

TREATMENT IN JUVENILE TRAINING SCHOOLS FOR GIRLS IN JAPAN

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I. OUTLINE OF GIRLS ADMITTED TO JUVENILE TRAINING SCHOOLS

A. System of Juvenile Training Schools (JTS)

1. Definition of Delinquent Juveniles in Japan

In Japan, “delinquent juveniles” are defined as juveniles under 20 years of age who committed penal code offences and pre-delinquent juveniles. Specifically, delinquent juveniles include “juvenile offenders” aged 14 or over and “juveniles of illegal behavior” under 14 years of age; “pre-delinquent juveniles” refers to juveniles who have exhibited such behaviour, being deemed likely to result in future offences or violations of criminal laws and regulations, in light of personal character or environment due to a tendency to disobey the lawful supervision of guardians, and so on.

As most delinquent juveniles newly admitted to JTS are over 14 years of age, this paper will focus on the treatment of JTS for delinquent girls from 14 to 19 years of age. In Japan, juveniles of 14 years of age are typically second-year students in junior high school (eighth grade). Twenty years of age is the age of majority (i.e. the age of adulthood).

2. Flow of Juveniles’ Admission to JTS

Since the procedure of delinquent juveniles’ admission to JTS is complicated in Japan, the following explanation only touches on the typical flow. The police and the public prosecutor, as the criminal investigators, should refer all cases of juvenile offenders to the family court. The prefectural governor or the directors of child guidance centers can also refer juveniles of illegal behaviour and pre-delinquent juveniles to the family court.

The family court may order a family court probation officer to conduct an investigation of the juvenile’s family environment. In addition, when it is necessary to conduct a hearing, the family court determines whether protective detention is necessary, which is committing the juvenile to a juvenile classification home (JCH), and the family court may require classification of the juvenile’s predisposition by psychologists at the JCH. In light of the result of the investigation and classification of predisposition, the family court may determine to place the juvenile under protective measures.

The Juvenile Law prescribes three protective measures: 1. probationary supervision, 2. commitment to a support facility for development of self-sustaining capacity or to a children’s home, and 3. commitment to a JTS. Other than referring the case to the public prosecutor for a criminal trial, commitment to a JTS is the most severe disposition for delinquent juveniles because it involves confining juveniles in an institution for treatment.

3. JTS for Girls

In Japan, JTS are single-sex facilities which accommodate either boys or girls. There are 9 JTS for girls placed equally in each district all over Japan. This placement of JTS reflects the thought that it is important for juveniles to maintain good relationships with their families for rehabilitation. Because of the high concentration of medical staff, Medical Juvenile Training Schools, of which there are only two in Japan, accommodate both boys and girls, but they are generally divided into boys’ and girls’ living quarters at the institution.

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B. Characteristics of Girls Admitted to JTS

1. Decrease in Delinquent Girls

The number of girls cleared for non-traffic penal code offences in 2011 decreased significantly to 43.1% in 2002, and their percentage of the total population of the same age group in 2011 also decreased to 50.6% of that in 2002. The number of pre-delinquent girls who were given guidance by the police also decreased from 981 in 2002 to 442 in 2011, and the number of girls referred by police for Stimulant Drug Control Law violations, which is the largest one of the special law offences, sharply decreased from 423 in 2002 to 115 in 2011. In addition, the number of girls referred by the police for prosecution under the Poisonous and Deleterious Substances Control Law violations, such as abusing or possessing paint thinner or other substances, dramatically decreased from 1,075 in 2002 to 40 in 2011. As a result, the number of girls committed to JTS decreased from 554 in 2002 to 329 in 2011, which is a decline of about 59.4%.

Judging from the fact that the 2011 population of girls between 14 and 20 years of age declined to just 85% of the 2002 population, the number of delinquent girls is decreasing faster than the girls' population in the same age group. In connection with these statistics, the number of girls admitted to JTS is also decreasing.

2. Trends of the Type of Delinquency

In 2011, the number of girls cleared for penal code offences was 14,921, and 329 girls were committed to JTS, accounting for 2.2% of the number of cleared girls. The composition of cleared girls by the type of delinquency is different from that of girls admitted to JTS. Larceny makes up the biggest percentage of delinquency in cleared girls, which is 73.2%. 13.9% were cleared for embezzlement, 5.2% for assault, 1.6% for fraud and 0.9% for extortion.

On the other hand, for girls admitted to JTS as penal code offenders, the percentage of larceny offenders is only 35.7%, and that of bodily injury and assault is also 35.7%, while the ratio of extortion is 10.1%. For all girls admitted to JTS, the percentage of larceny offenders is 21.6%, and that of bodily injury and assault is the same. The percentage of Stimulant Drug Control Law violations as special law offences is 20.7%, and the percentage of pre-delinquent girls is 10.6%. In addition, the ratio of cleared girls for heinous offences — including homicide, robbery, arson and rape — in all penal code offences of female juveniles is only 0.4%, or 55 girls, but the ratio of girls committed to JTS for heinous offences for all girls admitted to JTS is 6.4%, or 21 girls. We should provide treatment for admitted girls based on their above-mentioned characteristics. We further recognize that the number of girls cleared for Stimulant Drug Control Law violations largely decreased to 27% in the last 10 years, and the number of girls committed to JTS for the same delinquency also decreased to 38% in the same period.

3. Age Trends

We should not overlook the effect of age or the developmental stage on juvenile delinquency. According to the statistics in 2011, 22.8% of those admitted to JTS were 16 year olds (the largest percentage of girls admitted), and 15 year olds were 20.1% of those admitted. In the last 10 years, the trend of girls' ages when newly committed to JTS did not show a specific tendency though there was some fluctuation. This situation was different from the trend of the composition of age of cleared girls. That is, the number of 14 and 15 year olds has been increasing, while the number of 16 and 17 year olds has been decreasing.

On the other hand, there are some characteristics in the relationship between age and the type of delinquency in girls admitted to JTS. These relationships can be seen by the difference of the type of delinquency in girls admitted to JTS under 16 and over 17 years of age.

For those under 16 years of age, the largest percentage of girls were admitted to JTS for bodily injury and assault, but for those over 17 years of age, the largest percentage were admitted for drug offences.

As a result, the percent distribution of offences of delinquent girls admitted to JTS who are 17 years of age or over is almost equal to that of adult females, as the number of Stimulant Drug Control Law

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violations is the largest followed by larceny. In other words, the guidance for girls under 16 years of age should focus on preventing violent delinquency; for girls over 17 years of age, we should make greater efforts to educate on drug abuse.

Of course, the number of girls committing larceny is large in all age groups. Seventy-seven percent of girls who committed larceny engaged in shoplifting and 18% of them stole vehicles, such as bicycles, and so on. We should take such detailed modes of larceny committed by girls into consideration in order to provide appropriate treatment for them.

4. Family Conditions of Girls

We must not overlook the relationship between girls and their families, especially their mothers, in the correctional education for girls. According to the result of the *Comprehensive Study about Causes of Delinquency* by the Cabinet Office in 2009, compared with the general group of girls, delinquent girls share the characteristic of having poor family support because most of them come from single-parent families without a father.

In addition, the study points out characteristics of delinquent girls which are different from those of delinquent boys. There are many female juveniles who have experiences where they were exposed to violence from parents in their childhood; they do not want to be like their mothers (the same sex parent), and they feel that their parents do not love them. In light of the reality in JTS, those results are convincing.

It is the bad relationship between a girl and her mother that is regarded as the risk factor for delinquency in the early part of youth (adolescence), at the time of junior high school and the early days of high school, and such a bad relationship is also considered as a risk factor for mental disorders. On the other hand, for male delinquent juveniles the negative image of parents is not so remarkable, and that point shows the difference between boys and girls.

According to the statistics of the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) for newly admitted juveniles to JTS, twice as many girls than boys were diagnosed with some mental problem, and overall 20% of girls received such diagnoses in 2011.

Considering family relations and the negative factors coming from those relations, it is necessary for delinquent girls to experience the support of adult females who are role models for the girls as a part of the correctional education for female juveniles in JTS. In other words, delinquent girls must be raised appropriately by ideal adult females. In Japan, we call such actions to “bring up again” or “grow up again”, and it is also important for girls to improve their relationships with their parents, especially their mothers.

5. Discussion from the Viewpoint of Relapse Prevention

In Japan, various studies — for example, the study by the Research and Training Institute, MOJ, in the White Paper on Crime 2011 — points out that one of the most serious causes of reoffending by juveniles is the revival of associations with delinquent peers.

To prevent resuming acquaintances with undesirable friends, as mentioned above, it is important for juveniles, especially for girls, to find a place to call their own, not only in their homes but also in their schools or places of work. Most delinquent juveniles drop out of school because they do not feel comfortable there, which comes from a lack of scholastic abilities. Therefore, we should consider such situations for preventing commission of delinquency again. Of course, juveniles must acquire the skill to construct appropriate human relationships in order to refrain from resuming associations with delinquent peers.

II. MEASURES DEvised TO DEAL WITH PROBLEMS OF DELINQUENT GIRLS IN JTS

A. **Targets for Correctional Education**

In the former part, the following points are clarified as issues for correctional education for

delinquent girls in JTS:

- Focusing on violent behaviour of junior juveniles and drug abuse of senior juveniles
- Being accepted and supported by adult females as the model for girls
- Improving the relationship with the juvenile's parents, especially her mother
- Recovering and promoting scholastic ability
- Acquiring the skill to construct appropriate human relations

In the latter part, measures devised to deal with those targets will be discussed, based on the present treatment in JTS for girls in Japan.

B. Treatment Focusing on the Violent Behaviour of Junior Juveniles and Drug Abuse of Senior Juveniles

In JTS, correctional education for each juvenile is carried out based on an individualized treatment plan, and problems of violent behaviour and drug abuse are mainly dealt with in the programme for improving the juvenile's ways of thinking and attitude towards social life. The outline of the correctional education system is shown below.

When juveniles are admitted to JTS, instructors formulate an individualized treatment plan as a correctional education plan for each juvenile based on (1). the results of classification in JCH, (2). the report of the social environment investigation by the family court, and (3). information from the juveniles themselves immediately after admission to JTS.

Instructors set goals of correctional education from the viewpoint of relapse prevention and decide contents and methods of training for developing step-by-step instructions to achieve those goals. Programmes dealing with violence of junior juveniles consist of both group guidance and individual guidance. The programmes include contents to have juveniles understand their own impulsiveness, to have them learn how to control their emotions, to have them consider the harmfulness of violent actions from the viewpoint of victims, and so on.

On the other hand, the newly developed programme for drug-abusing juveniles started last year. This programme is based on cognitive behavioural therapy, and it is different from the programme for adults. The programme for juveniles emphasizes guidance for parents, and it is not placed as an independent programme but as one of the core programmes within comprehensive treatment programmes in JTS.

Incidentally, when correctional education is carried out, we should not forget the girls' strong feelings that they are victims and the necessity of addressing these feelings. As a matter of course, most girls committed to JTS have the status of victimizer. At the same time, however, a lot of girls admitted to JTS are also victims; throughout their life histories, they have received ill-treatment or have been exposed to violence, including sexual abuse or crime. As a result, such a sense of victimhood based on their own experiences may obstruct their ability to think about their own victimizing behaviour. Therefore, we must firstly make girls take care of their own feelings about their bitter experiences. After that, while grasping girls' feelings, and having girls consider their delinquency and victimization at the same time, we can realize effective correctional education.

Considering those situations, the next section will discuss the importance of accepting and supporting girls sufficiently.

C. Being Accepted and Supported by Adult Females as the Model for Girls

The foundation for the treatment system of JTS in Japan consists of the dormitory system and the individual instructor system, and those systems make it possible for adult females to serve as role models for the girls. The dormitory system means that juveniles belong to a dormitory in place of their

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home, and the dormitory staff members are in charge of caring for the juveniles who live together in the dormitory. Juveniles wake up in the dormitory, go to classrooms or vocational practice rooms in JTS during the daytime, go back to the dormitory in the evening, and interact with each other until bedtime around 9:00 p.m.

Generally, each dormitory accommodates 10 to 20 juveniles, and about 6 instructors are assigned to each dormitory. They take turns being on duty in the dormitory and take care of juveniles 24 hours a day, playing the role of parents. In the daytime, dormitory instructors also provide juveniles with academic education, vocational training, physical education, and so on. Dormitory instructors are, so to speak, role models as parents and working members of society.

On the other hand, the role of an individual instructor for juveniles under his/her charge is to assess and understand the juveniles' problems, to evaluate the level of attainment of the juveniles' respective targets, to manage the relationship between juveniles and parents, and to guide the educational or vocational choices and the life planning after release from JTS. An individual instructor is, so to speak, a coordinator or a counsellor for arranging contents and methods of correctional education, and for advising the suitable future of each juvenile through grasping the juvenile's detailed information in all fields. Juveniles may look upon instructors as their guardians.

It is necessary for instructors to establish close rapport with juveniles early after the admission, and to deepen understanding about juveniles as soon as possible. It is not easy for instructors, however, to build such relationships with girls because they have distrust of adults coupled with their sense of victimhood, as mentioned above. Therefore, instructors should start by accepting girls' present situations for constructing relationships, and after establishing rapport with the girls, instructors are asked to develop guidance step by step with a supportive attitude towards the girls.

In order to play such roles, JTS staff members are required to have strong abilities to provide guidance counselling for the girls. As a rule, JTS instructors for girls are employed from successful candidates of the employment examination for professional staff in the MOJ. Most of them may have completed some university or graduate school courses related to human science, like psychology, sociology, pedagogy, social welfare, and so on. Because they should have such expertise, they are strongly expected to acquire various practical guidance skills continuously through the systematic staff training courses.

The problem we recognize is that there are poor measures of bridging the gap between the life in JTS and life at home after the juveniles' release, especially when the adult role model is changed from the instructor to the juvenile's mother. Thus, it is important for girls to improve their relationships with their mothers; this point will be addressed in the next section.

D. Improving the Relationship with the Juvenile's Parents, Especially Mothers

According to the statistics of the MOJ in 2011, the ratio of female juveniles whose only guardians were their mothers was over 45% for girls newly admitted to JTS, and the ratio was larger than that of male juveniles (39%). Incidentally, in 2002, the ratio of female juveniles newly admitted to JTS whose only guardians were their mothers was about 34%, and that of male juveniles was about 27%. Judging only from these numbers, it is clear that the parental situation of juveniles committed to JTS has grown more and more severe over the last ten years. In addition, although there are not adequate statistics, many instructors feel that the numbers of parents who have no proper advisor or who are mentally unstable are increasing. In those cases, all that the parents can do is to maintain their own lives, and they seem unable to take care of their children.

Originally, the JTS had no legal authority to directly advise the juveniles' parents, so instructors had to deal with them as a part of correctional education for juveniles. Fortunately, in 2007, a new provision was added to the Juvenile Training School Law, which permits instructors of JTS to guide or advise parents directly, and various measures have been started.

It is essential for girls, as stated before, to improve their relationships with their parents, especially their mothers, for preventing delinquency. Accordingly, it is necessary for JTS to guide parents not

passively but actively, and to support parents for constructing new relationships with juveniles early after their admission to JTS, foreseeing their family life after release.

E. Recovering and Promoting Scholastic Ability

In Japan, compulsory education is carried out until children reach 15 years of age, i.e. graduating junior high school. However, the percentage of students who go on to high school is over 90% at present, and a variety of licenses or certifications beneficial for job hunting often require being over 18 years of age, and in Japan the age of adulthood is 20 years of age. Moreover, the scholastic ability suitable for the age is also connected with finding a place and appropriate friends in school.

Considering such social situations, it is important to provide opportunities for academic study not only for junior high school students committed to JTS but for all juveniles who are committed to JTS after graduating from junior high school. JTS has a system in which full-time and part-time licensed staff teach academic subjects, and they can tailor their individual teaching styles according to each juvenile's scholastic ability and desired life path after release. Since 2007, juveniles in JTS have been able to take the certificate examination for students achieving the proficiency level of high school graduates. This is of great significance because the opportunity of getting a national academic qualification is offered to juveniles even in the correctional institution. That examination is effective as it gives juveniles a practical target for academic learning.

On the other hand, in JTS, academic education has only been provided for junior high school students, and not for graduates of junior high schools. In the future, however, we need to put a great deal of effort into the academic education of graduates from junior high schools because the progress of basic scholastic ability may help juveniles obtain useful qualifications for job hunting, and to go to high school, vocational school, or university. In addition, the advancement of scholastic ability has the function of improving self-respect and increasing self-confidence. As a result, that function must be useful to decrease the possibility of recommitment of delinquency, so the importance of academic education cannot be overemphasized. Of course, we need to take into account that, for juveniles newly admitted to JTS, the ratio of girls whose IQ scores are under 80 was 34% in 2011, which is higher than the ratio of boys, 19%.

F. Acquiring the Skill to Construct Appropriate Human Relations

In JTS, measures to train skills for constructing appropriate human relations are social skills training (SST) and role-playing. Juveniles learn how to refuse temptation from undesirable peers after release, how to behave appropriately in the workplace, and how to communicate with other students in school or with family, and so on. Because it is not sufficient for juveniles only to acquire the skill of constructing adequate human relations, juveniles should try to use and develop the skill for smoothing the interchange of feelings through experiences in daily life. Therefore, the task we must tackle is to prepare circumstances where juveniles can learn adequate human relations through life in JTS. In order to realize this task, it is important for us to always maintain the instructors' high ability for managing dormitories and the institution.

III. CONCLUSION

Social conditions and public services for juveniles after release from JTS are not enough to prevent their recommitment of delinquency, considering the present situation of Japanese society. Only the juveniles and their parents are responsible for recommitting delinquency or not recommitting it. Because Japan is now confronted with the sharp progress of aging, we are apprehensive that people may fail to notice the importance of raising juveniles, since many are preoccupied with the problem of aging. Enriching education for children means not only constructing the educational system, but it also means recognizing once again the importance of all people involved in raising children in society.