

JSPS 'Fellows' Experience for JSPS London website

Fellow: Dr Esther Dermott  
Home Institution: Bristol University  
School of Sociology, Politics and International Studies  
Scheme: International Long Stay Visiting Fellowship  
Research Title: Parenting Practices in Japan: Definition, Measurement and Relationships  
Dates: September – December 2014 (4months)  
Host: Professor Kimio Ito / Professor Emiko Ochiai  
Host Institution: Kyoto University  
Department of Sociology  
Graduate School of Letters

The primary aim of the research fellowship was to begin to develop comparisons on how parenting is practiced and measured between the UK and Japan. Parenting is increasingly presented as extremely important for children's wellbeing. Yet what constitutes 'parenting', and how the relationship between parenting, material resources, and outcomes for children operates is not well understood. Looking at Japanese expectations of parents and related policies can contribute to disentangling the concept of 'parenting' in general and the fellowship was designed as an exploratory piece of work in order to examine how best to take this forward.

During the fellowship I presented analysis from UK research work to Japanese audiences, had a range of research meetings with Japanese academics working on various aspects of parenting and family culture, observed a kindergarten and nursery, began to develop collaborative writing and research projects with two colleagues, and acted as a keynote speaker and discussant at a conference for early career researchers.

Three Tips. 1) Bring a lot of gifts as you should bring something every time you have a one-to-one meeting and it is nicer if they are from your home country (small, light, and nicely packaged is ideal – not necessarily expensive). 2) Remember to get business cards printed and carry them with you. 3) Private accommodation is difficult to organise in Japan and expensive if you are staying less than a year. If you are not offered accommodation by your host University then try long-term hotels or airbnb.

Esther Dermott, [esther.dermott@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:esther.dermott@bristol.ac.uk)