

Results report – Keio Academic Society

Title : Becoming a Mother Far From Home

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Purpose of my study :

« Becoming a mother away from home » is a research that aims at uncovering the experience of French migrant mothers in Japan married to Japanese husbands. In order to do so, we will analyze their discourse with a psychoanalytic approach rooted in the intercultural psychology paradigm that implies a complementary view of the human mind. A mind whose productions are from biological, psychological and cultural process. Based on this, we may witness how Japanese cultural context influences our participant's very own cultural representations regarding motherhood and how it translates in mother-child relationships to end up at the roots of an individual's narrative identity.

My research aims at reporting on the impact of a given situation (migration) on the internal world of individuals (subjective and conscious discourse, affects, representations, fantasies and unresolved conflicts repressed into the unconscious).

Methodology : Recordings of mother-infant interactions while conducting interviews at the mother's house.

Results :

Number of participants : 8 (4 mothers and 4 babies)

1st observations: The impact of COVID19 on mothers whose babies were born during various states of emergencies in 2020 and 2021 has been greatly felt and often talked about during the interviews especially regarding the time spent at hospital during birth. Cultural differences regarding pre-birth care (such as dietary restrictions) and post birth care (such as breastfeeding practices) have been found to have a great impact on the mother psychological health. It seems to have foster or deepen attachment issues that were observed during the interviews during mother-baby interactions. The Japanese medical team's effort to connect with the mother and break the language barrier was quoted by the mothers as a very positive experience, making mothers feel more comfortable even when some were already fluent in Japanese.