those kinds of things.

When asked to name the best learning material she had experienced while at university, Ayako exclaimed “videos, DVD’s, podcasts, TedTalks, and YouTube!” She said that not only were they easy to understand but they were engaging.

I: I see. Are they are other methods, like for example using movies, computers, applications, translations or stuff like that? Any way that really helped you to learn.

P: Ah… umm… I guess videos or movies, using DVD’s makes it easier to understand, and I thought it was good. Oh, also Podcast and TedTalks and in those I could hear native English so I thought they were really good tools.

I: What was the best method or material up until now?

P: Good materials…. Um…

I: For example, materials that the teacher made, using YouTube, using a textbook, what was the best material?
P: The best materials…. I think a slide show plus YouTube videos in the slide show that were made by the teacher, and it also had movies, pictures and stuff like that I thought was really easy to understand and good.

Ayako further explained that the teacher who she thought was the best had used movies, which kept her engaged in classes.

P: And he uses movies, so we don't get tired of the materials, and number one is that it’s really fun.

Yumiko also mentioned teachers who created a positive learning environment. She stated that teachers who used media in their lessons were the most effective, and they were not limited to English Literature classes.

I: So… the next question will ask about the class environment. Number 7. What kind of methods did your teachers use to help your learning? More specifically, did a certain teacher do something in particular that really helped you to learn, you know like giving you a worksheet every week or something. Like something that really made you feel like you learned in that class.

P: Yea, well I guess terms of methods they used the blackboards and paper and notes and I have the image of writing a lot in classes. But comparatively in my case I really liked classes in which the teachers used media, like movies or something like that. They were easy to understand and they didn't require a lot of thinking effort on my part to understand things. The information just kind of entered into my head. These were in the English department as well as in classes from other departments. I took some classes from other departments and I thought that's one of the good points of X University. The
teacher would, would use movies and create a rhythm in classes and I thought that was good.

Finally, in a conversation, Taichi remarked that the use of media by the teacher and the teacher’s lectures enabled him to undergo transformational learning and change the way he viewed movies. When asked about classes in which he felt he learned a lot, Taichi replied that a class about American movies was not only engaging but also transformative, as it enabled him to reflect on how he interpreted movies.

I: And the classes you've had until now, the ones where you really thought you learned, what were they like?

P: I’ve had a few. For example in that movie class the teacher used American movies, but up until then when I watched a movie I only thought of them as just stories that eventually end, but after that class I to realize the differences in culture like for example the originality of the characters, the way they talk, and the architecture and atmosphere of the towns, all of these detailed things are cultural. Yea I think, the way I watch movies changed because of that class and I’m glad I took it.

Conclusion

The use of media to engage students was a common theme mentioned by several participants. All six participants had mentioned that their learning experiences and assignments in K-12 grades had largely been textbook-centered and were targeted on getting a certain score to get to the next level. The use of media, especially videos and movies, by teachers in their curriculum helped to boost their engagement in classes and resulted in positive learning outcomes. The case of disengagement in Japanese universities is mainly due to apathetic teachers, who are being overwhelmed by the number of students in their classes, and students
who are not being challenged academically. However, the use of media in classes was one way which, the participants in the study noted, helped to maintain and heighten their engagement. The next section will talk about the third superordinate theme: student burnout.

**Student Burnout**

The third superordinate theme to be examined in this study was student burnout. For the purposes of this study, student burnout is defined as prolonged periods of stress due to emotional, physical, or mental exhaustion. Results of the interviews showed that out of the six participants, four had experienced student burnout at some time during their university experience. Out of the four participants who said they had experienced burnout said its primary cause was the great number of assignments and the pressure to pass tests for qualification. The interviewer got the impression that much of the work that caused burnout was not meaningful. Rather, it was busywork. The meaningless assignments that kept them busy caused resentment and contributed even more to the burnout. Two of the participants responded that burnout became so severe that they stopped attending school altogether. When asked how they overcame the burnout, two of the participants said, just getting through the work was the remedy.

This section will look at three subordinate themes related to burnout: the importance of life outside of school, the use of group work, and peer relationships, which help in overcoming burnout. There is a group mentality, which may indirectly affect a student’s attitude towards teaching practices, and the top-down hierarchy in Japanese society maintains a significant presence in the university class culture.
Students place a lot of importance on their life outside of school

Three out of the six participants responded that they thought their overall university experienced was enhanced by the opportunities to make friends that the school gave them. The participants also used the word “gakkou seikatsu” which translates to “school life” to refer to not only their academic experience at school, but the entire lifestyle of a university student, which included part-time jobs, school festivals, job-hunting, and personal relationships with peers and others. Yumiko, who answered that she had not experienced burnout while at university attributed this to her enjoyment of life outside of school. Yumiko commented that for her half of the time spent at university was free time, which she spent in pursuing her hobbies to relieve any stress she felt at school.

I: I see. Ok so the next question will ask about academic burnout. Have you ever experienced it? Like you couldn't take classes anymore or something?
P: No

I: No huh. So, could you tell me why you never experienced it? Why did you feel you were always ok?
P: Well of course it depends on the time but looking back at things as a whole, I didn't really feel burned out. Half of the time at university is like free time and so I had a lot of time to myself. I could do the things I wanted and schools was just like an engine for me to do things. So, I didn't really feel burned out at any time.

Yumiko also gave her overall university experience a 5, the highest possible rating. The reason she gave for this was her life outside of school. She made friends, got a good job, and enjoyed her private time, which helped to prevent student burnout while providing a positive impression of her time at school.
I: (surprised face) Oh so… a 5? Why did you give it that rating?

P: Yes, well… at university, at university in my third year I started to think that I was happy that I entered X University. I guess that was because umm… well I wanted to study English at university and I guess at X University that's what I could do. I could brush up my English skills and I think the surrounding environment was good so I don't think it was just. I don't think it was just the university but my life outside of university, like making friends and stuff was really good. Oh, and the school really helped me in job hunting so in terms of environment, X university was good. I mean it was good to brush up on myself. Yes

Yuki shared these opinions as he, too, stated that he enjoyed his school life and made good friends during his time at university. Unlike Yumiko who commented that she enjoyed much of her learning experience at university, Yuki did not. Yuki gave his overall experience at university a 4. This would imply that, perhaps, his learning experiences were not as good as Yumiko’s. That is because, during his interview, Yuki repeatedly said that he did not feel that he was learning many skills, or that his teachers were engaging or offering lessons that resulted in positive learning outcomes. This meant that Yuki was primarily giving his overall university a positive rating due to his life outside of school.

P: Well comparatively speaking, my school life is very fulfilling and I am surrounded by a lot of good friends and to be honest I am having a lot of fun. Also, I decided I wanted to become an English teacher after entering this university. I was able to make a big decision about my future and that was a big point for me.

Taro made a similar comment about his overall university experience and attributed the positive rating to his life outside of school. Taro noted that he did not go to university for the academic
experience and rather it was the next logical step toward his goal of becoming an English teacher. Taro’s answer indicated the trend among Japanese university students of not rating their overall university experience by academic experience. Rather, they took a more holistic view that included a myriad of other factors such as part-time jobs, personal relationships, and the freedom to spend time doing things that interested them. The following answer by Taro demonstrates this observed trend.

P: Yea uh... So I didn’t really get the feeling that I came to X University to learn something, but I was able to gain the credits… How can I say gain the credits…But when I came to this school, I was able to meet different kinds of teachers and make a wide range of friends, and in these four years, it was like a moratorium for me… I was able to do a lot of things. I guess I am giving it that score because as a whole my university school life was good, I think.

Conclusion

Results of the interviews showed that Japanese university students take a holistic view of their university experience. Thus, extracurricular activities are a very important determinant of students’ satisfaction levels. In terms of student burnout, students reported that academically they felt burned out by assignments that were just busywork; assignments the purpose of which was not explained to them. However, students who enjoyed their lives outside of school were able to negate the negative effects of the academic stress at school such as academic burnout. The next section will examine how community and group work were used to overcome student burnout.

Importance of outside peers and group work to help overcome student burnout

When asked about how they overcame their burnout, a few of the participants had answered that friends made at school or at part-time jobs were vital for overcoming the difficult
times. This also explains why, as stated in the previous section, many Japanese university students placed so much importance not on the academic part of the experience alone, but overall, encapsulated student life. This theme was described perfectly by Kensuke. When asked how he overcame the feeling of burnout, he initially said that he resolved the problem by himself. However, after some thought, he added that the help of his seniors at his part-time job was pivotal in turning his negative feelings around.

I: Ok I see. So, um.... Next how did you overcome the burnout? Did someone help you?
P: I guess I can't really say that someone helped me. I guess I just resolved it within myself... I guess...
I: What do you mean you resolved it?
P: Oh, but I guess I guess I talked to my senior at my part-time job. That senior is a fourth year student in the same department and he successfully finished job hunting. And I consulted with him... that if being in the English department did not necessarily put me at a disadvantage. He told me that well I guess it depends on what kind of job I wanted. He kinda told me that. And then I was able to kinda turn my negative feelings around

Another trend discerned in the interviews was the importance of group work in overcoming negative feelings. Group work consistently ranked as one of the top means for fostering a positive learning environment. Kensuke also noted that in school, one of his teachers also helped him overcome his negative feelings of burnout by engaging the class in a group activity. When asked how the teacher taught most effectively, Kensuke said it was the group activity and it taught him that speaking English was fun. The dialogue is quoted below.
I: That sounds good. And what kind of methods did your teachers use to umm. No sorry, excuse me. Please tell me about the best teacher that you think taught the best. Amongst all your teachers at university, who was the best? What did that teacher do?

P: Yea… ah…..and… well I guess the best was my English teacher when I was a freshman but well… that teacher… student centered together… made them do it like that. He really valued group work. We didn’t just sit and take the class, in that class during class in pairs, in pairs we would talk about a topic in English. Every time. Thanks to that, I could feel like the wall towards English was broken down, or how can I say… well the difficulty was very free and I guess I think I could see the fun in talking English thanks to that teacher.

Taichi also commented that the personal engagement he received from his seminar teacher was pivotal for his overcoming the burnout. This personal engagement was seen as a way for teachers and students to build relationships.

I: Ah, ok, and uh how did you overcome that burn out? What did you do?

P: Yea…

I: Did some someone help you?

P: I think there were many people who I consulted with, like friends, or Professor Hashimoto, the teacher I just mentioned about. I really went to him for advice so many many times.

Conclusion

As mentioned in the previous section, many participants had noted that their overall experience at university was positive, due to factors not directly related to academics. This section further examined how some of the students overcame their burnout. Results showed that
again, factors outside of school contributed to students overcoming their burnout. Also, the use of group work in classes constituted more student-centered lessons and helped students to express themselves during classes. This freedom of expression and interaction with peers was another way participants got over their burnout. Finally, personal engagement with teachers was another way a participant got over his burnout. The two remaining students commented that nothing or no one necessarily helped them get over their burnout and that, with time and by just bearing the stress, they eventually were able to move on from the burnout.

**There is a strong group culture that exists in the Japanese university classroom**

The next subordinate theme discussed has to do with the pressure of a group culture, which added to the stress that may contribute to burnout. Though the participants did not explicate the role of group mentality as a contributor to the stress, there were numerous comments about other students who negatively affect the learning environment and contribute to stress. As mentioned earlier, student burnout was defined as prolonged periods of stress due to mental, emotional, or physical exhaustion. The following section explores the theme of group mentality in the Japanese university classroom. The first reference to students who added to the stress came from Ayako who said one of the characteristics of a bad teacher was not scolding students who were loud or slept in the class. She explained that such behavior from students created a bad learning environment for everyone in the class. This suggested that Japanese university students were very sensitive to not only the teachers’ actions but also to their classmates’ behavior patterns.

I: Ok, conversely how about teachers that were really bad? What kind of teachers were they?
P: (laugh) Umm… teachers who are in a big classroom and stand in front of the students and just talk. And teachers who don't scold students who are loud or sleeping in class; it makes the learning environment bad for others.

When the interviewer asked Ayako to how she would describe a positive learning environment, she answered that teachers who reprimanded students for their bad behavior was an important characteristic of such an environment. As Ayako mentioned this twice in the interview showed that this factor was extremely important in Ayako’s definition of a positive learning environment.

I: I see. Ok number 11 how would you define or what do you believe makes up a positive learning environment? This type of learning method, this kind of class really helped me to learn, what kind of environment? Could you tell me about it…

P: Yea, I think that when even just one student is sleeping or playing on their phone, or talking it make the whole class environment bad, so when all students are in a position to learn, and when the teacher warns the bad students about disrupting others, that’s really important. I think it’s necessary for the students to develop the skill of taking classes.

Kensuke’s opinion was like Ayako’s. He commented that students who skip class or do not speak up in the class make it harder for other students to engage in the class. The interviewer noted that the participants were sensitive to the harmony in the class for the benefit of the whole class and not just for themselves. Conversely, an environment of disharmony was a cause of students’ feeling stress in the classroom.

I: Ok. So, how would you define or what do you believe makes up a positive learning environment?
P: Umm… well the students should not always be passive. They should actively participate in the class. I think if a teacher can make that kind of learning environment is important. If someone skips class, or doesn’t speak then it makes it more difficult for the other students to speak up so well I guess the teacher should try to make an environment in which everyone speaks, everyone has fun, everyone is active, and taking the class is the best I think.

In another conversation, Yumiko said that one of the reasons for her stressed feeling was her dissatisfaction with the instructors who did not treat all the students equally. She further stated that the teachers who gave the best learning experiences were deliberate in treating all students equally.

P: I think teachers that teach deep contents or like for example professors all have a lot of knowledge but some aren't able to transmit that equally to their students. I like teachers that really look at the students and share all of their knowledge fairly and then students get new ideas and new knowledge and it becomes like a catalyst for them to become interested in something. I think… I just want teachers to treat their students equally and the teachers who did that left the biggest impression on me. Being able to teach all of the students equally.

Conclusion

There was limited evidence to conclude that Japanese university students place high importance on class harmony as a positive contributor to the learning experience. However, on the other hand, the absence of class harmony in a class environment caused stress, which could lead to burnout. The next section will discuss a similar topic, that is, a facet of Japanese culture that might contribute to stress and student burnout in university classes.
There is a top-down hierarchy that may contribute to student burnout

Another indirect trend revealed in the students’ interviews was the effect of a strong top-down hierarchy of Japanese society on learning environments. This may be related to several aspects of learning and one of them could be student burnout. The next section will highlight some of the observations made during the interviews which showed that the relationship between the teacher and the student can have positive as well as negative effects on students’ mental stress and level of motivation. The first conversation quoted below highlights the influence of the top-down social hierarchy in Japanese classrooms. Yuki said, he thought that the one-way direction in which the teachers transmitted information to the students reflected the influence of the top-down hierarchy on the educational policy in Japan. He added that this was a systemic characteristic that permeated through all levels of education in Japan. This one-way style of knowledge transmission was a source of stress for Yuki. He revealed that there were times when he felt like giving up school.

P: As for educational policy in elementary, junior high, and senior high, currently its thought of as like students sit in their chairs quietly, don't speak, and listen to the class. And that policy is continued in university, and of course speaking in class, of course sitting down quietly and just receiving the class has become the norm.

While the exchange with Yuki highlighted the possible negative effects of the top-down hierarchy in Japanese society, conversations with three other participants highlighted its possible positive influence. Ayako noted that the top-down hierarchy helped her to have confidence in and put her trust in her teacher. She explained that having an instructor whom she could respect for high academic standing contributed to her confidence that what she was learning was
meaningful. She said that the greater the respect a teacher gained the more meaningful were the learning outcomes the teacher produced. These interviews showed that it was the characteristic effect of the top-down hierarchy in Japanese university classrooms that the knowledge transmitted by the instructor was implicitly accepted as correct.

I: I see, well is there anything else you would like to share about your learning experiences at this University or your experiences with teachers at this University?

P: Hmm… something I’d like to share… something to share… ah, but one thing that's good about X University is that professors that went to really good schools, well I think it matters at any school but, teachers like Professor Tanaka who are like first class in terms of research and knowledge about British Literature, and being able to take their classes or receive knowledge from them is something that's really good.

I: So do you think it’s pretty important that university teachers show their skills to the students and that it makes them more respected?

P: I think so

I: If they don't do that, would you say that the effectiveness of their teaching is lessened?

P: Yes, I think so. I think that if students know that the professor has done some famous research or is some amazing person, they will assume that whatever they say is correct and if they have some really famous work record we will respect them more and listen more attentively in class.

At the other end of the spectrum, one of the participants described how, when a teacher successfully broke down the top-down hierarchy in the class this resulted in a more positive learning outcome.
P: So to describe him in just one word, it would be unique. His way of talking is really interesting. For example current Japanese talk about the first person male using words like “ore” “boku” and if they’re female they use words like “watakushi” and perhaps in a formal setting they would also use “watakushi” but in that teacher’s class (laugh) he uses old words like “sessha” or “shousei” that hasn't been used since the Edo era and he all of a sudden uses them in classes. And in a formal setting like class once he uses those words, it breaks the formal atmosphere of the classroom and all of the students’ anxieties or formalities and they melt away. From the perspective of the student this makes things easier to learn.

By eliminating many of the formal aspects of the top-down hierarchy, the teacher mentioned in the above conversation quelled students’ anxieties that could have given rise to student burnout.

In another interview, Yumiko explored the notion of building trust between teachers and students to create a more positive learning environment. Yumiko first noted that there is a distance between teachers and students, which indicated the existence of a top-down hierarchy in the classroom. However, by developing a more personal relationship and building trust the teacher was able to ease students’ anxieties.

I: So you say that the teachers would talk to the students? What would they talk about?

Just class stuff?

P: Yea at university there is a bit of a distance between the teachers and the students. Up until high school we are really close to our teachers but in university its different so we mainly talk just about class stuff and during class time, but if the students are all interested in the class then they take that class because they’re interested in it and they have information and knowledge about the class and the teachers talk to us… Those are
the types of classes that students find are fun. And then this creates a relationship in which the students trust the teachers more and their relations grow from there.

**Conclusion**

The interviews revealed that, of the six participants in the study, four had reported feeling burned out at one time or another. Of these four, two had experienced so severe a burn out that it prevented them from attending school for some time. The main reason for burn out was a great many assignments that the students had to do, which they deemed as meaning little in terms of learning. There was also a significant pressure for passing qualification tests. This section discussed four subordinate themes, namely, the importance of extracurricular activities in school life, the importance of peers and group work to help offset the monotony of classwork, the need for group harmony in Japanese classrooms, and the effects of the top-down hierarchy in Japanese society felt in the classroom. While these four themes were not linked directly to student burnout, they were major influencing factors for students in terms of experiencing, overcoming or preventing burnout. The next superordinate theme: *raising intrinsic motivation* will be discussed in the final section of this chapter.

**Raising Intrinsic Motivation**

The last superordinate theme has to do with the findings regarding intrinsic motivation. Many of the causes of the lack of intrinsic motivation were similar to those that were evident in the second superordinate theme of this chapter: *disengagement*. However, this section focuses on the means that the school or instructor could use to increase intrinsic motivation. Participants had noted that there were several ways in which their instructors helped to raise intrinsic motivation, which resulted in positive learning outcomes. Specifically, participants reported increased
motivation when there was personal engagement with the instructor and when the learning materials were created with specialized content. Instructors who avoided directly answering the students’ questions but, instead, hinted at the answers or guided the students to learn by themselves caused increased intrinsic motivation. This section will discuss some of the subordinate trends that were revealed during the interviews, namely, the importance of personal engagement, giving hints as opposed to immediately supplying answers, and awakening the desire for deeper knowledge and critical thinking through learning materials.

**Importance of personal engagement**

The first subordinate theme observed in the interviews in relation to intrinsic motivation was the teachers’ use of personal engagement with students. Four out of the six participants stated clearly stated that personal engagement with the instructors not only raised intrinsic motivation resulting in positive learning outcomes but also resulted in life-changing decisions that helped the students to shape their future. The personal engagement was characterized by increased communication inside and outside of the classroom. It was also characterized by increased individual interactions. Feedback was one of the best ways of facilitating individual interactions between teachers and students. Also, the constructive criticism was a surprising way used by Japanese instructors to increase the intrinsic motivation among their students. Taichi described his personal engagement with his teachers. In the interview quoted below, when asked who the best instructor was during his time at the university, Taichi named one teacher who not only engaged with him personally but helped his decision to become a teacher.

I: And is there anything else that's really good about that teacher that set him apart from others?
P: Yea uh…. Personally, I am an X University student, and when I was younger I didn't really think about the field of education. However, that teacher came up to me and told me that I should become a teacher and learn more about education, and now I am very grateful that he did that.

I: So, you mean that teacher really encouraged you in private?

P: Yes, he did.

I: Especially what you just mentioned he said to you.

P: Yes

Taichi replied that he had not really been interested in becoming a teacher before taking this class. However, thanks to the close contact and encouragement from one teacher, he was able to choose his future career. In other conversations, Taichi noted that personal feedback was important for creating a positive learning environment.

I: I see. And number 11, how would you define or what do you believe makes up a positive learning environment? What do you think is necessary?

P: Yes, uh… a learning environment that helps produce positive learning outcomes right? I guess uh… not just being taught but being offered the chance to think and being given feedback on what we need to take our thinking to the next level is a good learning environment, I think. If they do that then no stone goes unturned and I will look at a problem in a different way, those kinds of opportunities and being given those chances are very necessary, important I think.

Taichi went on to explain that individualized feedback helped in creating more positive feelings towards the learning event.
I: If that feedback was given in a more individual way, do you think it would have resulted in better learning?

P: I think so.

I: So, you’re saying that when you talk to the teacher you get the feeling that you’re learning more?

P: Yea

In another conversation, Taichi reiterated the importance of individual feedback. Taichi, when asked if he had any other teachers who he thought were very inspirational or motivating answered as follows.

P: Yea, however in terms of teachers that stimulated my desire to learn, there were other teachers. Uh… my education studies teacher. Basically all of the classes were discussion style and at the end we would say our comments or like we would have to write down on paper how the class went and what we learned, and at the end of the semester, as a report we would have to turn in a compilation of all the previous information and discussions we had done and we had to include all of the individual assignments we looked up. There were teachers who made us reflect on what we had learned and individually responded to our assignments.

The above response shows that when teachers gave students individual feedback, they were perceived as helping to raise the student’s motivation to learn. Ayako echoed this opinion of Taichi’s when she said that her teachers who talked individually with students left the best impression. When they got individual feedback, the students felt that their voice had been heard in the class and that raised their intrinsic motivation to learn.
I: I see. Well the next questions will ask you about teaching practices in your University classes. What methods did your teachers use in the classroom to help you learn the materials?

P: Umm….

I: Ways that really helped you study

P: I guess rather than just the teacher standing alone in front of the class talking or explaining, it creates a better environment when the teacher talks to each student one by one, by that I mean like when the teacher asks a question or when they are asked a question they gave a good answer, towards that question. How can I say…I thought its better when they give a rating?

I: I see. Are there any other teachers than Professor Suzuki or Professor Tanaka that did something at a time and make you think oh this is really good?

P: And, Professor Shelley as well. During class, even though the class is very big, she walks around and you are able to talk with her, even with subjects that are perhaps hard to talk about in front of everyone, she comes to me and I am able to ask questions and say my opinions and she interacts with the students and I think that is very important.

Ayako further explained that even in big classes, to have a teacher who walked around the classroom to talk individually to students helped to create a relationship of greater trust with the teacher, which encouraged the students to ask questions that they might have hesitated to raise in a large class. When a teacher stayed back after office hours to give students feedback, this created a greater feeling of personal engagement. In one exchange, Yuki commented that he learned much more from one on one meetings with teachers and receiving feedback.
I: I see. And the next question. The next questions will ask you about teaching practices in your classes. What methods did your teachers use in the classroom to help you learn the material?

P: At university?

I: Yea yea, at university

P: None really… well… but my graduation thesis. When writing my graduation thesis, I guess my teachers give me quite a bit of advice about the reports that I write. How can I say… I show them the materials and they give me advice

I: Is that talking to you privately?

P: Yea, one on one.

I: That one on one… that one on one, is it like, is that way quite useful?

P: Yea, it's useful. I learn a lot from it. I guess I learn a lot from it. In order to finish writing my graduation thesis it’s useful.

In another exchange, Yumiko replied that she thought that teachers who reached out and communicated actively with students left a better impression than other teachers. By talking more with students and engaging on a more personal level, they are able to build trust which results in more positive learning outcomes.

P: But I guess the teacher that left the biggest impression on me, all of the teachers were well… they had good classes. The students talked a lot in the classes. I mean the teachers that talk to the students are the most popular, I guess in a way are trusted more? I can't think of any names but yea that’s what I think.
When asked specifically about what teaching methods teachers used to create a positive learning outcome, Yumiko explained in the following exchange that active communication is the best way to motivate students.

P: Yea, so any teacher who I think can make their students motivated, have to be good at talking. I mean like they have to be able to communicate well with the students. In that I mean they have to be good talkers. If they aren't like that then the students won't be interested in them and so depending on the way they talk and how they communicate with the students. I think those teachers who are the best at that really motivated me.

Two participants had said that teachers who encouraged them really raised their intrinsic motivation. Taro explicitly stated that an English teacher who praised him and continuously encouraged him, also helped to motivate him to continue attending classes. The level of personal engagement was indicated when he mentioned that the teacher knew him by his name.

I: Ah, ok. Yes, well there was a native English teacher who always praised me. And the teacher always told me to keep trying and that I could do it. And that motivated me. I was able to keep going in class.

I: Did that teacher talk to you personally?

P: Yes, personally.

I: And the teacher remembered your name?

P: Of course

In the next exchange, Ayako also mentioned that a small class she had taken in which the teacher gave individual feedback and encouragement raised her motivation to study. This interview summarized the importance of personal engagement and encouragement for raising
intrinsic motivation in Japanese university classes. The non-generic and very specific feedback given to Ayako really produced positive feelings towards the class and the course content.

I: Ok, uh……. Professor Tomoko Tanaka had a small classes and I’m taking it now but in that classes we are reading literature pieces and we talk about it in classes but Professor Tanaka gives us good advice or feedback on our answers and she praises and encourages us, like oh you should do this and thanks to that in the next class I’m more motivated to study, like I know where I was lacking and I could try harder next time.

I: So, could you tell me more about the advice that she would give you? What kind was it?

P: Uh…. Like she would say oh that idea or that statement you just made was very observant and sharp, or I like the way you think, that kind of stuff.

Finally, two participants commented on teachers who used constructive criticism to raise students’ intrinsic motivation. Both participants expressed gratitude for the teachers who made constructive criticism which served the students as an impetus to improve themselves. In the following extensive interview, Taichi explains that when his teacher was direct and told him what he was lacking and must learn to become a better teacher served him as a good opportunity for self-improvement. Taichi also explained that this kind of exchange with a teacher would not have been possible without a certain level of prior personal engagement.

I: You talked about him earlier, but what is the most important thing that you think he did in order to help you learn?

P: Yea, to be honest, he was very blunt with the students and would sometimes be really frank with is. To be more specific, he told me exactly what I was lacking in order to become a teacher. And at that time it may have seemed harsh and he told me what I had
to learn more or else I wouldn't be able to become a teacher. He told it to me very
directly. It was very mentally shocking, but I think it was a good opportunity to rethink
what I needed to do.

I: Why was that teacher able to say such frank things to students?

P: I think because he really cares for his students right?

I: Did that teacher say these things individually to each student? Or do he say it to all the
students that you have to do this? Or individually to you you’re missing these things…

P: He said it to me individually.

I: I see. Was that in class our outside class?

P: Outside of class.

I: So that means you went to go see him many times outside of class for advice?

P: Yes that's right

I: It must have been a lot.

P: Yea

I: Was he the professor you were closest to?

P: Yea I think so.

Taichi admitted that initially the criticism disheartened him but in the end, he accepted it as a
means of growing and felt grateful to the teacher. At the end of the conversation, Taichi said that
he knew the teacher was not being spiteful; that the criticism was sincerely given. Kensuke
expressed a similar opinion when he commented that criticism in the class helped him to realize
where he was lacking. The following dialog is not as explicit as the one with Taichi, but it does
highlight the need for students to use feedback to learn where they have room for improvement.
It also shows that when criticism is given in a constructive tone, it raises the student’s eagerness to learn and improve.

P: Yea… ok.. So there have been a lot…. I guess. Among them…. Umm… the best one was when I was a freshman. It was in an English class. Umm... through SKYPE that native teacher would play a video and talk and give us assignments. For me that was the…. That was the first time. First time I could really talk with a native English teacher. I realized SKYPE was a tool through which I could could use. So the teacher would make us summarize the contents of the talk and then submit it to him. I guess umm.. For me it was like I developed and I could raise my English speaking ability, but at the same time I could feel that my speaking was nowhere near as good as I wanted it to be. That assignment for me I guess for me it was very beneficial.

**Conclusion**

Personal engagement with students was observed to be one of the most important ways to raise intrinsic motivation in students. The personal engagement was observed as being realized by individual feedback, constructive criticism, or by simply allowing for more personal communication between teacher and students. Five out of the six participants in the study noted that personal engagement characterized meaningful learning experiences for them. The next section will examine the use of certain teaching methods that facilitated intrinsic motivation among the participants.

**Giving hints and not just answers for raising motivation**

The second subordinate trend regarding intrinsic motivation had to do with teaching methods. Specifically, teachers who did not just give answers straightaway, but dropped hints instead, and helped students figure out the answers for themselves, received positive comments.
Five out of the six participants were explicit in describing this method of teaching in a positive way. This also emphasized the strength of participants’ feelings about this teaching method. In the first quote below, Kensuke notes that hinting at answers and not giving the answers led to deeper thinking on the part of the students and improved their critical thinking skill. Many students had reported that, in their K-12 learning experience, memorization and drills were the key teaching methods used. This suggested to the interviewer that not giving the answer immediately put the teacher in the role of a facilitator.

I: So umm… the next question has to do with the class environment. What kind of methods did your teachers use in class that helped your learning?

P: Well not just answering one-way, giving a hint… really well… umm… how can I say…. A summarized hint and the teacher would give us one and the teacher wouldn't just immediately give us the answer, but like that hint would make the students think, and raise their critical thinking ability. I think that method really made me learn a lot.

Taro’s answer agreed with Kensuke’s as he said that giving a hint rather than just telling the answer resulted in a more reflective learning process. In the following quote, Taro is asked to characterize the best assignment he had been given at the university and replies to highlight the usefulness of giving hints.

I: Uh….. The best assignment in class…. I guess when I was a freshman, I think it was in English. For example, how would the teacher go about giving the assignment. The teacher would tell you the mystery in English...

P: Yea, on paper, on paper there would be like a short, short script and we would have a week to read it and like in the story there was a little hint to solve the mystery for example a tanned guy would shave his beard and when he came home only the place
where he shaved was not tanned…. Those kinds of small hints, and we would have to see whether we could pick up on them.

Further, in the following conversation, Taichi comments that when his teacher became more of a facilitator than a dictator of knowledge, it resulted in more positive learning outcomes. He explained that the teacher let him and his classmates’ debate and discuss the issues or problems before guiding them towards the answer.

P: Yea, the classes that I think made me discuss. Not the classes where the teacher would just pass his knowledge from themselves to the students, that's just a one-way street so I think I the teachers with the best approach made us first talk about it amongst ourselves and then debate about it or the problem and then the teacher would offer his/her own approach to the problem as well and advise us to maybe think about it in a certain way. Like the professor would tell us the direction to go in and that would help students to learn more deeply I think. Those are what make good classes and good teachers.

In another exchange, Ayako describes the teaching methods of one of her teachers who she thought was good at motivating students to learn. She explains that the teacher did not just give answers but gave hints and left the students to discover the answer for themselves. This discovering of the answer alone gave the students a sense of accomplishment which raised their intrinsic motivation to learn more.

P: Uh… there is a teacher, Professor Suzuki and he is doing research so he has a lot of knowledge, well he’s a professor so of course he has knowledge but he doesn't just teach that teacher that teacher gives hints to students so they can reach the answer for themselves. In that class, like, he doesn't just give answers but he also makes the students
want to learn the answers for themselves and I thought that was really skillful. And he uses movies, so we don't get tired of the materials, and number one is that it’s really fun.

In the following dialogue, Yumiko describes her learning experience with teachers who refrained from giving the answers and instead gave clues for the students to figure out the answers by themselves. Yumiko noted that while these types of assignments were perceived as being more difficult, she enjoyed them and they raised her motivation to study.

P: This is just an example but for example all classes have levels but in my case I liked teachers who were a bit difficult, who gave a little tougher assignments than other classes. Not that all of the assignments were tough, but the teacher would give hints and advice about how to go about solving it. And thanks to those hints I was able to organize, organize the stuff in my head and that made me want to study.

With reference to giving hints, Taro made an interesting comment regarding making mistakes. When asked about what kind of environment helped him to learn, he replied that when the teacher helped create an environment that was tolerant towards making mistakes, he felt most comfortable in learning. He added that when teachers and students cooperated with each other, that helped to foster the feeling that making mistakes was alright, anytime and anywhere.

I: How would you define or what do you believe makes up a positive learning environment For example what do you think is necessary?

P: A good environment….a good environment… Well I guess the teacher and the students both have the drive and really work together is important, and the most important number one would be like having an environment like anywhere and anytime to make mistakes.
I: So would you say that the environment now is one where like you can’t really make mistakes? For example, oh I can’t make a mistake.

P: A little? I guess I think a little. There wasn’t any specific case but I don’t have any specific memory but like the class environment is one where the correct answer is always sought after and best.

Conclusion

Participants in the study expressed that they had more positive learning outcomes when teachers dropped hints in discussion-led classes to elicit the answers rather than when the teacher immediately gave the answer. This was along the lines of the comments made about the teaching methods mentioned in the section on disengagement. These comments conveyed that lecture-style courses in which students were spoon fed the answers resulted in low levels of engagement. This role of the teacher as a facilitator, more than as dictator of knowledge, was reported as making more connections with meaningful learning experiences. The next subordinate theme that will be discussed centers around materials used by teachers to raise intrinsic motivation among students.

Students prefer deep learning

The final subordinate theme is related to intrinsic motivation involving the use of certain materials that help students learn to a deeper level. The word “deep” reflects the nature of the contents that are perceived as more specialized and content-specific. Many of the participants said that learning a topic in greater detail gave them greater satisfaction with the learning experience. Students also expressed that they appreciated the content that offered a deeper
explanation and reasoning for why they were studying a certain content. The first conversation in this section reveal’s Kensuke’s feeling of a higher level of motivation to study after his teacher gave him in-depth explanations.

I: Tell me a story about a teacher at the University that inspired or stimulated your learning? You know a teacher where you felt like I really wanna learn from this teacher.

P: Yea…. umm… I guess it was the teacher I mentioned earlier. I said that I am aiming to be a teacher in the future. And my current seminar teacher, uh… I met a teacher who is for the educational practices class. Those people are… how can I say it… they teach about like how to teach to get students to understand you and what are the differences between English spoken by Japanese and native speakers. They also talk about grammar and like how the differences and perspectives are really big. It’s very concise and that makes me want to learn more. And, umm… I’m studying now.

Additionally, in an earlier exchange with Kensuke about his overall learning experience at school, he had responded that the lecture-style classes he attended as a freshman were very generic. However, his current seminar teacher was teaching the course contents in detail.

P: Yea, I guess my reasoning is that…. Umm… of course there have been really good classes with good teachers but…. Umm… the lecture style of class…. (pause) well… as I mentioned earlier, those classes in which students are just passive and the teachers just explain something one-way… there are ….teachers who teach like that and I don't really think they are useful. I guess one-way… I guess. Now my seminar teacher… the English that I want to learn…. They explain the grammar to me in detail… so I guess there are pluses and minuses so I decided to give it a 3.
Taichi also expressed gratitude at being able to take content-specific courses that offered more specialized knowledge. His reply when asked why he thought one of his teachers was so good at teaching is included in the following quote. It highlights Taichi’s desire to study not just literature, but linguistics as well.

I: Tell me what point about him is so good?

P: Yea so uh… the way he moves forward in the class is very appealing, I think. Of course, the course contents are also very appealing, because the reality is that the literature department doesn't have many classes on linguistics. A lot of the contents he taught us about seem very commonplace and common knowledge however, but he was able to teach us how so many of the common things we know are actually very important.

Yuki also commented that detailed comments were vital for him to overcome his dislike of the English language. In the following dialog, he explains that he was initially not very good at English, but thanks to one of his teachers, he was able to learn about reading at a deeper level. It equipped him with a new tool to learn with and that sparked his interest in the English language.

P: Ah…. umm… well I guess in high school, I wasn’t very good at English, I was pretty bad at it. So bad actually that out of all the subjects English was the worse, but there was one teacher who taught me how to read English sentences. How to understand the sentences. And as I was able to read and understand the sentences more it became interesting, I guess my interest was sparked and I grew to actually like English

Besides being able to study subjects in-depth, participants also mentioned that when instructors explained why they were studying certain content that also raised their motivation. Knowing the purpose of studying the content, the participants were encouraged by the idea that
what they were learning was beneficial to them. In the following dialog, we hear Taichi commenting on how his instructor offered the reasons for a certain phenomenon.

P: Yea, so basically the teacher would create a handout and we would conduct classes on that handout. But yea, if I had to give an even more specific example, the making of polite phrases like will you, would you, can you, could you, usually we just learn the degree of politeness and the grammatical changes when we learn them but Professor Hashimoto would explain why it was like that and give us the opportunities to think of the reasons behind the phenomenon. And in the end of the class, he would explain the answer. A lot of the topics seem very common knowledge, but if you really think about it, I didn't know a lot of the reasons behind those common knowledge facts, and that was very attractive.

I: So, you’re saying that that teacher didn't just ask you to memorize something and say this is this, he gave you a reason for why something the way it is and since you were able to learn about something in depth you found the classes appealing?

P: Yes.

Conclusion

Many of the participants used the word “deep” to describe contents that were very specialized or the explanation of something. Participants noted that these contents not only raised their intrinsic motivation to learn but also contributed to a feeling of satisfaction with the class. When contents were deeper, participants felt that they had really benefited from the learning experience. Learning materials that displayed profound learning or that were more specialized in their content, elicited reports of higher levels of positive learning outcomes.

Chapter Summary
This study explored the lived experiences of six Japanese university students at a private university in Tokyo, Japan. The goal of the study was to gain a better understanding of the problems of a lack of authentic learning, disengagement, and student burnout through the lens of transformational leadership in Japanese university classrooms. The overarching research question that led the study was, “How do students at a Japanese university perceive transformational leadership qualities in their professors or instructors? This study also set out to answer the sub-questions, “What aspects of transformational leadership do Japanese university professors engage in that contribute to authentic learning?” “What aspects of transformational leadership do Japanese university professors engage in that contribute to engagement?” “What aspects of transformational leadership do Japanese university professors engage in that contribute to increased intrinsic motivation?”

All six participants were juniors or seniors from the same department at one university. They all took part in semi-structured in-depth interviews about their experiences and opinions about their time at the university. While all answers were different, they shared certain common points and opinions. After the interviews were completed the researcher performed three levels of coding to determine recurring trends or themes from the data. After transcribing and translating the interviews, the results were analyzed with emotive coding, evaluative coding, and holistic coding. From the analysis, four superordinate themes and fourteen subordinate themes emerged.

The first superordinate theme to emerge related to the lack of authentic learning in Japanese university classrooms, which covered four subordinate themes: “lack of skills”, “classes aren’t useful”, “the use of authentic materials”, and “presentations for future jobs”. Many of the participants had noted that in most of their classes they weren’t learning any skills
that they thought would be useful to them in the future. On the other hand, classes that were directly related to getting a job or those that mimicked real-world job conditions were deemed most useful. Participants also felt that instructors who used authentic materials, in this case, native English materials, were considered as having the most meaningful classes. Likewise, a class in which instructors stressed the importance of presentations and gave opportunities to practice this skill was mentioned as being meaningful for future applications.

The second superordinate theme was the high level of disengagement that students, as well as instructors, have in their classes. The number one reason cited by the participants for the lack of engagement in classes was the apathy of the teachers. This was also the first subordinate theme of the section. Participants commented that instructors, especially in large classes, rarely engaged or interacted with students. This led to a very transactional type of relationship in which teachers went to class and talked for 90 minutes while students just sat. This lack of engagement gave rise to the second subordinate theme: students didn't feel academically challenged in the classes. Meanwhile, students who did engage in classes mentioned that the instructors for those classes used media, especially videos or movies to help sustain interest and break the monotony of lectures. This was the third and final subordinate theme of the section.

The third superordinate theme was related to student burnout. Participants in the study commented that the biggest reasons for burnout were the number of assignments given to them by teachers and the stress of passing exams for qualifications. Participants also noted that the assignments seemed meaningless and were likened to “busy work.” This created resentment towards the assignments which resulted in greater stress. The themes subordinate to this section were not directly related to student burnout but were shown to have an influence on the factors that led to student burnout or to overcoming the burnout. The first subordinate theme was that
students’ perception of their school life is not dominated by their academic experiences. Rather it is the combination of their school life with their extracurricular activities on which they place the utmost importance. Related to this was the second subordinate theme: there is a strong top-down hierarchy in Japanese university classes that may lessen or increase stress. Finally, the third and fourth subordinate themes explored the idea of group work and class harmony as reasons for stress.

The final superordinate theme explored the means of raising intrinsic motivation in Japanese university classrooms. Three subordinate themes emerged as ways that participants had noted their teachers using in classes to raise intrinsic motivation. The first was the importance of personal engagement with students. In bigger classes, this was especially important as participants observed that the classes in which they personally talked to the instructor were more meaningful learning experiences. The second subordinate theme: giving hints as opposed to directly giving the answers was a teaching method used by instructors. Participants in the study reported that they had more positive learning experiences with instructors who utilized this teaching method in their classes. Finally, the last subordinate theme related to teaching materials. Participants commented that they had preferred specialized or in-depth contents as opposed to introductory course materials. The former sparked their interests and motivated them to learn more.

The results from this study provide useful data that may help to improve the Japanese university classroom experience. As many of the participants noted, they had an overall positive university experience, but academically they did not feel satisfied. The next chapter will consider the thematic findings and use them to do a cross-analysis with the literature of transformational leadership. Finally, recommendations for practice and future research will be provided.
Chapter 5: Discussion and Implications

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the lived experiences of six Japanese university students and their perceptions of instructors’ leadership and practices that promote positive learning outcomes. A conceptual framework was utilized that arose from an examination of authentic learning, student engagement, and transformational leadership.

Authentic learning is based on the idea that learning involves authentic tasks that teach problem-solving skills while building the students’ confidence in their own learning abilities (Bruner, 1966; Helgeson, 1992; Perkins & Blythe, 1994). The concept of student engagement suggests that students who are more engaged report learning more and better and having a more positive view of their educational experience overall (Kuh, 2000). The transformational leadership theory, first described by Burns (1978), lays out a framework wherein a leader seeks to lead and enlighten followers. Both the leader and follower increase their understanding and benefit from each other in such a structure. The present study drew predominantly from Bass, and Reggio (2006), who identified four seminal components of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

In this chapter, the findings from the interviews will be discussed within the conceptual framework to answer the research question: How do students at a Japanese university perceive transformational leadership qualities in their professors or instructors? Several sub-questions, also guided this study: What aspects of transformational leadership do Japanese university professors engage in that contribute to authentic learning? What aspects of transformational leadership do Japanese university professors engage in that contribute to engagement? What
aspects of transformational leadership do Japanese university professors engage in that contribute to increased intrinsic motivation?

This study used the methodology of interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) to emphasize on how individuals make sense of their lived experiences through careful examination of personal accounts (Smith et al., 2009). According to Giorgi (2007), phenomenological research seeks not to state the existence of a phenomenon but rather ask the question of how it happens. Through in-depth interviews using open-ended questions, IPA allows participants the freedom to express their thoughts and opinions through their unique viewpoints. IPA was deemed the most appropriate methodology for this research as the study was non-numerical and relied on in-depth interviews using questions designed to allow students to deeply reflect on how transformational leadership impacted authentic learning, student engagement, and motivation.

Due to the scant research on leadership theories and practices in Japanese university classrooms, this study aimed to address this critical gap while highlighting several problems such as apathy in higher education institutions in Japan. Creswell (2012) states that it is ideal to keep the sample as homogeneous as possible to ensure the reliability of the study. Several considerations were made to ensure that the sample set shared a number of important characteristics. First, all six students were native Japanese students between the age of 21 and 23. Second, all participants belonged to the same department within the university. Third, purposeful sampling was done to select participants based on their ability to give thoughtful answers to the questions. Lastly, all interviews were done in a private classroom at the convenience of the student. The interviews were recorded using a recording device and then transcribed and translated solely by the researcher.
Data analysis was carried out using a hybrid of emotion, evaluation, and holistic coding. Through this data, the researcher looked for trends and generalizations related to authentic learning, engagement, motivation, and transformational leadership. The results demonstrated four superordinate and fourteen subordinate themes. The four superordinate themes were a lack of authentic learning, disengagement, student burnout, and raising intrinsic motivation, and each superordinate theme consisted of subordinate themes that sometimes had limited relatability but were deemed worthy of discussion. This chapter includes the discussion of four overarching themes in the context of the existing literature: lack of authentic learning, student disengagement, student burnout, and finally ways to raise intrinsic motivation in the Japanese university learning environment. The chapter will conclude with implications for practice and recommendations for future research.

**Interpretation of the Findings**

The results of this study aligned with the literature on the lack of authentic learning, disengagement, and student burnout in Japanese universities. The last superordinate theme, intrinsic motivation, also correlated with the research but has been discussed in terms of ways to raise intrinsic motivation. All the findings regarding authentic learning, disengagement, burnout, and intrinsic motivation were interrelated and drew from each other. The researcher was able to make eight suggestions to help create positive learning outcomes for Japanese university students in the context of the theory of transformational leadership: (1) to address the lack of skills being taught at university, instructors should aim for more authentic tasks that mimic real world situations; (2) students are more engaged when given the opportunity to express their autonomy in classes through presentations and group work; (3) students appreciate a student-centered learning approach that utilizes media and shuns over-reliance on textbooks or other generic
learning material; (4) burnout of students is largely due to perceived busywork, and they value their time outside of school to help overcome any stress; (5) certain aspects of transformational leadership can be applied through the lens of Japanese cultural considerations; (6) Japanese universities need more cooperation between the full-time professors, part-time lecturers, and student affairs department to offer a more cohesive and meaningful educational experience; (7) Japanese full-time professors need to be held more accountable for their teaching practices; (8) Japanese universities need to focus more on offering deep educational experiences using authentic learning tasks, student-centered curriculums, and more personalized time with their teachers.

For many Japanese students, the time spent at university is akin to a moratorium of waiting time after high school and the time before they start working. Most students felt that they were not gaining enough skills to equip them for their future careers. One of the results showed that Japanese students measure how good a class is either by how deep the contents of the class were or if it helped them gain a credential or qualification for their future job. Thus, classes that were tailored specifically toward one of these goals were deemed the most useful. Classes that delved into deeper topics, such as those covered in seminar classes, were also thought of as useful. Thus, one could argue that in order to help students produce more positive learning outcomes, content-specific classes or classes geared to encourage deeper thinking should be developed.

While the majority of classes in Japanese universities use a teacher-centered lecture style, the study results show that engagement in classes heavily depends on whether students are given the chance to meaningfully interact with their teachers and peers. This takes the form of personalized interactions and purposeful feedback. The typical Japanese classroom design
centers on the idea that the teacher is a giver of knowledge and the students should respect them and diligently try to absorb the knowledge imparted. In reality, many students become disengaged and are left with very little passion to learn. These sentiments are shared by many teachers who are overworked or have to teach classes with a large number of students. Students in the study shared that they appreciated teachers who took the time to talk to them one-on-one or gave them the opportunity to freely discuss issues important to them in the classroom. Due to the complex communication process in many Japanese companies, students felt that learning to work with others through group work and public speaking skills gained during presentations were extremely important.

In the Japanese university classroom, there is an overreliance on textbooks. Since many teachers do not have the time to develop their own curriculum, the safety and convenience of textbooks can be alluring. Textbooks are trusted to be accurate and worthwhile of study. However, many participants in the study stated that they felt the most engaged when teachers developed personalized content tailored to their needs. When coupled with the use of media, this kind of curriculum was thought of as valuable and engaging for students. Participants in the study also appreciated teachers who taught in a way that encouraged critical thinking. By giving students deeper knowledge and not merely answers, these teachers were able to spark an interest in the contents with their students.

Much of the stress and burnout experienced by the participants in the study could be attributed to the sheer volume of homework and assignments given to them by their instructors. The instructors not explaining the objective of the assignment created resentment in students, which further contributed to their burnout and apathy towards class. When asked how they overcame their burnout, most of the participants remarked that they just endured it and waited
until the stressful event was over. Students also remarked that they were able to find relief when they talked to teachers one-on-one or their peers outside of school. This suggests that the university life of Japanese students is not necessarily dominated by their learning.

When examining how transformational leadership may be applied to the Japanese context, it is helpful to revisit the theoretical framework developed by Bass and Reggio (2006). It is helpful to examine some of the results of this study with the four seminal characteristics of transformational leadership theory: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. In terms of idealized influence, Japanese instructors should consider their power of influence over their students. As Japanese society is highly hierarchical, many Japanese students hold much respect for their instructors. In terms of inspirational motivation, the teacher should engage their students using authentic learning and create learning goals that align with the students’ goals. Instructors who can create a sense of “team” in the classroom can better produce the desired learning outcome. In terms of intellectual stimulation, instructors should challenge their students to express themselves and provide opportunities for deeper learning. Finally, in terms of personalized consideration, creating an environment where students can trust their instructors is vital. Results of the study show that by giving personal feedback or individualized attention to students, teachers were able to not only create a positive learning environment but also inspire students to want to learn more. The following sections will go into these findings in more detail.

Lack of Authentic Learning in Japanese University Classrooms

The first big takeaway from this study was that there is an absence of authentic learning and practical work skills being taught to Japanese university students. Results demonstrated that instructors did not know the difference between deep versus surface level learning and the belief
that a few activities in class could be associated with authentic learning. While there is no one set
definition of authentic learning, it involves allowing students to explore, discuss, and
meaningfully construct conclusions that reflect real-world problems. The results of the study
overwhelmingly showed that students did not feel they were learning skills that would be useful
to them in their careers. Authentic learning places an emphasis on authentic tasks that mimic real
world problems. These are given to students to equip them with skills to handle problems that
may be encountered in an actual job environment. The results of the study correlated with the
literature on Japanese university instructors relying too much on textbooks while creating
superficial learning outcomes that do not incorporate real-world skills (Shimura, 2009). A lack of
authentic learning is one of the causes for the superficial level of learning in many Japanese
classrooms. Moreover, a lack of skills being taught is also one of the reasons for students not
being better prepared when they enter the workforce.

One term participants frequently mentioned was “active learning.” According to Bonwell
and Eison (1991), in active learning, students are involved and do not just listen. It places more
emphasis on developing students’ skills. Here, students are involved in higher order thinking and
engaged in authentic activities. There is emphasis on students’ exploration of their own attitudes
and beliefs as well. While there are differences between active and authentic learning, both share
several characteristics, such as the rejection of the didactic and lecture-based model of learning,
an emphasis on student-centered activities, collaboration with peers, and the engagement in
higher-order thinking tasks.

Several participants associated the lack of authentic learning with the absence of active
learning in their classrooms. According to Salemi (2002), active learning helps promote a
positive attitude toward learning, and students benefit from classroom interaction with their
peers. Moreover, it also benefits practitioners and helps instill lasting understanding of important concepts in classroom contents (Salemi, 2002). According to Nicaise, Gibney, and Crane (2000), authentic learning involves doing tasks that mimic the real-world problems and situations encountered in a student’s field of study. The participants in this study were asked to think about whether the things they were learning in their classrooms equipped them with the real-world skills they would use in their future jobs. Out of the six participants in the study, five remarked that they felt that their university classes and curriculum would not be useful in their future.

These results raise the question of whether going to university in Japan is worthwhile or not. Many scholars have noted that time spent in college is not for studying, but rather a vacation for them before they start working (Kawazoe, 2015, Kitamura, 2001, Shimura, 2009). Many of the students in the study reported being disengaged and having a low motivation to study in classes. This also begs the question of who is benefiting from having students attend these classes. Ito & Kawazoe (2015) mention that professors are overworked and have very low motivation to provide more engaging lesson plans. Likewise, adjunct lecturers often resort to teaching over fifteen 90-minute lessons a week, which leaves them very little in terms of innovative lesson planning. As the population of Japan decreases and more universities compete to attract students, this problem will only worsen as schools are forced to lower educational expectations while maintaining a balanced budget.

Participants also spoke extensively about their dissatisfaction with professors’ teaching styles and the lack of skills being taught. One participant felt that none of the assignments given to him by his teachers helped him learn. This opinion supports the idea that the Japanese university experience is a necessary step to gain a job rather than a place to deepen one’s knowledge on a certain subject. Three participants noted that much of the satisfaction they
experienced from the university came from their involvement in extracurricular activities and the freedom to pursue interests outside of school. Many scholars have observed this trend in Japan – students see universities as more a place to have fun rather than to study (Deguchi, 2018; Oba, 2005). The implication of these circumstances is that if Japanese universities do not raise their level of authentic learning and meaningful engagement in classes, then they will be nothing more than degree mills that continue to offer a fun time to students before they begin working. Instructors will continue to offer mediocre lessons and students will continue to develop insufficient skills in their fields of study.

Another finding from the current study was that the Japanese educational system is structured to help students pass tests rather than to promote authentic learning. Scholars have noted that authentic learning tasks such as debate and discourse promote social interaction between students, which help them gain insight into different perspectives and knowledge sets (Brown, 1992; Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Vygotsky, 1978; Wiburg & Carter, 1994). Study participants noted a lack of opportunities to interact with other students. One student explicitly mentioned that he felt his teachers were failing in their duty to provide learning opportunities, as the classes were tailored specifically to passing tests. However, as is common in other East Asian countries, there is a deep-seated dependency on tests in Japan (Amano, 1990). This systemic characteristic compels Japanese students to always study to pass the next test and gain higher status in society. One participant noted that the type of tests a student passes or which school they graduate from greatly influences the life they will lead in Japan. This exerts pressure on Japanese students throughout their academic careers; thus, their only way to escape from this constraining pressure is when they went to a university.
Furthermore, this raises the question about what is the motivation for Japanese lecturers to create meaningful lesson plans and offer engaging classes. The reality is that many Japanese lecturers are inundated with work from the student affairs sections at universities. This presents another issue of how Japanese schools are managed. Professors constantly juggle work given from the student affairs department, who understand little about the actual teaching conditions. Many of these people do not understand the actual conditions of classes or any educational theory. This creates a divide in power between professors and those who manage the school, thereby producing more stress and less motivation for full-time university teachers. Unfortunately, it is the students who lose the most in this situation as they are left with meaningless classes and mediocre learning experiences.

However, one authentic learning task was especially useful for students – giving presentations in class. This was one skill that participants wanted more time to develop, as they thought it would be useful in the future. Students felt that this skill resulted in more positive, autonomous learning experiences. Authentic learning encourages learners to take responsibility for their learning, which group presentations would help facilitate (Brown, 1992).

Moreover, all participants shared that their educational careers from kindergarten to 12th grade focused mainly on following textbooks and passing tests. Many Japanese students, therefore, do not have the opportunity to give presentations in classes that could lead to opportunities for transformational learning. Teachers who gave their students the freedom to explore problems on their own and discuss them in class displayed transformational leadership. This supports literature on transformational leaders enhancing motivation, performance, and morale by having their followers take greater ownership for their work and learning (Bass, 1985). This would imply that more Japanese university instructors should make use of group
presentations and teamwork in their classrooms to spur authentic learning and transformational leadership.

**Didactic Lessons and Lack of Engagement**

The second major takeaway from this study focused on disengagement for students and teachers in the classes. Findings showed that disengagement was related to a lack of authentic learning (as discussed in the previous section) and intrinsic motivation. Specifically, participants noted that disengagement was largely due to their teachers’ apathy and the absence of a positive learning environment. This apathy manifested itself in didactic, lecture-style classes where instructors talked for 90 minutes straight.

Teachers’ apathy was evident when students believed that their teachers did not care about their learning and had little influence on the students’ positive learning behaviors. One of the main facets of transformational leadership theory is idealized influence (Bass & Reggio, 2006). Bass and Avolio (1990) define a transformational leader as one who inspires commitment to a distinct organizational vision by demonstrating a set of desirable attributes. Taking this a step further, Hughes (2014) states that idealized influence is characterized by actions and behaviors that help instill a sense of pride in followers. In the classroom setting, this translates to instructors inspiring students to learn and be more engaged with the curriculum. Such instructors have a strong desire to teach and lead so they go beyond what is asked of them to help students overcome obstacles. Participants in the study noted that many of their teachers lacked these attributes and commented that there was an overall sense of apathy in teachers.

The argument made by students that they were not being challenged academically correlates with Bass and Reggio (2006)’s argument that intellectual stimulation is one of the four guiding principles of the theory of transformational leadership. Ahanger (2009) states that
leaders who encourage their followers to challenge the status quo by being innovative and coming up with creative ways to solve problems exercise intellectual stimulation. One could argue that the didactic lecture-based style of teaching in many Japanese university classrooms is one of the major causes of disengagement by students. The apathy and teaching style made students less enthusiastic and involved in their classes. This creates a vicious cycle where apathetic teachers create uninteresting curricula that disengage students. These disengaged students show no interest in learning and this can thereby make instructors feel even less motivated to create interesting classes.

This apathy by both teachers and students is especially dangerous for Japanese university students as it will result in a further worsening of educational quality in Japanese university classrooms. As the world becomes more globalized, Japanese students will have to compete with other students from other countries. Unless, they are equipped with skills that will not only allow them to effectively communicate with others, but also to innovate solutions to complex problems, they will continue to fall behind their international peers. According to an article by the Japan Times newspaper, only two Japanese universities were included in the Times Higher Education World Rankings for 2018 (Sawa, 2017). If teachers continue to be apathetic and unmotivated to create engaging lesson plans while students are not interested in learning, then the future of Japanese university classrooms will worsen. Moreover, more and more Japanese graduates will enter the workforce with little or no skills.

According to the literature and study results, one reason for teachers’ apathy may be because of Japanese teachers’ workload. According to a 2018 article in Mainichi, 68 teachers died from being overworked from 2006 to 2016 (Izawa, 2018). This article also highlighted some alarming statistics regarding workloads – 60 percent of Japanese junior high school teachers and
30 percent of elementary school teachers worked 80 hours of overtime every month. This problem is not restricted to the K-12 level since Japanese university teachers are expected to teach six to eight 90-minute classes a week in addition to administrative, extracurricular duties, and conducting research. The picture is even bleaker in the case of adjunct lecturers, as many teach up to fifteen 90-minute classes a week at three to four different universities. Many study participants seemed to understand these circumstances and attempted to even defend their instructors’ apathetic teaching practices. The participants noted that in classes with many students, it would be nearly impossible for the teacher to engage with all the students. Thus, students were able to empathize with their teachers and their workloads. The implications of this are that even students realize their teachers are already overworked, which makes it harder for them to ask questions or see instructors during office hours because students fear bothering instructors or creating more work for them.

However, when it came to increasing engagement, one key idea mentioned frequently was the positive use of media in class content. Not only did the use of movies, YouTube, TedTalks, and other media outlets help sustain engagement, but they also raised intrinsic motivation, as students felt that they were more authentic in terms of learning materials. In this case, because the participants belonged to the English department, they felt that teachers who used authentic materials centered on native, natural speech, were better. Moreover, their perceived authenticity as native English speakers also helped to appear more authentic and engaging in classes. This suggests that Japanese instructors should make better use of media in their lessons, which might help lighten their workloads and simultaneously engage students in classrooms.

**Japanese Social Relationships as one Remedy to Student Burnout**
The third takeaway from the current study was that Japanese cultural practices heavily influenced teaching methods and learning environments in Japanese classrooms. Specifically, the hierarchical relationship between peers and teachers played a significant role in the students’ learning outcomes. Participants indicated that the relationship between instructors and students reflected a more transactional leadership style, which is representative of many East Asian cultures. Bass (1977) argued that the facets of transformational leadership were universal and should be able to transcend cultural borders. In transformational leadership, leaders who engage in certain behaviors are more effective than those who display transactional or no leadership behaviors regardless of the country or culture. However, Bass (1997) also pointed out that while the concept of transformational theory was universally valid, specific behaviors associated with leadership factors may vary according to the cultural context.

The implications for students and teachers being influenced by this type of relationship is that the role of teachers as role models for students is heightened in an East Asian cultural context. In terms of transformational leadership, teachers and elders can be said to have even more influence over their followers than in western culture due to the reverence held for senior members in society. One could thus argue that transformational leadership theory has great potential in terms of encouraging positive change in the Japanese university classroom. The aspects of idealized influence and inspirational motivation may especially be sensitive to this cultural aspect.

The current study showed that within the Japanese context, group work and communal student networks inside and outside of university are pivotal in shaping their perception of their time attending college. Surprisingly, half of the participants noted that they did not feel burned out because they had a large network of extracurricular activities such as part-time jobs, circles,
and friends to help them relieve the stress from school. This correlates with the idea that the Japanese university experience is not necessarily based on academic learning, but rather that it is a place to build social relationships and enjoy life before work.

One important step to becoming a transformational leader is to establish a sense of trust between leaders and followers. These sentiments were also reflected in the results of the study. Participants in the study noted that teachers they perceived as being more trustful were more successful in producing positive learning outcomes. Instructors who gave more personalized consideration, such as individualized lesson plans, more face-to-face contact, and individualized feedback to students were thought of as being more caring and trustworthy. Two participants in the study specifically noted that teachers who offered equal opportunities for all students helped create a positive learning environment. Thus, trust and fair treatment of all students were determining factors in whether teachers created a harmonious learning environment or not. Japanese university instructors should utilize their position in society and the social relationships that come along with their status to inspire and motivate students.

Raising Intrinsic Motivation

The final takeaway from this study relates to some of the ways in which intrinsic motivation for learning can be increased in Japanese university classrooms. Many participants gave valuable feedback on how some of their teachers created an engaging environment. They stated that teachers who used transformational leadership behaviors such as encouraging deep learning using active learning activities instead of textbook activities increased students’ personal engagement. This, in turn, led to higher intrinsic motivation and more positive learning outcomes for students.
Transformational leadership encourages followers to think outside the box by providing access to more perspectives and viewpoints from other people (Bass & Avolio, 1996). Students believed they learned more when they had the opportunity to express themselves and their autonomy through assignments, presentations, and group work. Through interactions with more people, students gained new ideas and perspectives that may not have been accessible if they had worked alone. This correlates with the participants’ notion that instructors who gave them opportunities to work in groups were more likely to create opportunities for authentic learning and active engagement. Participants also felt that group work, giving presentations, and expressing themselves were skills that would be useful for their future careers. They also mentioned that they learned more and preferred this style of classes to the traditional lecture-based style.

Intellectual stimulation is one of the four facets of transformational leadership theory (Bass & Avolio, 1996), and it occurs when leaders provide opportunities for critical thinking that help change the thinking paradigms of the followers. Instructors who avoided answering students’ questions directly and hinted at the answers or guided students to learn by themselves also increased intrinsic motivation. This creates a natural curiosity for deeper levels of knowledge. Within a Japanese classroom, one recommendation would be to not immediately supply students with answers. This goes against the rote memorization and test-based style of teaching that many Japanese teachers utilize. In these teaching styles, students are required to memorize answers and be able to reproduce them in a test, thereby, bypassing the need to ask why the answer is right or wrong. The results of the current study showed that when teachers let students figure out answers by themselves then students have higher levels of learning satisfaction and increased knowledge. This implies that in order for transformational leadership
theory to be implemented in the Japanese university classroom, teachers need to give greater autonomy to students by not spoon-feeding answers to students. Transformational leadership behaviors allow learners to discover new knowledge sets for themselves. Thus, the standard didactic lecture-based method used by most Japanese university teachers should be replaced by more student-based methods where students discover answers by themselves.

Comments by participants on their reasons for attending university further support the claim that attending university is Japan is a social given. Students remarked that they attended college not necessarily to gain knowledge in a specific field but rather because it was what was expected of them. This is in accordance with the trend that many Japanese students go to university mainly as the next step on their path to get a job. While this may not be true for all Japanese university students, the idea that Japanese students go to university because they must and not because they want to explain some of the reasons behind a lack of intrinsic motivation or engagement in classes.

Additionally, personal engagement with teachers through a series of trust-building behaviors helped increase students’ intrinsic motivation. Building a sense of trust to engage in transformational leadership was also a key finding of the study. According to Hughes (2014), transformational leaders are the social architects of their organization; they make special effort to develop relationships and a shared vision with their followers. By creating a personal and shared vision, transformational leaders are more equipped to establish trust through the clarity of their role. Participants in the study noted that increased personal engagement with the teacher due to small class sizes, office hours or personalized feedback on assignments led to more trust being created. Due to the lack of attention and consideration shown currently, it is imperative for Japanese university instructors to establish trust through individualized consideration and
attention. In order for this to happen, Japanese university lecturers need to take more time to get to know their students. They need to have smaller classes in which they take into consideration the learning needs of their students more. This could be facilitated by having the Japanese university student affairs department understand the needs and challenges of teaching more. There needs to be more collaboration by those in power at Japanese universities to offer more intimate and personalized classes to students.

**Revisiting the Conceptual Framework and Implications for Practice**

Most of the implications in this study point to the notion that certain aspects of transformational leadership theory are applicable to the Japanese university classroom, including authentic learning, engagement theory, and raising intrinsic motivation. However, for all facets of transformational leadership to be successfully implemented, then it is imperative that Japanese cultural considerations, such as the tendency for hierarchical relationships, the emphasis on group work, and the need for class harmony to be considered. According to Burns (1978), there are four overarching characteristics of transformational leadership:

1. Transformational leaders use their power to direct followers and interact with them while recognizing their goals, motives, feelings, and needs.
2. Transformational leaders have an innate sense of purpose, which helps them guide their followers to a new understanding.
3. There are two levels of leadership: *transactional*, where there is an exchange between leader and follower, and *transformational*, which engages the leader and the follower to raise awareness in each other.
4. Transformational leaders genuinely care about the needs and feelings of followers, which helps establish trust between the two.

Many researchers have concluded that certain leadership behaviors are characteristic of a culture, while others have argued that other effective behaviors can be performed regardless of culture. When looking at these characteristics, it is important to note that these must be interpreted through a cultural lens. This may greatly influence how each of the characteristics are manifested. Avolio, Bass, and Jung (1995) posited that it is easier for collectivistic cultures to incorporate facets of transformational theory (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1995). In the Japanese context, a strong group mentality seems to exist. In other words, Japanese tend to place a greater emphasis on class harmony. While not directly related to them, Japanese students are especially sensitive to how the actions and behaviors of other students in the class heavily influence the learning environment. The participants in the current study noted that instructors who ensured that everyone in the classroom participated equally helped create a positive learning environment. One participant stressed that assuring that every student had an equal opportunity to learn was an essential characteristic of a good instructor. There was limited evidence in the current study that showed harmony among students as an indicator of positive learning experiences. Conversely, classroom environments that were not harmonious created stress, which then contributed to student burnout.

Spretizer, Perttula, and Xin (2005) argued that based on empirical data in the United States and Taiwan, cultural values played a significant role in the relationship between transformational leadership and leadership effectiveness. Respect for elders is one of many Japanese cultural values that is relevant in the university classroom environment. One of the subordinate themes in this study was that the Japanese culture’s top-down hierarchy plays a
significant role in university classroom cultures. Results showed that this top-down hierarchy was either a source of great stress for students or a means to lead and inspire teachers. In terms of the negative aspects, one participant stated that the one-way direction in which teachers transmitted information to the students reflected the influence of this hierarchy on educational policies in Japan. Contrary to this, three participants noted that the top-down hierarchy helped them to see teachers as role models. Many participants noted that they strived to inherit some of the positive characteristics of their instructors and that learning from someone they respected resulted in better learning outcomes.

Japanese university teachers need to better understand the power and influence they hold over students. Due to the cultural assumptions that older people and people in positions of power are given respect, one could argue that the idealized influence aspect of Bass and Reggio’s (2006) transformational leadership theory could be even more important in the Japanese university classroom. Participants noted that the influence of their junior and senior high school teachers was significant to their university academic interests. Thus, in order to help instill motivation in students, Japanese university teachers should align their teaching styles more with the power and influence they have over their students. By acting apathetic to lessons, they perpetuate the notion that the class is not important and that they should just attend it to gain credit to graduate.

Inspirational motivation is one of the four facets of transformational leadership. According to Hughes (2014), inspirational motivation is characterized by a leader who can inspire followers to think optimistically about the future by offering a compelling vision of it. They can express accurately and concisely what needs to be done to achieve goals while encouraging team spirit and enthusiasm. Bass (1985) also theorized that when followers are
provided with intellectual stimulation, then they are challenged to question their current
to knowledge and actions. In other words, they are challenged to question how they came to their
current knowledge sets. Likewise, they are stimulated to use their imagination to examine
problems from different points of views while satisfying their intellectual curiosity. If this holds
ture, then one could argue that followers are more likely to concentrate on tasks instead of
extrinsic obstacles or circumstances. Moreover, according to Amabile (1996)’s intrinsic
motivation theory of creativity, an enhanced interest in a certain task would naturally help the
follower look for a new way to approach a problem, which would also raise their intrinsic
motivation to solve the problem. Thus, transformational leadership and its characteristics could
inherently raise intrinsic motivation. Results from this study pointed to a positive correlation
between teachers who raised intrinsic motivation through inspirational motivation.

In a study by Shin and Zhou (2003), transformational leadership behaviors are associated
with increased creativity and intrinsic motivation. In the context of a classroom, this would take
the form of a teacher who is able to set out clear learning goals and inspire students to take
control of their learning experience. Intrinsic motivation and inspirational motivation are related,
as the latter leads to the former. In the classroom, a transformational leader who inspires and
motivates students helps inspire them to learn even after class has ended. Results from this study
indicated that certain characteristics not only helped students to raise their intrinsic motivation
but also inspired them to learn more. Increased levels of personal engagement, personalized
curriculums, the use of media in curriculums, and teachers who inspired students using their
charismatic personalities were associated with higher levels of intrinsic motivation.

In addition to the importance of inspirational motivation, transformational leaders need to
understand their own strengths and weaknesses as well as personal biases to successfully lead
their followers (Shin & Zhou, 2013). Many university instructors in Japan are not required to go through any teaching methods courses. Schools rely on teachers to gain experience solely through their classroom experiences and assume they will be good teachers. However, this is not always the case and rarely do students challenge teachers on their teaching practices. One may attribute this to the top-down hierarchy that is prevalent in Japanese culture, where young people are expected to respect elders and listen to them or those in power. When full-time teachers are promoted, many schools only rely on class surveys to gauge the teaching skills of teachers. However, one could argue that these class surveys have little validity, as they are rarely examined by the administration or other teachers. In order to improve the Japanese university classroom experience, school administrators must closely examine teachers while providing teaching styles training. However, normally there is little accountability in terms of teaching practices for Japanese university instructors. Especially, full-time teachers who are tenured, are rarely observed to appraise their teaching practices. With little accountability, there is even less motivation for teachers to create innovative and engaging lessons.

There were several factors noted by the participants that could help increase the chances of creating a positive learning outcome: native teachers, authentic materials, the usage of media, more personalized feedback, and the incorporation of group work and presentations. According to the participants, many of their teachers did not use these kinds of methods or teaching materials in class. With the exception of the native teacher aspect, this confirms the belief that there is an over-reliance of Japanese university instructors on textbooks, tests, or reports. For adjunct teachers, who are subject to the curriculum demands and requirements according to the school, the problem is compounded, as many already struggle with too many classes and work overload. This allows very little room for full-time or adjunct teachers to be creative with their
curriculum design or to spend more time on individual students. According to an article published in *Mainichi*, the Japanese government has recognized the negative effects of passive textbook learning and will start incorporating active learning activities in new textbooks starting from 2020 (*Mainichi*, 2019).

The results of the current study also showed that creativity and individualism are not fostered within the Japanese educational system. However, the teachers who were able to express their creativity and individualism through their personalities were seen positively by their students. Idealized influence is one of the main facets of transformational leadership theory. Idealized influence is characterized by the behavior of the leaders and the followers’ attributions to the leader (Bass & Avolio, 1996). These leaders have confidence and can direct their followers toward a shared vision. They exude a sense of selflessness, integrity, and honor, which results in them being respected by followers. The results of the current study showed that Japanese instructors who exhibited these traits helped to not only inspire their students to learn more but also helped their students to experience a personal transformation.

Lastly, classes that effectively used media to help reinforce class material garnered more favorable opinions from the participants. The study, therefore, indicates that teachers should try to incorporate media to engage and spark interest in students. In terms of English language teaching, media materials were more authentic and, therefore, worthwhile. In this case, since the English department was considered, students felt that teachers who used authentic materials centered on native natural speech were better. The use of media also offers a way to help lighten a teacher’s workload, thereby allowing teachers more time to spend with giving students meaningful feedback.

**Recommendations for Future Research**
Several areas for future research on a wider group of students could add to the scope of this study. A quantitative study could be carried out in public universities across different departments and levels to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the problems highlighted. Another demographic that could be studied are students in different majors. Since this study was limited to only students doing an English major, one could argue that the students in the fields of science and technology may have a different learning experience. Even soliciting different candidates from different age groups over a 5–10-year period would prove to be valuable, as it would bring to the fore more long-term trends in the Japanese university education system.

From a qualitative study standpoint, an interesting area of research would be to look at the lived experiences of university professors and adjunct lecturers teaching in Japan. Many of the results in the study suggest that Japanese university instructors, both tenured and adjunct, are burned out by their own workload for differing reasons. This could be a major cause of the apathy and transactional leadership behaviors mentioned by the participants. A research study examining how and why instructors choose to carry out their classes in a certain way would be interesting, and it could shed light on the reasons behind the negative learning outcomes of students. Specifically, investigating the workloads and curriculum development practices by Japanese university instructors would offer more insight into how apathy is affecting teachers. This would help to shed light on the problems faced by many university teachers and how they could remedy them.

Conclusion

This study aimed to answer the following research question: “How do students at a Japanese university perceive transformational leadership qualities in their professors or instructors?” The concepts and theories guiding this study were primarily drawn from three
strands of overlapping literature: authentic learning, student engagement, and transformational leadership. Using Bass and Reggio (2006)’s framework regarding the theory of transformational leadership, this study employed interpretive phenomenological analysis to explore the research problem qualitatively. The researcher used emotion, evaluative, and holistic coding techniques to examine the semi-structured interviews with six native Japanese university students. The participants were juniors or seniors from the same department at a private university in Tokyo. They were asked about their instructors’ teaching practices and curriculums and required to discuss their overall learning experiences at university. The researcher used purposeful sampling to choose students who would be able to deeply reflect on their time and experiences at university.

An analysis of the data affirmed that many of the discussed problems revolved around a lack of authentic learning, engagement and student burnout. This study suggested eight themes that could create positive learning outcomes for Japanese university students: (1) to address the lack of skills being taught at university, instructors should aim to incorporate more authentic tasks that mimic real-world situations along with traditional pedagogic tasks; (2) students are more engaged when given the opportunity to express their autonomy in class through presentations and group work; (3) students appreciate a student-centered learning approach that utilizes media and shuns over-reliance on textbooks or other generic learning material; (4) burnout in students largely occurs due to perceived busywork, and students value their time outside of school to help overcome any stress; (5) certain aspects of transformational leadership may be applied through the lens of cultural considerations; (6) Japanese universities need more cooperation between the full-time professors, part-time lecturers, and student affairs department to offer a more cohesive and meaningful educational experience; (7) Japanese full-time
professors need to be held more accountable for their teaching practices through more collaboration with the student affairs department; (8) Japanese universities need to focus more on offering deep educational experiences using authentic learning tasks, student-centered curriculums, and more personalized time with their teachers.

Japanese university classrooms reflect an educational model that is outdated and in dire need of modification. However, due to the entrenched policies, lack of innovation and social pressure on both teachers and students, there is very little room for creativity or change. The results in this study show that the Japanese university classroom is about much more than just memorizing information to pass tests. Many students are eager and genuinely interested in expanding their body of knowledge during their time at university. As seen in the responses in the interviews, there are many great teachers in Japan, and they definitely show many characteristics of transformational leadership. A common misunderstanding is that transformational leaders are “soft,” but the truth is that they constantly challenge their followers to higher levels of performance. Looking to the future, hopefully more instructors will be inspired more to take a closer look at their teaching practices and remedy some of the problems within Japan’s university classrooms.

**Epilogue**

I am grateful for having an opportunity to gain more insight into what it means to be a scholar-practitioner. In this epilogue, I offer a few of my thoughts about the study. This study has further motivated me to go forward in my teaching career. The teaching profession, I realize even more clearly, really is a profession and not just a job. I gained more academic tools to question and investigate many of the other phenomena I experienced while working as a scholar-
practitioner. A scholar practitioner’s role, arguably, is to help people to find their working “voice” within the traditional school setting. As Freire (1973) describes in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, “Students are merely dehumanized things to fill with contents which are detached from reality, disconnected from the totality that engendered them” (p. 71). A scholar-practitioner, it could be said, is a new type of pioneer within the academic world. They are, as Jenlink (2005) points out, “Public intellectuals [who] are concerned with making education political, that is, making public issues of social justice and equity as part of the educational agenda, working to foster more democratic social practices that transform the space of schools” (p. 9). This correlates to Freire’s argument that “the solution is not to “integrate” the oppressed into the structure of oppression, but to transform that structure so that they can become “beings for themselves” (Freire, p. 74). Scholar practitioners are also constantly engaged in self-reflection and constructive criticism of their professional and academic activities. Their professional activities and the knowledge they gain stem from collaborative and relational learning within a wide network of peers and organizations. This study has given me the opportunity to reflect on what it means to be a scholar-practitioner and the value of my expertise and knowledge within my field.

This study has definitely inspired me to think about how I teach my own classes and the kind of relationships I have with my students. It makes me think about how I am being perceived not only by my students but also by my peers and society in general. It has made me think about how I can contribute more to the body of knowledge within my field. How can my knowledge and experiences be used to further the body of knowledge surrounding a certain topic? In terms of classes, the study has provoked me to think of how I choose to do certain activities and behaviors in classes. Are the tasks I give my students meaningful? Do they help to engage,
inspire, inform, or push my students’ current scope of knowledge? It is with a heightened awareness of my own behavior and biases that I complete this study.

When Japanese freshmen enter university, many of them are still on the cusp of forming their identity. In an article, Kelly (2009) mentions the concept of minimal group paradigm, which is based on the theory that considers identity formation as affected by group membership when there is no salient identity. This minimal group paradigm is indicative of Japanese university classes where there is a strong tendency towards a group culture mentality. This study provoked me to think about how sociological norms and rules make their way into the university classroom and just how much of an influence they have on learning. In terms of my teaching, maneuvering the social rules and understanding society is imperative to being able to be an effective scholar-practitioner. Depending on the context and group, scholar-practitioners need to work critically with ideas about power and emotion, reflecting on and experiencing how structural bases of power exert pressure and encourage self-policing of identities of their students.

Talking with the students and not to the students is pivotal in any educational experience. Having taught for almost ten years in diverse settings, I have learned that a lasting learning outcome occurs only when a positive relationship between a teacher and student is made. The results of the study pointed to the idea that teachers have an extremely influential role in the lives of young people. They are not only seen and respected as people with a greater level of knowledge but they also have the power to inspire and motivate with their life experiences. According to a couple of students in the study, the fact that they chose to become English teachers or major in English was because their junior high school or senior high school teachers were interesting. One of the students specifically mentioned that it was because of his English
teacher that he discovered the fun of learning English. One of the big takeaways from this study is learning how these learning experiences become key and transformational in others’ lives.

Another big takeaway from the study is that education is more effective when it is personal. Parsons, Nystrand, and Parsons (2014) argue that teachers are responsible for increasing or decreasing student engagement. Teachers can increase engagement by showing that they genuinely care about their students. I make it a point to memorize my students’ names, talk to them about what is going on with their lives, and ask questions about things outside of class in order to establish a trusting relationship. They can be assured that this teacher will not only teach them about a certain subject but also interact with them on a personal level. This has resulted in a plethora of positive memories and learning experiences with my students. In the study, the students seemed eager for more personal interactions with their teachers, with many of them noting that though they thought their teachers were nice people, they would appreciate the opportunity to get to know them better. They also mentioned that it was during their seminar classes, which are limited and center around very specific contents, where they had the most positive learning experiences. Therefore, instructors in Japanese universities need to understand that when they are teaching, they are teaching people and not just a number of students.

I also discovered how students value cooperation and working in teams. University is a time to broaden horizons in terms of meeting people from different backgrounds. It is the first time people learn to communicate with each other as adults. In Japan, students go to a ceremony known as the seijinshiki or “coming-of-age ceremony,” in which they go back to their hometowns and meet their peers from elementary and junior high school. This study opened my eyes to the importance that students place on being able to converse with and work on projects together with their peers. By sharing ideas and cooperating with others, students are able to
transform themselves into more aware and capable beings. Japanese universities should be smarter in having students cooperate more in groups on projects to offer more authentic and skill-building classes. I am sure that I will emphasize this aspect more in my class.

On a personal level, this study has been a validating experience. I have been able to attach specific educational theories and terms to phenomena that I have witnessed while teaching in Japan. It has validated many of the perceptions that many teachers here in Japan hold. Upon completing the study, I was able to describe, in expert detail, many of the problems and challenges faced by university educators in Japan, such as the apathetic attitudes and disengagement faced by students and teachers. This study, I strongly feel, has transformed me into a more aware teacher.

I hope that this study creates more conversation about leadership practices at Japanese universities. A greater understanding of more leadership frameworks leads to a greater chance of a successful outcome. In terms of social justice in education, the goal is to encourage transformational leadership—it not only changes policies but also mindsets and perspectives (Shields, 2004). How to go about this transformational leadership in academia is still a question to debate. Many current models of leadership in higher educational settings rely on more traditional models of leadership, such as top-down management, bureaucracy, communism, and managerialism. As more and more Japanese universities struggle to gain students, it has become more difficult for universities to focus solely on the educational aspect of the college experience in Japan. Universities now have to resort to advertising about cafeteria menus, school festival activities, and dorm accommodations to attract students. For Japanese universities to stay relevant in terms of education and social needs there is a necessity for them to question how and why they choose to implement their current policies.
In conclusion, entering university, Japanese students may face a multitude of academic difficulties. From apathetic disengaging teachers to needless busy work, many Japanese students question whether they really learn anything during their time. Through this study, I was better able to understand the students’ points of view towards their learning experiences better. An important concept that left an impact on my view of leadership was that leadership and learning are intertwined with identity. How people lead and how students learn are heavily dependent on their identities formed by gender, race, disciplinary background, role, position, and other characteristics (Kezar & Lester, 2010). Only by understanding their own identities can individuals discover biases, prejudices, tendencies, strengths, advantages, and other perspectives vital to growing as a person. In my own case as an American Expat teacher in Japan, this study not only allowed me to understand that what I have to offer to students is not only valuable but also highly unique. I was also reminded of my responsibility as an educator and what it really means to be a scholar-practitioner. I am confident enough to say that this study has “transformed” me. I hope that my study offers more insight and validation to students, teachers, or anyone else who reads it.
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Appendix 1

2019年05月20日
May 20th, 2019

駒澤大学
Komazawa University
文学部英米文学科
Faculty of Letters Department of English and American Literature
学科長本村浩二様
Department Chair: Professor Koji Motomura

ノースイースタン大学
Northeastern University
プロフェショナルスタディーズが学部
College of Professional Studies
Enomoto Andrew Michael Yoshihiko
Mr. Andrew Enomoto Ed.D Candidate

博士論文にかかる調査実施の承認依頼について
Letter of Request to Conduct Interviews for Doctoral Dissertation

I am writing this letter to you to ask for your permission to conduct interviews for my doctoral dissertation. On behalf of the dissertation committee and the researcher, I would greatly appreciate your approval to conduct this research at Komazawa University. Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you. The primary investigator for this study is Dr. Hattie Hammonds, a part-time Instructor at Northeastern University in Boston, Massachusetts. I will serve as the student researcher that is conducting a study for my dissertation.

記

研究の目的と意義
Research Goal and Significance
この研究は、"日本の大学生は教授や指導官のリーダーシップの変革をどのように知覚するか"をテーマとし、日本人学生のインタビューに基づいて進めてられています。近年では、日本の大学の授業スタイルは危機的な状況であり、このトピックは非常に重要です。教師によって現状のモデルが継続的に変わることにより、学生は将来の仕事のためのスキルを何も学んでいないように感じています。さらに多くの学生が、教授や指導官の授業の進め方が乏しい結果、授業に対する関心が低下し燃え尽きてしまうと感じています。本研究は以下のサブクエスチョンに基づいています。

This qualitative study, based on in-depth interviews with Japanese students, will be guided by the overarching question: How do students at a Japanese university perceive transformational leadership qualities in their professors or instructors? This topic is important, as there is a teaching crisis in many Japanese university classrooms. By continuing with the current model adopted by many teachers, students feel they are not learning or gaining any skills for their future jobs. Moreover, many students claim that increased apathy towards classes and burnout is the result of poor teaching practices and leadership skills by their instructors. The sub-questions that will guide this study are:

1. あなたが学ぶ大学の教授は、本質的な学習に寄与する変革的なリーダーシップのどの側面に従事しているか。
   What aspects of transformational leadership do university professors at your school engage in that contribute to authentic learning?

2. あなたが学ぶ大学の教授は、授業従事に寄与する変革的なリーダーシップのどの側面に従事しているか。
   What aspects of transformational leadership do university professors at your school engage in that contribute to engagement?

3. あなたが学ぶ大学の教授は、内発的動機の強化に寄与する変革的なリーダーシップのどの側面に従事しているか。
   What aspects of transformational leadership do university professors at your school engage in that contribute to increased intrinsic motivation?

実施手続きは次の通りです

Interviews will be carried out in the following manner.

- 実施方法：担当者と対面して着席し、インタビューの様子をレコーダーで録音します。

   Participants will meet the interviewer, take a seat and be provided with an informed consent form. This form will let participants know that their participation in voluntary and they can leave the study at any time with no penalty. All interviews will be recorded using a handheld recording device.

- 対象者：＜大学での経験について深く振り返ることができ、授業での様子、感想
Participants for this interview will be third, fourth year, or graduate university students in Komazawa University’s Department of English Literature department. Participants must be able to share their feelings and experiences towards classes taken during their time at Komazawa University. They should also be able to reflect deeply on their time and be ready to answer questions. It is also important to mention that neutral sampling will be utilized to prevent any bias from corrupting the results of any data gathered.

- **Research Duration and Required Time**: This research will be conducted from June 1, 2019, to July 30, 2019. Interviews will last 60-90 minutes per participant.
- **Research Implementation Location**: Interviews will be conducted privately between just the researcher and the participant.
- **Data Access**: All data will be transcribed solely by the researcher for the purposes of this dissertation. No third parties will be given any sample or data.

In the event that any participant should have a question, they are free to ask the interviewer at anytime.

**Regarding Research Risk**

* This research involves no restriction, no use of drugs or medicines. Data and information from the interviews will have no bearing on any of the participants’ grades or performance at school. The interviewer is obliged to fully protect the safety and privacy of the subjects.
＜研究参加の自由について＞

* 課題の途中であっても内容や方法等についてご不審な点がある場合は、遠慮なく随時担当者にお声かけ下さい。また、対象者は説明の途中や課題開始後であっても研究への不参加を表明することができます。

In the case that the interviewees do not feel comfortable answering questions or talking, they have the option to leave at any time they wish. They may also tell the interviewer they are not able to answer or do not feel comfortable answering any questions. Interviewers may also edit and control any part of their talks after the interviews.

＜データ管理について＞

* 課題の結果及び課題を行っている際の録音記録は、結果の分析にのみ使用されます。データについては厳重に管理し、関係者以外が閲覧すること、持ち出することはありません。

All results and recordings produced from this research investigation will be strictly used for analysis only. Data will be strictly managed and will not be viewed by anyone else than those involved in the research.

実験で得られた情報は、目的以外で使用されません。また個人情報の特定ができないようなデータは処理されます。

All information and data gained from the research interviews will not be used for any purposes other than those stated in this letter. All private information will also be strictly managed and disposed of at the end of the research.

以上

ノースイースタン大学＜研究責任者所属＞
Northeastern University, College of Professional Studies

榎本アンドリュー＜研究責任者氏名＞
Mr. Andrew Enomoto
Enomoto.a@husky.neu.edu
090-6174-8858
Appendix 2

Study Interview questions (in Japanese and English)

Background Questions
1. Where are you from?
   あなたの出身はどこですか。

2. Describe or tell me about your educational experiences prior to coming to the University.
   Where did you attend elementary, junior high and high school? What were your learning experiences like at each level?
   大学に入る前にあなたが受けた教育について記述してください。あなたの小中学校及び高校はどこですか。それぞれの段階でのあなたの学習経験はどのようなものですか。

3. What type of assignments did you complete when you were at each educational level?
   小中学校及び高校であなたはどのような宿題、課題を受けましたか。

4. Why did you decide to attend this University?
   なぜ大学へ進学することを決めたのですか。

5. Tell me what year are you in at the University (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior).
   あなたは大学の何回生ですか。

6. What do you want to do after you graduate from this University?
   大学卒業後、あなたは何をしたいですか。

Study Questions
1. On a scale of 1 being the worst and 5 being the best, how would you rate your overall experience at this University? Why are you giving the University this rating?
   総合的に考えて大学での経験を5段階で評価してください (1:とても悪い、5:とても良い)。あなたがそのように評価した理由は何ですか。
2. Describe the learning experiences or learning opportunities you’ve had while attending this University?
この大学に在学中にあなたの学習経験や学習機会について記載してください。

The next two questions will ask you about the teachers you’ve had since coming to the University.
次の2つの質問は、あなたが入学以降に会った教師について質問します。 

3. Which teachers motivated you to study or learn? How did they motivate you to study or learn?
どの教師が、あなたが学習するように動機付けしましたか。またその教師はどのようにあなたを動機付けましたか。

4. Tell me a story about the best assignment you’ve received while you’ve been at the University. Which teacher gave the assignment? What was the assignment? What did you learn?
大学在学中にあなたに与えられた課題の内、もっとも良かったものについて教えてください。どの教師がその課題を出しましたか。その課題はどういうものでしたか。その課題からあなたは何を学びましたか。

The next questions will ask you about academic burnout
次の質問は学術的な燃え尽きについて質問します。

5. During your time at this University, have you ever felt burned out? If yes, tell me why you felt this way. If no, then how have you avoided this issue?
在学中に燃え尽きたと感じたことはありますか。もしYesなら、なぜそのように感じたか教えてください。もしNoならどのようにあなたはそう感じないようにしてきたか教えてください。

6. What did you do to overcome this burn out? Who (if anyone) helped you?
この燃え尽きを克服するために何をしましたか。もし誰かが助けてくれたのであれば、それは誰ですか。
The next questions will ask you about teaching practices in your University classes.
次の質問は大学のクラスでの様子について質問します。

7. What methods did your teachers use in the classroom to help you learn the material?
あなたの学習を助けるために、あなたの教師が授業中にどのような方法を使っていましたか

8. Tell me a story about a teacher that you believe taught the best. What did they do that made you believe they were the best teacher?
あなたが最も教えるのが上手だと思う教師について教えてください。その教師は具体的にどのようなことをしていましたか？

9. Do you believe that the material that you are learning will help you get a job? Why or why not?
あなたが学んだことは仕事を得るために役に立ったと思いますか。なぜそう思いますか。もしくはなぜそう思わなかったのですか。

10. This is a 4-part question. What skills do you believe will help you in the future? How do you know this? Is the University helping you gain these skills? How or how not?
この質問には4つの質問が含まれています。どのようなスキルが将来役に立つと思いますか。なぜあなたはそうのようにと思いますか。大学はそのスキルを獲得するための助けになっていますか。そのように感じる理由について教えてください。

11. How would you define or what do you believe makes up a positive learning environment?
良い効果をもたらす学習環境について、あなたはどのように定義しますか。また何が必要だと思いますか。

12. Which teachers do you believe have created a positive learning environment?
良い効果をもたらす学習環境を作ろうとした教師はいましたか

13. Tell me a story about a teacher at the University that inspired or stimulated your learning?
あなたの学習意欲を鼓舞し、刺激した教師について教えてください。
14. Is there anything else you would like to share about your learning experiences at this University or your experiences with teachers at this University?

この大学での学習経験や教師との経験について、他にシェアしたいことがありますか。

Thank you for participating in my study. If I have any follow-up or clarifying questions, then I will contact you.

私の研究に参加していただきありがとうございます。もしフォローアップや追加質問があれば連絡させていただきます。
Appendix 3

Email Sent to Participants (in Japanese and English)

参加者宛
Dear Student,

この研究に参加していただいて誠にありがとうございました。このメールにて自信があって正確な答えを提供するために、この研究の背景と説明をさせていただきました。もし参加することにしましたら、次のメールを読んでお返事ください。改めてありがとうございました。

Thank you for your interest in participating in this study. In this email, I would just like to give you an overview of this study and some background information so that you may be able to confidently answer all of the questions should you choose to participate. Please read the following information and respond to me with your answer. Thank you very much again for your time.

私は榎本アンドリューと申します。ノースイースタン大学のプロフェショナルスタディーズ学部の教育学科に所属しています。教育学研究科博士後期課程の博士論文のためにtransformational leadership in Japanese university classesに関する研究を行っております。この同意書は「How Transformational Leadership can be used in Japanese University Classrooms to Increase Authentic Learning, Student Motivation, and Positive Learning Outcomes」の内容について説明したものであります。この研究についてご理解・ご協力いただける場合は、下記の説明を確認いただき、ご確認をお願いいたします。

My name is Andrew Enomoto. I am an Ed.D. candidate at Northeastern University’s College of Professional Studies. I am conducting a study on “Transformational Leadership in Japanese University Classes” for my dissertation entitled “How Transformational Leadership can be used in Japanese University Classrooms to Increase Authentic Learning, Student Motivation, and Positive Learning Outcomes.” Hopefully, the results from this dissertation will improve learning outcomes and the university classroom experience in Japan, and across the world. Please read over this explanation in the event that you think you would be able to participate in this study. Thank you

研究の目的と意義
Research Theme and Significance

この研究は、"日本の大学生は教授や指導官のリーダーシップの変革をどのように知覚するか"をテーマとし、日本人学生のインタビューに基づいて進めてされています。
近年では、日本の大学の授業スタイルは危機的な状況であり、このトピックは非常に重要です。教師によって現状のモデルが継続的に変更されることにより、学生は将来の仕事のためのスキルを何も学んでいないように感じています。さらに多くの学生が、教授や指導官の授業の進め方が乏しい結果、授業に対する関心が低下し燃え尽きてしまうと感じています。本研究は以下のサブクエスチョンに基づいています。

This qualitative study, based on in-depth interviews with Japanese students will be guided by the overarching question: How do students at a Japanese university perceive transformational leadership qualities in their professors or instructors? This topic is important, as there is a teaching crisis in many Japanese university classrooms. By continuing with the current model adopted by many teachers, students feel they are not learning or gaining any skills for their future jobs. Moreover, many students claim that increased apathy towards classes and burnout is the result of poor teaching practices and leadership skills by their instructors. The sub-questions that will guide this study are:

4. 日本の大学教授は、本質的な学習に寄与する変革的なリーダーシップのどの側面に従事しているか。

What aspects of transformational leadership do Japanese university professors engage in that contribute to authentic learning?

5. 日本の大学教授は、授業従事に寄与する変革的なリーダーシップのどの側面に従事しているか。

What aspects of transformational leadership do Japanese university professors engage in that contribute to engagement?

6. 日本の大学教授は、内発的動機の強化に寄与する変革的なリーダーシップのどの側面に従事しているか。

What aspects of transformational leadership do Japanese university professors engage in that contribute to increased intrinsic motivation?

実施手続きは次の通りです

Interviews will be carried out in the following manner:

• 実施方法：担当者と対面して着席し・・・課題施行中の様子をレコーダーで録音します。

Participants will meet the interviewer, take a seat and be recorded using a handheld recoding device.

• 対象者：大学での経験について深く振り返ることができ、授業での様子や感想や意見などを詳しく教えていただける大学3年・4年生を対象としています。

Participants for this interview will be third or fourth year university students in Komazawa University’s Department of English Literature department. Participants must be able to share their feelings and experiences towards classes taken during their time at Komazawa University. They should also be able to reflect deeply on
their time and be ready to answer questions.

- 研究期間と所要時間：この研究は2019年7月25日から2019年8月5日の期間で実施されます。インタビューは60−90分程度になります。

Interviews will be conducted during the duration of June 1st, 2019 to July 30th, 2019. Interviews will last 60-90 minutes per participant.

- 研究実施場所：この研究は駒澤大学文学部英米文学科で実施されます。

Interviews will be done in a private room on the campus of Komazawa University.

この研究についてわからないことがあった場合には、後述の担当者にお問い合わせください。

In the event that any participant should have a question they are free to ask the interviewer at anytime.

＜研究にかかわるリスクについて＞
* この研究で行う課題では，参加者を拘束したり，薬物等を使用したりすることはありません。また，学校の成績や授業への影響も一切ありません。担当者は安全性とプライバシーへの配慮を十分にいたします。

At any time during the interview, subjects shall not be physically restrained. There will absolutely be no use of drugs or medicines. Data and information from the interviews will have no bearing on any of the participants’ grades or performance at school. The interviewer is obliged to fully protect the safety and privacy of the subjects.

＜研究参加の自由について＞
* 課題の途中であっても内容や方法等についてご不審な点がある場合は，遠慮なく随時担当者にお声かけ下さい。また，対象者は説明の途中や課題開始後であっても研究への不参加を表明することができます。

In the case that the interviewees do not feel comfortable answering questions or talking, they have the option to leave at any time they wish. They may also tell the interviewer they are not able to answer or do not feel comfortable answering any questions. Interviewers may also edit and control any part of their talks after the interviews.

＜データ管理について＞
All results and recordings produced from this research investigation will be strictly used for analysis only. Data will be strictly managed and will not be viewed by anyone else than those involved in the research.

Affiliation of Researcher: Northeastern University
Student Researcher Name: Andrew Enomoto
Enomoto.a@husky.neu.edu
090-6174-8858
Appendix 4

Northeastern University: College of Professional Studies
ノースイースタン大学：カレッジオブプロフェッショナルスタディ
Name of Investigator(s): Dr. Hattie Hammonds, Andrew Enomoto
研究者氏名: ハッティーハモンズ博士、アンドリュー榎本
Title of Project: How Transformational Leadership can be used in Japanese University Classrooms to Increase Authentic Learning, Student Motivation, and Positive Learning Outcomes
プロジェクト名: 上気同

Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study
研究に参加する同意書

Why am I being asked to take part in this research study?
あなたがこの研究への参加を依頼された理由

Why is this research study being done?
この研究が実施される理由

We are inviting you to take part in a research study. This form will tell you about the study, but the researcher will explain it to you first. You may ask this person any questions that you have. When you are ready to make a decision, you may tell the researcher if you want to participate or not. You do not have to participate if you do not want to. If you decide to participate, the researcher will ask you to sign this statement and will give you a copy to keep.

この同意書は本研究についての記載がありますが、本研究の研究者が最初に説明を実施します。もし不明点があればこの研究者に質問することができます。研究に参加・不参加することを決心したら研究者に申し出てください。参加したくない場合は参加する必要はありません。参加する場合は、研究者はあなたにこの同意書にサインを依頼し、あなたにそのコピーを渡します。

We are asking you to be in this study because you are a native Japanese university student that has gone through the Japanese educational system your whole life. As a result, you have valuable insight and experience related to Japanese teaching practices.

私たちがあなたへ研究への参加を依頼した理由は、あなたは日本の大学に通う日本人であり、これまで日本の教育を受けてきたからです。このため、あなたは日本の教育方法に対する貴重な見識と経験を有すると考えられます。

The purpose of this study is to examine the lived experiences of Japanese university students to gain a better understanding of the problems of a lack of authentic learning, disengagement, and student burnout through the lens of transformational leadership.

This qualitative study, based on in-depth interviews with Japanese students will be guided by the overarching question: How do students at a Japanese university perceive transformational leadership qualities in their professors or instructors? This topic is
important, as there is a teaching crisis in many Japanese university classrooms. By continuing with the current model adopted by many teachers, students feel they are not learning or gaining any skills for their future jobs. Moreover, many students claim that increased apathy towards classes and burnout is the result of poor teaching practices and leadership skills by their instructors. The sub-questions that will guide this study are:

この研究の目的は、日本の大学生のありのままの経験を調査して、本質的な学習の欠如、授業への取り組み、そして生徒のやる気の燃え尽きについての問題を変革的リーダーシップの概念を通してより理解することです。

この研究は、“日本の大学生は教授や指導官のリーダーシップの変革をどのように知覚するか”をテーマとし、日本人学生のインタビューに基づいて進めてられています。近年では、日本の大学の授業スタイルは危機的な状況であり、このトピックは非常に重要です。教師によって現状のモデルが継続的に変更されることにより、学生は将来の仕事のためのスキルを何も学んでいないように感じています。さらに多くの学生が、教授や指導官の授業の進め方が乏しい結果、授業に対する関心が低下し燃え尽きてしまうと感じています。本研究は以下のサブクエスチョンに基づいています。

1. What aspects of transformational leadership do university professors at your school engage in that contribute to authentic learning?
   あなたが学ぶ大学の教授は、本質的な学習に寄与する変革的なリーダーシップのどの側面に従事しているか。

2. What aspects of transformational leadership do university professors at your school engage in that contribute to engagement?
   あなたが学ぶ大学の教授は、授業従事に寄与する変革的なリーダーシップのどの側面に従事しているか。

3. What aspects of transformational leadership do university professors at your school engage in that contribute to increased intrinsic motivation?
   あなたが学ぶ大学の教授は、内発的動機の強化に寄与する変革的なリーダーシップのどの側面に従事しているか。

What will I be asked to do?
研究参加者に取り組んでもらうこと
If you decide to take part in this study, we will ask you to participate in an interview in which you will answer twenty questions regarding your learning experiences at Komazawa University (See Appendix 4). If you decide to participate, you will first be asked to decide on a date and time of your convenience for the interview. After meeting the student researcher will go over the process of the interview. You will then be asked to sign an informed consent form after receiving a full explanation of the study (See Appendix 5). During the questions portion of the interview, participants will meet the interviewer, take a seat and be recorded using a handheld recording device. The interview will also be transcribed using the Speechnotes program on the student researcher’s computer. There are no foreseeable plans for a follow-up interview, however if an answer is unclear you may be asked to clarify or explain your answer further.

この研究に参加する場合は、インタビューに参加し、駒沢大学での授業に関する20個の質問に答えていただきます（Appendix 4）。参加者の都合の良い日時を基にインタビューの日時が決定されます。インタビューの当日には、まず研究者からインタビューの手順に関する説明があります。その後、研究の説明（Appendix 5）があり、最後に研究への参加同意書に署名をしていただきます。インタビュー中については、参加者は着席してもらい、レコーダーによって回答を記録させていただきます。録音された回答はSpeechnotesというアプリで文字に起こされますが、追加のインタビューの予定はありません。回答が不明確である場合は別途追加の質問や説明を依頼する場合があります。

Where will this take place and how much of my time will it take?

Interviews will be conducted during the duration of July 20th, 2019 to August 5th, 2019. Interviews will last 60-90 minutes per participant. Interviews will be done in a private room on the campus of Komazawa University.

Research period and duration: This research will take place from July 25th, 2019 to August 5th, 2019. The interviews will last approximately 60-90 minutes per participant. Interviews will be conducted in a private room on the campus of Komazawa University.

Will there be any risk or discomfort to me?

研究に参加することによるリスクや不快
There is no foreseeable risk or discomfort; however, one could argue that there are two risks associated with this study. The first is that your confidentiality and your teachers may be compromised. This may be due to a data breach. The second risk has to do with the psychological burden you may have towards critiquing your instructors.

In order to protect against the first risk mentioned in the paragraph above, the student researcher will keep all of your data and answers in a set of two USB sticks that will be locked in the same file cabinet that the signed informed consent form are located. The USB sticks will be protected with a password that only the researcher will know. These USB sticks will be kept for three years following the study, and then destroyed.

In order to safeguard against the second risk mentioned above, the student researcher will delete your name or course titles from the actual dissertation. All data will be kept in the locked file cabinet and on a password-protected storage device that belongs to the student researcher solely. Nothing that you say can be traced back to you.

前もって予見できるリスクと不快はありませんが、研究に関する 2 つのリスクがあります。
まず第一に参加者と参加者の教師に関する情報が漏洩する可能性があります。第二に教師に対して批評することによる参加者の精神的な負荷です。

参加者の情報を守るために、全てのデータはパスワードで保護された 2 つの USB に保存されます。そしてそれらは同意書とともに鍵付きのキャビネットで保管されます。USB のデータは 3 年間保管され、その後破棄されます。

参加者の精神的な負荷に関しては、研究者は参加者の名前や学科情報を博士論文の中に記載することはありません。全てのデータはパスワードで保護されたストレージデバイスに保存され鍵付きのキャビネットで保管され、研究者のみアクセスすることができ、参加者を特定することはできません。

| Will I benefit by being in this research? |
| この研究に参加することによる利益 |

There will be no direct benefit to you for taking part in the study. However, the information learned from this study may contribute to the body of knowledge surrounding teaching practices at universities in Japan and around the world.
この研究に参加することによる直接的な利益はありません。しかしながら、この研究で得られた情報は日本や世界の教育方法に関する知見へ寄与されます。

Who will see the information about me?
参加者の情報へのアクセス

Your part in this study will be confidential. Only the researchers on this study will see the information about you. No reports or publications will use information that can identify you in any way or any individual as being of this project.

All data will only be accessible by the student researcher. In order to maintain anonymity, the student researcher will not transcribe any names or course titles. All data will be kept solely by student researcher on two separate USB sticks that will have passwords. All transcription will be done using the Speechnotes program and then checked by the student researcher, thus eliminating the access of data to anyone else. The data will be used for the dissertation and then will be kept on a password-protected storage device following the study. This data will be kept for three years and then disposed of.

この研究におけるあなたの情報はコンフィデンシャルとして扱われます。この研究の研究者のみ情報をアクセスすることができます。この研究に基づくいかなる報告書、出版物において、参加者を特定され得る情報が記載されることがありません。

匿名性を守るために、あなたの名前や学部情報が文字に起される事はありません。書き起こされた情報はパスワードのかかった2つのUSBメモリーに保管され、研究者によって保管されます。文字への書き起こしはSpeechnotesというアプリで行った後に研究者が確認するため、研究者以外に情報にアクセスすることはありません。全ての情報は、研究者の博士論文のために使用されます。その後の研究のためパスワードで保護されたストレージデバイスで3年間保管された後に破棄されます。

If I do not want to take part in the study, what choices do I have?
研究に参加したくない場合どうすれば良いか

You have the choice not to participate in the study.
あなたにはこの研究に参加しないという選択があります。
What will happen if I suffer any harm from this research?
この研究に参加したことで何か損害を受けた場合

No special arrangements will be made for compensation or for payment for treatment solely because of participation in this research.

この研究に参加したことにより、治療のための補償や支払いがされることはありません。

Can I stop my participation in this study?
この研究への参加を取りやめる場合

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You do not have to participate if you do not want to and you can refuse to answer any question. Even if you begin the study, you may quit at any time. If you do not participate or if you decide to quit, you will not lose any rights, benefits, or services that you would otherwise have as a student.

この研究への参加は参加者の任意です。従って、もし参加したくない場合は参加する必要はなく、質問に答える必要もありません。研究が始まってしまっても参加者はいつでも参加を取りやめることができます。途中で参加を取りやめてもあなたの生徒としての権利や利益、サービスを損なうことはありません。
Appendix 5

Background and Explanation of Transformational Leadership

Please read this document about the background of the study and an explanation of transformational leadership. Because this study will focus on your genuine experiences, please think deeply of your own time at university and how these theories may be applied to your own personal experiences.

Many praise the Japanese educational system, as it is regularly high in international rankings for literacy, math, and scientific literacy. In 2015, the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) placed Japanese 15-year-olds as second in scientific literacy, eighth in reading, and fifth in math. However, upon closer examination, the reality is different; according to a report by *The Times Higher Education* (2018), only two Japanese universities were ranked within the top 100 in the world in 2018. Part of this disparity may be attributed to what many scholars claim is an ineffective higher educational system. Other critics of the Japanese educational system argue that the system is simply a revolving wheel, producing generic graduates with obsolete skills. An article by the *Japan Times* stated that “Even up to the most rarefied ranks, some universities may engage in a kind of token academia, offering all but a time-
out between entrance exams and employment, the re-disciplining after playtime. Their real energy is put into part-time jobs, clubs, and sports”

One of the causes of the crisis in higher education in Japan is the issue of teaching quality amongst its professors. The quality of instruction is often seen as the most important factor in positive learning outcomes. This dissertation seeks to contribute to the scholarly body of knowledge surrounding the lack of authentic learning and student engagement in many Japanese university classrooms. Specifically, the purpose of this qualitative study is to better understand the phenomena that inhibit authentic learning and promote classroom disengagement and burnout in the Japanese university system. It will use a concept known as transformational leadership.

Transformational leadership denotes a type of leadership, which motivates, raises morale, enhances motivation, and increases job performance. There are four overarching characteristics of transformational leadership:

1. Idealized Influence: Idealized influence denotes transformational leaders who become role models for followers through evoking admiration, respect, and trust. Not only do transformational leaders place followers’ needs above their own, but they also display behavior that is consistent with the values and principles of the group.

2. Inspirational motivation: Transformational leaders motivate followers by providing meaning and challenge to tasks. They do not simply give tasks, such as homework and exchange them for something else such as points towards a grade but they also encourage team spirit.

3. Intellectual stimulation: Transformational leaders stimulate innovation and creativity. They do so by encouraging followers to question assumptions, reframe situations, and approach old problems from new perspectives.

4. Individualized Consideration: Transformational leaders act as coaches or mentors who foster personal development. They provide learning opportunities and a supportive climate for growth. Their coaching and mentoring are tailored to the individual needs and desires of each follower.

If you have any questions or don't understand anything please feel free to email me.

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背景と変革的なリーダーシップの説明

本研究と変革的なリーダーシップの説明に関するこのドキュメントを呼んでください。この研究はあなたの正直な経験にフォーカスしているため、あなたの自身の大学生活とこれらの理論があなたの個人的な経験にどのように当てはまるかどうかをじっくり考えてください。

多くの人々が日本の教育システムを賛賛しています。これは識字能力、数学、科学的能力の国際ランキングにおいて日本は常に高い順位にあるためです。2015年に
International Student Assessment (PISA)のプログラムが15歳の日本人に対して実施され、日本は科学的能力で2位、読解で8位、数学で5位という結果でした。しかしながら、その後の詳細な調査では異なる結果が得られました。The Times Higher Education (2018)による報告書では、2018年において、日本のたった2つの大学しか世界のトップ100校に含まれていません。この相違の理由の一つは、多くの学者が主張している非効率な高等教育システムかもしれません。日本の教育システムに関するその他の批判として、システムは単純に機能しているが、時代遅れの能力を持った画一的な卒業生しか生み出さないというもので、Japan Timesによる記事は、“もっとも希少なランクであっても、いくつかの大学は、入学試験と就職までの間の全て、もしくは一時的なタイムアウト、プレイタイム後の再訓練を提供しています。学生の本当のエネルギーはアルバイトやクラブ活動に費やされているのです”と伝えています。

日本の高等教育の危機の原因の一つは、教育者たちによる教育の質です。指導の質は、好ましい学習環境におけるもっとも重要な要因として考えられています。この博士論文では、多くの日本の大学の教室で見られる、本質的な学習の欠如と生徒の関わり合いの欠如に関する学術的な知識体系に寄与することを目的としています。特にこの質的研究の目的は、日本の大学システムにおける、本質的学習を阻害して生徒のクラスでの関わりを抑制し、生徒が燃え尽きる現象をよりよく理解することです。この研究では変革的なリーダーシップという概念が使用されています。

変革的なリーダーシップはある種のリーダーシップで、動機付けして士気をあげ、モチベーションや仕事のパフォーマンスを向上させます。以下の4つの項目は非常に重要な変革的なリーダーシップの特徴です。

1. 理想化された影響：変革的なリーダーであり、彼/彼女はメンバーのロールモデルとして賞賛と尊敬、信頼を引き起こし、彼/彼女は、自己のためにメンバーの助けを利用してだけでなく、グループの価値観と原理に一貫した行動を示します。
2. 心に強く訴える動機：変革的なリーダーは作業の意味と挑戦を示してメンバーを動機付けします。彼/彼女は宿題のように単に作業を与えることはせず、また成績に繋がるポイントのような何かと引き換えに作業させることもしません。代わりにチームの士気を促進します。
3. 知的な刺激：変革的なリーダーはインパセッションや創造性を刺激します。彼/彼女は、メンバーに対して仮説を投げかけ、状況の枠組みを再構築し、過去の問題を新たな視点からアプローチすることを奨励します。
4. 個々に対する配慮：変革的なリーダーはコーチやメンターのように個人の成長を育むように行動します。彼/彼女は学習の場を成員のための環境を提供します。そのコーチングやメンタリングの手法は、メンバー個々の必要性と要望に応じてカスタマイズされます。

質問や不明点があれば、遠慮なく以下のメールアドレスに問い合わせください。