

JAPANESE YOUTH CULTURE

— Patterns of Thinking and Behaviour of
Japanese High School Students —

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1. Introduction

This paper aims to briefly discuss Japanese Youth Culture in the 1990 s, a culture surrounded by the influences of an abundance of material goods of a Mass Media Society. Generally speaking the age category of “youth” is a broad range of adolescents in the pubescent years from around 13 to 14 years old to young adults around the ages of 24 to 25. I would especially like to limit my discussion of “youth” to high school students in the middle years of their youth experience, those around the ages of 15 to 18 years old.

The “culture” of youth culture in a more detailed sense can consist of mind set or way of thinking and behaviour style or daily lifestyle. However in this paper, the aspect of youth culture I would like to highlight, like a sub section under the umbrella of the whole of youth culture, is the common behaviour and way of thinking of Japanese high school students set out in an outlining description of their daily lifestyle.

Japanese high school culture varies greatly depending on a school’s ranking. This

paper will attempt to focus on issues applying to most students attending middle level ranking public high schools. Japanese high schools are generally split into two levels, junior high school, the equivalent of Australia's Year 7, 8 and 9 and senior high school, the equivalent of Australia's Year 10, 11 and 12.

2. Japanese Youth Culture and Its Background

Australian young people all possess different characteristics such as their face, colour of their skin and hair, however for Japanese youth these aspects change very little from person to person.

In Japan, fashion, music and sports are a common interest among young people. Tennis, F1 Racing are popular conversation topics, however Japanese know very little about such sports as Australian Rules Football and Cricket. Stores such as McDonalds, KFC, Pizza Hut and Seven Eleven are common in Japan. Hungry Jacks and Red Rooster do not operate in Japan. In Japan this kind of modern development would have been unthinkable 30 years ago. This is an example of the rapid progress towards the globalisation of Japan's daily culture and is a scene common in the development of all industrial societies.

It can be said that Youth Culture is a sub culture. To understand it you need to fully understand the history of the Japanese school system, the current situation and trends and the make up "Adult Culture".

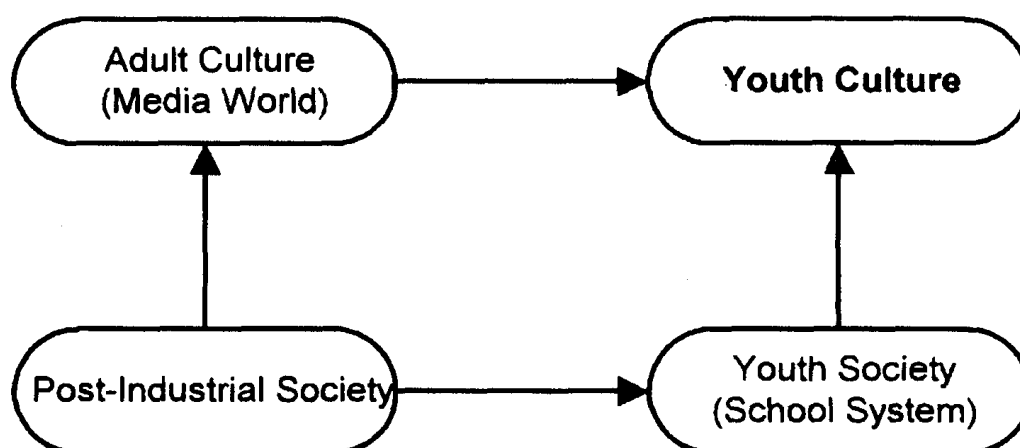


Figure 1: Background of Youth Culture

A poetic description of where Youth Culture lies in the cultural structure of Japan, could be presented as: “The flower of Youth Culture grows in the soil of Youth Society and blossoms under the sunlight of the main and ruling culture, Adult Culture”.

Japanese Adult Culture is filled with evidence of a developing post-industrial society, namely the existence of Mass Media. On the other hand however, Youth Society is built on a traditional system of merit. Competition to enter a good university is growing more and more intense for Japanese youth.

Two key words in understanding Japanese Youth Culture are; Mass Media and the School System. These are two words to be kept in mind for the remainder of the paper.

3. The School Life of Japanese High School Students

Firstly it is important to look at the kind of school life that Japanese high school student lead. It is quite different from that of Australian high school students. The main

lifestyle areas of Japanese high school students are HOME, SCHOOL and SOCIAL LIFE.

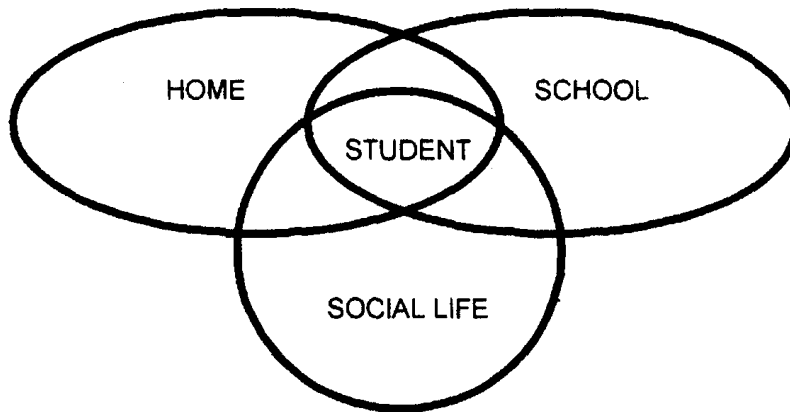


Figure 2: Youth Lifestyle Areas

The HOME is where children are brought up and are cared for in a warm environment. However in the home, parents are in control and their word is final so young people who want independence must distance themselves from their home life. SCHOOL is intended to be a place where essential basic knowledge and skills are taught for when a child finally leaves the nest and ventures out into society. However here, teachers are in control. Therefore only when a young person goes out to enjoy a SOCIAL LIFE with their friends, do they have control and can freely mix with their peers and participate in the world as an independent consumer and worker.

In each country around the world the influences of HOME, SCHOOL and SOCIAL LIFE in a young person's life vary greatly. Therefore I believe that if you study the mix and variation of these three influences, the characteristics and differences of each country's youth would become clear.

3.1 Restrictions on Japanese High School Students

On average Japanese high school student are kept at school for 36 hours a week. In

schools emphasising university entrance of its students, study hours are long and in other schools extra-curriculum activities tend to take up much time. Recently only two Saturdays a month are holidays for students.

In one school year there are about 215 school days for Japanese students (senior). When comparing this to other countries in the world it is clear that this number is very high. For example, senior high school students attend school at least 35 days more than Australian high schools students.

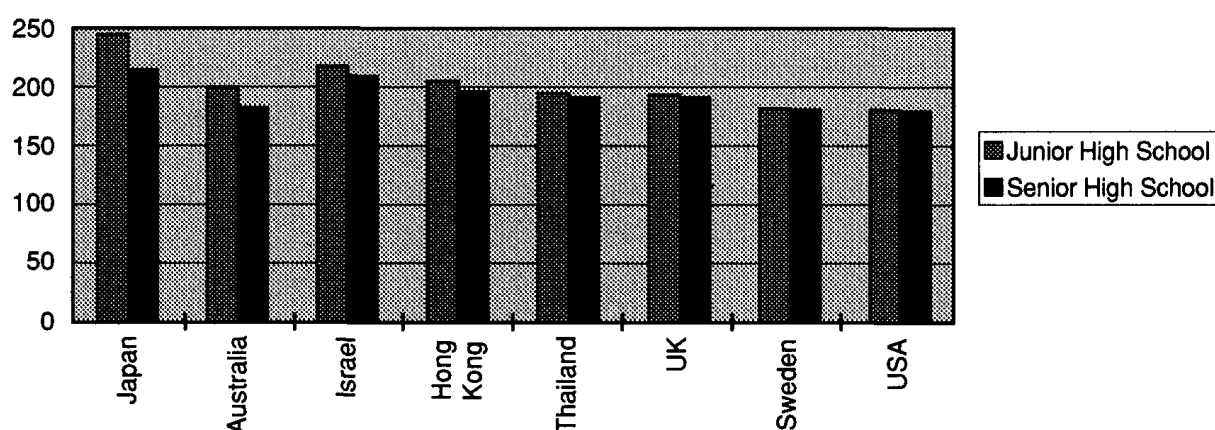


Figure 3: School Days Around the World (one year)

Source: Hello Japan, 1993

Each school day averages to around six hours with one hour of extra-curriculum activity. External sports clubs are not joined by Japanese high school students. In addition to this, the average travelling time to and from school is one and half hours return.

Japanese high schools are famous for their strict rules and especially their high regard for discipline. Rules are restrictive and comprehensive and include such rules regarding minute detail on uniform, outer school personal activities, hair styles, what students bring to school and rules relating to the times which student must arrive and

leave the school premises.

In 1990 in a Kobe public high school, a female student fell victim to a strict school rule and died as a result. The girl was running late to school and had to get through the school's front gates before a certain time. However the teacher on duty, stuck fast to the rule, refused to wait and closed the gate as the girl was trying to get through. She died of a head injury shortly after.

Since then overly strict rules and corporal punishment have been reassessed and the management of the school system has begun to be reconsidered. However this has not yet been successful or sufficient.

3.2 Japanese Home Life - An Extension of School Life

For most, home is a place to rest. However for Japanese high school students, home is a place to study for entrance into university. The mother of the family normally pressures her child to study. Although parents realise their child has very little free time to enjoy themselves, they are competing with other parents and children are constantly compared. They are then unable to let their own children relax as they may not keep up with their peers.

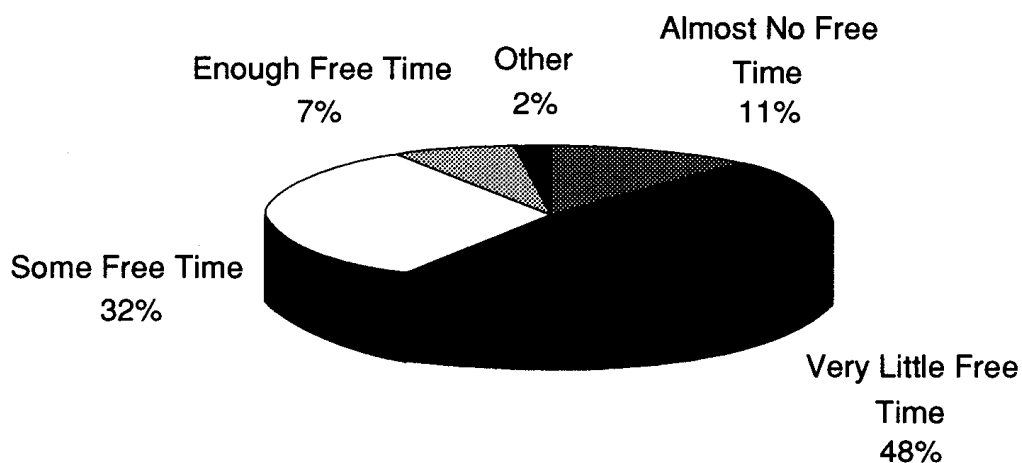


Figure 4: How Much Free Time Does Your Child Have? (1992)

Source: A Data Book of Educational Statistics 1993

Parents who make their primary and junior high school students go to after school cram schools and those who unrelentingly push their children to study seem like they are raising a race horse, whipping them to catch up or beat their peers.

Most children are exempt from housework as they are expected to be studying. In actual fact only 20% of children do any form of housework at all. The time spent doing housework daily for junior high school students is on average is 0-15 minutes. In Japan the whole concept of housework has disappeared almost completely from a child's lifestyle.

Even though houses are quite small in Japan, 80% of high school students have their own bedroom. A private room to themselves is usually allocated for study, but for many students it is a refuge of freedom and a way to avoid their parent's control. Parents do not generally like their children socialising with their peers and they would prefer them spending time by themselves in their bedrooms.

In 1989 however, a young person's bedroom became the scene of a cruel and malicious crime. Seven male youths kidnapped and kept a high school girl locked in a second storey bedroom for 40 days. They repeatedly raped her, then murdered her and buried her in concrete. The youth's parents living downstairs had no idea what was happening in their son's bedroom. This occurrence is an extreme example of how a child's bedroom and study area is a place where parents can enforce no control or intervene in their children's lives.

Around 40% of students study more than 2 hours each day at home, and around 6% study for more than 4 hours a day. However students who do next-to-nothing comprise of 34%. There is a great difference between those who study and those who do not in their study time at home.

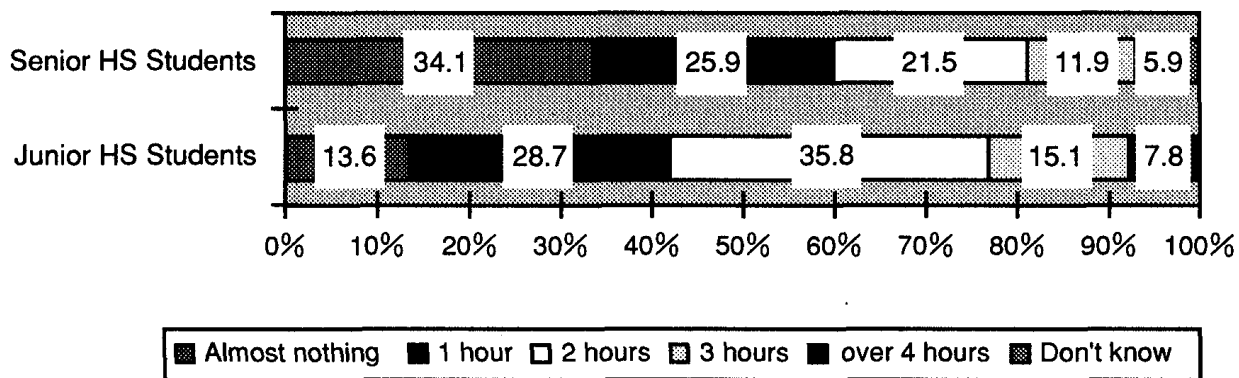


Figure 5: Average Daily Study Hours at Home

Source: Gendai Chugakusei Koukousei no Seikatsu Ishiki, 1995

3.3 Socialising Is Frowned Upon by Parents and Teachers

The reason for this is that it distracts students from their studies and leads to developing a bad lifestyle. Parents and teachers also do not usually agree with students having part time jobs. This is because the purpose in a student's life is to study and study only.

The rate of students going out to socialise after school is only 20%. This 20% usually go to bookshops, music shops and fast food stores. Even on the weekends, students who go out with their friends are few. Students who do go out, go to *karaoke* and amusement centres to name a few.

Students are encouraged to go to after school classes and cram schools instead of going out to see their friends. In junior high school one in every two students go to these after hours cram schools. In senior high school 20% go to these schools. For students in all situations, restrictions in making friendships are great and very few are able to enjoy themselves freely.

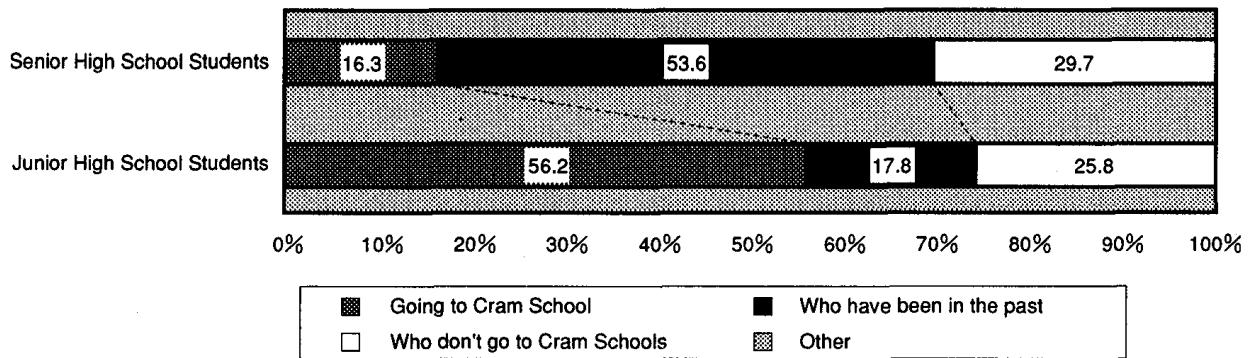


Figure 6: Students Going to After School Cram Schools

Source: Gendai Chugakusei Koukousei no Seikatsu Ishiki, 1995

Harajuku in Tokyo and the *American Village* in Osaka are famous meeting places for high school students where many people wear unique fashion, sing, dance and shop. This self-expression has however become like an outdoor theatre and is not common in Japan.

3.4 Weak Youth Culture

An American cultural anthropologist, Thomas P. Rohlen, who studied Japanese high schools stated that he believed that Japanese Youth Culture was extremely “weak”. The reason for this opinion was that he compared Japanese high schools with those in America. In America youth values, fashion and behavioural patterns are developed outside of the school and are brought in. However in Japan outside friendships are few and therefore outside influences are not able to be brought into the schools to strengthen its youth culture.

It can possibly be said that *School Culture* is made up of a combination of *Student Culture* and *Teacher Culture*. In Japan Student (Youth) Culture is weak and therefore teacher’s control can easily overpower. Teacher Culture therefore guides the direction of School Culture.

Student Culture is certainly weak, however it is not only due to the power of teachers in a student's life, but also to pressure from the outside world such as the strong influence of Mass Media.

Recently in Japan the immoral desires of adults have been enticing young curious high school girls into the excitement of a new, yet seedy lifestyle. Some examples of the work done by these girls include *Terekura* (literally meaning telephone club), which is work involving phone sex with men. *Burusera* is short for bloomers and school sailor blouses and is when high school girls sell their used underpants and school uniforms to sex shops for high prices. Most girls doing this are in full knowledge of what their clothes are to be used for and feel no guilt or shame in this. They see it as exciting to use their sexuality in a business like manner. To top this off this practice has become quite common in Japan over the last five years from 1993.

Enjoukousai, literally translated as "a supporting relationship" is when high school girls receive money for having sexual relationships with men. This is perhaps what you would call a high school prostitute.

This is a current problem in Japan. This can be seen in the December 1996 issue of *Newsweek* featured the headline "Japan's Dirty Secret" including a photograph of a high school girl wearing "loose socks" the latest, yet untidy, fashion in Japan. It seems that many lonely high school girls are drawn in by the temptations of a more adult life. These individual weaknesses and lack of strength in the Youth Culture has led to an increase in the dropout rate for high school students.

3.5 "Degreeocracy" and High Schools in Japan

Japan is very much a country that highly values qualifications. A person's qualifications determine their status in the future. The entry into Japanese high schools

is around 95% with the entrance into universities around 37%. In Japan higher education first became popular 30 years ago.

Even with the same level of education, the ranking of a student's high school or university can them an advantage when looking for work or entering a university. For example, going to a prestigious university such as Tokyo University would ensure a graduate of a position with a good company when starting a career.

Only one in four high school graduates think about looking for work straight out of school. Most high school students want to continue on to universities, TAFE colleges or specialist colleges. The rise in popularity of further education is due to the increase in opportunities for further education. However in reality the difference between schools is so large that the chances to continue with further education varies greatly. Japanese high schools are divided into academic high schools, vocational high schools and part time high schools.

High schools emphasising university entrance is around 74%. A school's prestige is ranked according to the number of students going to good universities upon graduation. Within vocational high schools, there are commercial, technical, agricultural, and domestic science courses. Students from these schools mainly go onto university once graduating. Only 2.6% of students go to part time high schools. Originally these were schools designed for students who were working whilst studying, however they are now attended mainly by school dropouts and are ranked as lowest class schools.

In the school culture, school ranking varies greatly. In top class high schools, teachers can concentrate on the curriculum, however in lower level high schools, teachers often spend more time concentrating on student guidance than teaching the

curriculum.

When going onto a new high schools, guidance counsellors will often recommend not a school that suits the child's needs or wants, but one where the child will be able to pass only. The result of this has been an increase in dropouts due to forcing children to enter a school against their will and to a school that may offer little to cater for their personal interests.

Each year there are around 100,000 dropouts, some 2.1% of all high school students each year. The average for public schools is 15 students per school and 26 students per private school. Compared to America this rate is only one tenth, however the Japanese high school system is not likely to improve in flexibility and so in around ten years there is unlikely to be much improvement.

4. The Lifestyle of Japanese Students

4.1 *Feelings of Self Worth*

If you are a Japanese high school student, your self-esteem and feelings often depend on your school's ranking and your grades. Students who are able to enter prestigious high schools and have good grades can feel confident in themselves and can look forward to a bright future. They are full of confidence. However these feelings of confidence and high levels of optimism are not common. Many students believe that because they are not in the top group of students that they are useless and have no future to look forward to. Their self-esteem and confidence is quite low.

It is, however, found that the few students who give up the idea of entering prestigious universities and companies, that is ignore the outside pressures on them, are

often much more confident and look forward to their future. Figure 12 above is an outline of Japanese students self-assessment compared to others.

The figure above indicates the percentage of students who could answer “yes” to the statements at the bottom of the graph. Respondents are grouped according to their future educational aspirations.

4.2 Values

In a survey I conducted I asked participants to give their choice of the following most desired lifestyles.

1. You should enjoy one day at a time
2. You should spend quality time with those you love
3. You should plan ahead and build a fulfilling life
4. You should strive to make a better world together with others

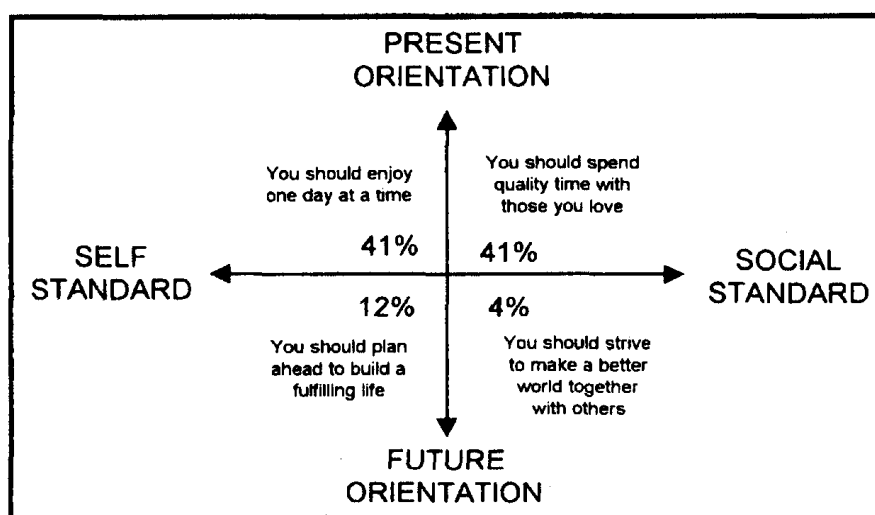


Figure 7: Results of Values Survey

Source: Gendai Chugakusei Koukousei no Seikatsu to Ishiki, 1995

Figure 7 blow sets out the results of this survey.

This gap between students desired lifestyle (present orientation) and their actual

lifestyle (future orientation) leads to a dissatisfaction and therefore a suppression of human energy and motivation. That energy is then lost in their closed world of Mass Media in their private rooms where they are supposed to be blooming into adults. Outside their homes they are drawn into a “street corner culture” of *karaoke* and amusement centres, and there are those lured into the world of high school sex work.

4.3 Friendships

80% of students believe that their friends are the most important things in their lives, and 90% are friends from their schools. This is because there are few opportunities outside school to make friends. For a long time Japanese friendships have been with a small number of close friends who do everything together. The character of Japanese friendships are mainly highly involved, emotionally reliant and closed friendships.

One of the greatest problems in Japanese schools is *ijime* or bullying. This is where a large number of classmates continually inflict psychological and physically harm on a particular individual. Playing pranks on people is common in all societies, however Japan’s form of bullying is isolated within a group and to outsiders something may look like a harmless prank, however there are many cases of continual concentrated bullying becoming so bad that the individual has no place to hide. Often no one actually notices the effects and the seriousness of the problem heightens.

Suicide linked to bullying in schools up until 1995 had sadly risen to nine incidents. The seriousness of Japan’s *ijime* problem can be said to be caused by the total emotional exclusiveness of friendships, and the inability for unacceptable outsiders to break this barrier. The highest incidence of bullying is during the high stress period of high school entrance exams in junior high school. At senior high school, the incidence is lower as students can distance themselves and there is far greater opportunity to avoid bullies.

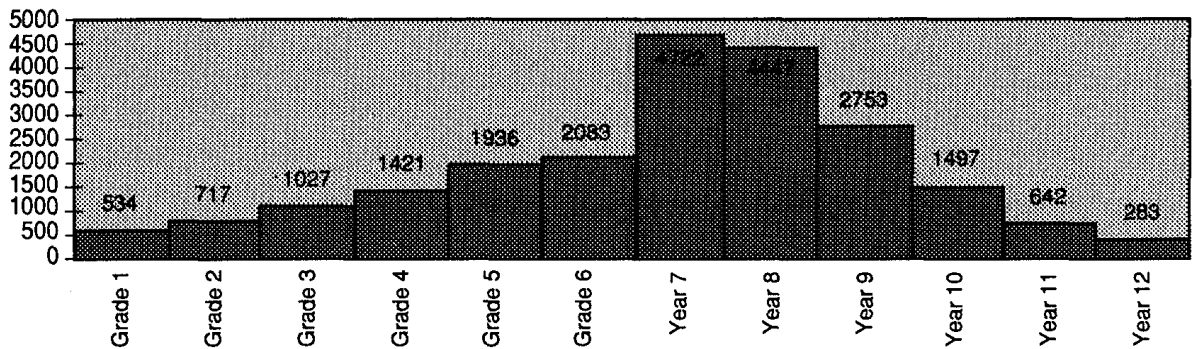


Figure 8 : Number of Bullying Incidents

Source: A Data Book of Educational Statistics, 1993

The percentage of students who have very good open friendships with day to day people is only 9% in Japan. “Close friendships” and “Open friendships” are clearly defined. A close friend is the one close friend/s who you can feel relaxed and can share your feelings with. An open friendship is with everyday people or acquaintances that you can feel relaxed and be yourself with. Most Japanese people cannot make open friendships.

Recently, there are even those who cannot even open up with their close friends. Youth Culture Researchers believe Japanese high school friendships are poor. This can possibly be explained by the idea that in Japan, school grades equal human worth. Students are all working hard towards their grades to improve their self worth. As a result they become run down and disheartened. Friends have the same problems but they don't talk about their school results with their friends. These problem individuals have builds a wall between people and friendships cannot become closer. It can perhaps be concluded then that the overemphasis placed on school results in Japan has resulted in the distortion of youth's personal relationships.

4.4 Relationships with the Opposite Sex

The strongest evidence of traditional influences can be seen in youth relationships with the opposite sex. Traditionally these relationships in the East are not as open as those in the West. However they are in fact very close in Japan and are often the topic of many conversations with friends.

50% of Japanese high school students say they have liked someone of the opposite sex. 36 % of males and 42% of females have confessed to liking someone to their face. Recently female students are becoming more outgoing and motivated towards the opposite sex than males.

The way of thinking about relationships has gradually become more open and relaxed, however actual relationship experiences are still not that open and free. Many public high schools are mixed sex however, teachers and parents attempt to restrict close relationships with the opposite sex at all times. The reason for this is that they believe that any involvement could distract the child from their studies and are extremely afraid of any physical relationships developing.

There are many parents who had relationships when they were young, however they will still greatly restrict their own children. As a result there are no modern guidelines and advice for forming new relationships when children grow up and so old principles and traditions is the only path to follow leaving no room for progress.

As time goes by, gradually social changes have seen relationships becoming more open, however at a Japanese university it is still rare to see students kissing. When comparing these relationships with the West, Japanese relationships may seem childish.

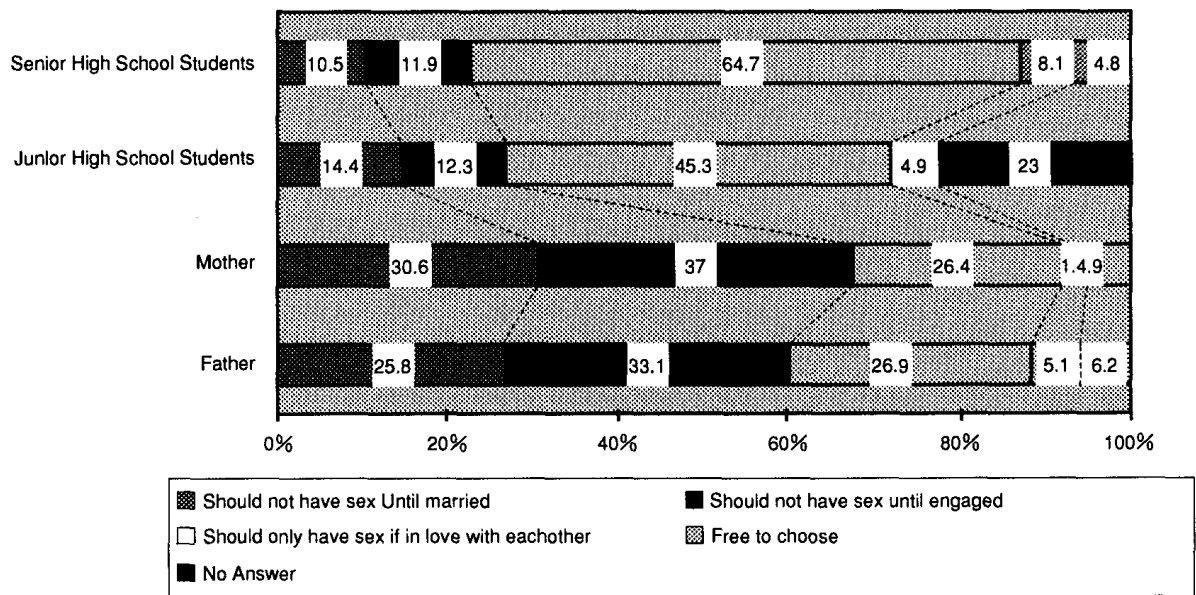


Figure 9 : Opinions regarding Sex before Marriage

Source: A Data Book of Education Statistics, 1993

4.5 Personal Possessions

The above table summarises personal possessions of young people in Japan. These are not items shared by siblings or other family members. In comparison to five years ago, these percentages have increased. At present, video recorders, personal computers and telephones for personal use have been increasing rapidly. These percentages in comparison with Australian high school student’s possessions are extremely high.

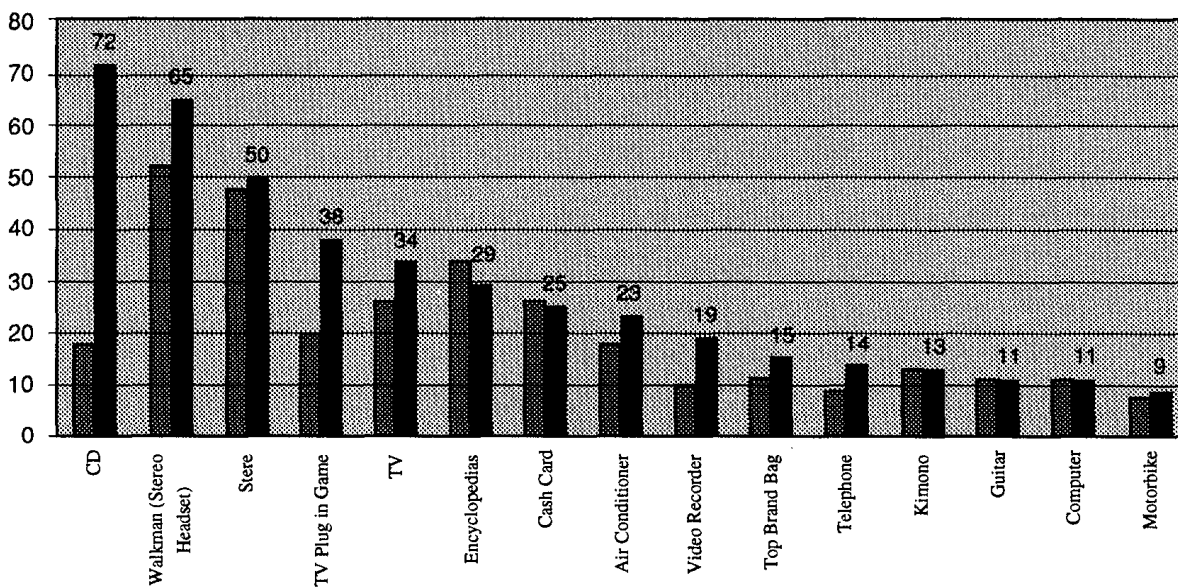


Figure 10 : Personal Possessions

Source: Gendai Chuugakusei Koukousei no Seikatsu to Ishiki, 1995

4.6 Television and Telephones

When asking students what they value as the most important possession in their lives, the answers were; firstly their television and secondly their telephone. On average high school students who watch over 3 hours of television each weekday totals 40%. Often the main form of entertainment on a weekend is television as few students leave the house to socialise with friends.

The telephone is seen as a tool for friends to communicate. This is essential for those who cannot meet and talk due to school or home restrictions. Cordless telephones have meant that students can talk to their friends in their own rooms. Female students on average speak for over half an hour.

The reason for the great necessity to talk to friends outside of school, although they see each other all day at school, is because at home, students can talk uninterrupted in the privacy of their rooms, they can feel at ease to say whatever they like and they can have relaxed conversations with only one person. The inter-net may also become a

popular tool for communication, but this data is not yet known.

4.7 Music

The favorite hobby of Japanese high school students is listening to music. Students listen to music for about one to three hours a day. (see Figure 20 for Time Spent Listening to Music). 20% of students rent between 1 to 2 CDs a month from rental shops. They swap CDs with friends and they mostly listen to western popular music, although Japanese artists are also popular.

Japanese youth generally like classical music however they do not enjoy traditional Japanese ballads called *enka*. Like many cultures music tastes are defined according to the generation. For example in Japan, children like theme songs to cartoons, young people like western popular music, middle aged Japanese like *enka* and the elderly like Japanese folk songs.

4.8 Comics

In Japan comics are a child's culture. 80% of high school students, 60% of university students and 40% of businessmen read comics. High school students who do not read any comics at all very rare. Every month 405 of students read more than five comics. Comic in Japan are quite thick, similar to that of a large novel in Australia. This is a very large readership.

Male read more comics on average than females with the, 45% of males and 30% of females. The reason for this difference is due to the popularity of weekly comics designed for men. The top sellers of comics in Japan are then men's comics, "Boy's Jump" and "Boy's Magazine". The weekly rate of publication of these is 4 to 5 million copies. They are the world's most read comics that they even feature in the Guinness Book of Records.

The most popular comics in Japan have been made into television animation, movies, dramas and novels. Japanese television animation is now also broadcasted on Australian television. Most of the books in a Japanese high school student's room are comics. The average student would own around 50 comics.

Comics are big business in Japan. It is a huge market and is even comic style textbooks for subjects such as economics, law, literature, history and religion. Each year in Japan there is a "Comics Market" for fans of comics. Around 100,000 people attend the market where they can sell their own comics and collect information from others.

The problem with comics for youth is that there are many sexually explicit and violent scenes. Comics express scenes more vividly than actual photographs can. Comics that have no restrictions on pornography and violence, are overflowing with images and seem to provide a level of interest and excitement in people more than photographic material does.

4.9 Money

Japanese high school students receive on average AU\$60 a month pocket money from their parents. With this they buy extra clothes they want, CDs, snacks and hobby related items.

Students who have part time jobs only make up 18% of all high school students. To a student and parent, studying is the most important work. Both parents and teachers restrict students from working and work experience like that in Australia does not exist in Japan.

University students on the other hand mostly have part time jobs. There is a distinct contrast between high school and university life in Japan. A high school students

lifestyle is that of control and oppression (asceticism) whereas a university student's lifestyle is about satisfying material and physical needs and wants (hedonism).

On average a Japanese high school student has around AU\$1,000 saved in their bank account. Most children are bought a CD player and television as well as almost all of their clothes. This reliance on money from parents, however is another way to slow a student's path to independence.

5. Youth Culture and Its Dependence on the Media World

46% of high school students say that they do not want to grow up and face the adult world. These findings were presented at a Psycho-Social Moratorium by American Psychoanalyst, E.H. Erikson. Erikson found that most student's honest opinion is that they do not like their controlled school life and do not want to enter the Adult society of hard work. The lifestyle they most favor is a university lifestyle which is free and fun. Therefore most students are aiming towards this kind of lifestyle by studying hard at school.

Unfortunately however, to become a university student, high school students cannot lead a very satisfying life and must put off all their goals until later in life. Also, the idea of university and University Student Culture takes on the problem characteristics such as, "university as a Leisure land", "University Students Who Do Not Study" and "youth who lose sight of their goals".

At a glance, the growing number of personal possessions should signify a comfortable and wealthy lifestyle. However high school students rely on these possessions and they have little physical contact with others and are forced to lead a

solitary lifestyle ruled by parents.

Top class students come home from school, lock themselves in their room and study hard for their entry into university. However many students come home from school and watch television and videos, play computer games, read comics and talk to their friends on the telephone. Students also often listen to CDs and their walkman whilst apparently studying.

Japanese Youth Culture has become dependent on their material possessions and the Mass Media world. This media is a product of Japan's growing information technology industry.

This is what Rohlen means by Japan's Weak Culture. Japanese Youth Culture is not really spreading its roots into Youth Society, that is it is not developing and growing stronger. This untalented Youth Culture blooming to only dwarf size could be said to be merely a *Bonsai* culture (small stunted tree). Youth wrapped in the consumerism of this Mass Media Society are mostly engulfed in media and outside pressures and although this media culture is similar for adults, adults are always moving a step forward. Therefore the soil of Youth Society in which the flower of Youth Culture grows is not rich and abundant for the developing of healthy and beneficial relationships. Therefore this unstable Youth Culture is just left to drift in a consumer world where self expression, productivity and creativeness is not present. Youth analysing this bleak situation themselves often feel that Adult society is looking down upon the youth of Japan and paying no attention or taking any responsibility. It seems as simply an amusing and entertaining topic of conversation for them.

I believe that this evaluation is true. The reason is that Youth Culture is not establishing strong roots in Youth Society and it is overlooked that they are easy

targets of Adult exploitation. Since the mid 1980's, the term *Otaku* was given to young people who were poor at forming personal relationships. There *Otaku* are not only high school students, they are also people in their twenties including university students. These people who are not good with others are seen to be abnormally addicted to computers, animation, videos and the like.

A time when *Otaku* came into the eyes of the media in an incident in 1989 with a serial killer of small girls. Four girls were killed one by one and were filmed. The dead bodies were then cut into pieces and sent to the victim's parents. The youth who performed this horrible act was obsessed by bizarre videos and was said to be an *Otaku*. This anti-social group of people labeled *Otaku* were then associated with this horrific and abnormal behaviour.

There is no reason to link the behaviour of this one criminal with all other *Otaku* however there obsessive youths do all have one thing in common and that is that on the outside they are very unskilled at forming and maintaining personal relationships. *Otaku* is one new aspect of Japanese Youth Culture.

6. Conclusion

As mentioned earlier the biggest the problem with Japanese Youth Culture today is the huge lake of direct and free relationships with others. For Japanese Youth Culture to grow strong and healthy, strong foundations are important. Youth Culture suffers due to the overemphasis on educational background, the competition to enter a university, the controlled education system, the stronghold of rules inflicted on youth by adults, the lack and denial of free time and space and the lack of chances to form strong friendships with others. Form early childhood when the lack of chances to form

strong friendships with others. From early childhood when friendships are formed, communication skills for later in life are polished, however more importantly it is essential to secure a life of freedom and self expression that may at a glance seem unnecessary in the early stages of a child's life, but prove to be invaluable in later life.

In January 1995 at the time of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake (Kobe/Osaka) many young people took part in volunteer activities. This surprised many adults who only saw youth as egotistic, anti-communication *Otaku* types, and the view towards youth began to change. Volunteer activities encouraged youth to draw away from highly controlled schools and work places and experience for the first time enjoyable relationships with people they were coming into contact with. Volunteer activities enable youth to participate in society for the first time of their own free will.

The actions of youth at the time of The Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake opened doors for youth to participate freely in a society of excessive control. Also people were finally becoming aware that not all young people were these *Otaku* types and were people with their own will. Since then, young volunteer activities are maintained and with evaluative information from these, school and social systems are being reformed. For example an evaluation of results of volunteer activities has been set up and a volunteer holiday scheme has been established.

To nurture and bring up a Youth Culture with endless opportunities and chances, an Adult Culture filled with hope and wishes and lively, motivated youth is essential. School and Social reformations that are currently underway in Japan are far from ideal however it can be said that there is certainly positive actions taking place and many motivated supporters.

NOTES

This paper was initially presented at Monash University, Melbourne, Australia on March 26th, 1997 to a group of high school Japanese language teachers. This paper is an expanded version of that presentation. I acknowledge the contribution of Rachel Mackay for the entire English and layout of this paper.

May 31th, 1997

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