

My Reflections as a Miura Professor during Spring 2002



It was in the Spring Quarter of 2002 when I was selected for visiting the Chubu University campus at Kasugai, Japan as a Visiting Miura Professor. My visit was a memorable one. Even now, I some time reflect on those memories which are still fresh in my mind and linger as a breath of fresh air. I had a wonderful time and I cherish every moment of my stay.

Dr. Iyoshi was the President then and Mr. Ohnishi was the Chairman, Board of Trustees of the University. Dr. Okitsugu Yamashita was the Vice president. I believe that now (2009), he is the President.

During my visit I met many outstanding personalities of Chubu University and had an enjoyable lively discussion on many aspects of social and economic issues of Japan and the USA.

I also visited a few graduate classes where we had discussions on the international business management issues of corporate cultures. I remember vividly the interesting discussion on women executives and their management styles and the role of women in Japan society with one group of women who were learning to speak English. Many of these discussions led to interesting research articles in publication in scholarly articles journal and paper presentations in various professional meetings.

During my stay I also gave three public lectures. (1) How to do Business in India- Some perspectives, Tips and Implications for Japan. (2) Japanese Female Managers and the Gender Bias- some Findings Based on a Survey. (3) A Literature Review of Teaching & Faculty Evaluation in Higher education- Some insights on Future Directions.

Right from the day I arrived at the campus, I was given a royal treatment. The hospitality and warmth of Chubu University cannot be explained in words. I felt right at home and never felt

that I do not speak Japanese or that I was a non-Japanese.

Professionally speaking, my stay at Chubu proved for me to be a God-send gift. I met many faculty and administrators who became not only good friends but were also interested in doing collaborative research. Dr. Sasuke Miyazima-- Director of the Center for International programs, Ms. Yuko Yamada , Dr. Michio Takahasi--Associate dean of the Chubu Venture Management School of Business Administration and Professor Makato Ohtsu from the Graduate school of Business Administration at Nanzan University collaborated with me and my husband-Dr. Rajindar koshal on various projects. Actually Dr. Iyoshi was instrumental in introducing us to Dr. Takahasi and Dr. Ohtsu. This project was based on a grant from the Ministry of Education of the Government of Japan. The purpose of the research was to find out what makes an outstanding leader and entrepreneur. Is it true that successful entrepreneurs have some specific leadership qualities and cultural traits? If so, one could then test personalities and select only those individuals who have these qualities and train them for future small businesses. Our findings confirmed to the above hypothesis that was also tested extensively by Dr. Hofstead-the well known authority on leadership qualities.

Our research continued for at least one year after we returned from Chubu. As a result of our collaborative research with Professor Miyazima and Ms. Yamada we presented many papers at various professional meetings of POMS (Production and Operations Management Society), DSI (Decision Sciences Institute), Allied Social Sciences and Midwest Business Association in the U.S.A as well as in other foreign countries.

I learned many cultural implications of Japanese Business such as the impact of Japanese culture and customs on the decision making process. Being a woman helped me in understanding the gender differences in the Management styles of corporate executives in Japan and how it varies from other countries. I also became familiar about woman's role in the traditional society, in the household and how the current changes are revolutionizing the younger women. I was also able to understand the pros and cons of the Pyramid structure of Management as it operated in Japan. I mingled and interacted with various age groups of Japanese society and also visited many places of interest. In this process, I developed a taste for Japanese food especially eating the raw fish—Sashimi.

Overall, my visit at Chubu University as a Visiting Miura Professor was one of the highlights of my career. Both professionally and socially, I enjoyed thoroughly working with the Japanese people. They take time to open up but once they do, they become really true and sincere friends. I am still in contact with many of these friends. I do not know how to thank Chubu University for their superb hospitality and the love, affection and the warmth that they showered on me to make my stay an unforgettable one.