

Research into Programs for Abusive Parents in Japan and Korea (1)

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Abstract : The description of this research is divided into two parts, the first half and the second half. This manuscript, which is the first half, describes the statistics of child abuse in Japan and Korea, and the laws and regulations of the programs for abusive parents, before clarifying the details of the programs for abusive parents in Japan and Korea. This research is a comparative study of programs implemented in Japan and Korea for parents who have abused their children, based on interviews carried out in Japan and Korea. It examines the characteristics of child abuse in Japan and Korea, the ways in which the programs are conducted in order to adapt to family relationships (parent-child relationships and spousal relationships) and educational culture in families behind this issue, and the tasks to be faced.

Keywords : the characteristics of child abuse, Japanese and Korean culture

I. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to comparatively examine how the creation and implementation of programs for parents who abused their children in Japan and Korea conform to the characteristics of abuse in those countries, the family relationships (parent/child relationships and partner relationships) in the background of this, and the household education culture and, further, to comparatively examine what these issues are, based on interview surveys conducted in both Japan and Korea between 2008 and 2010. In addition, and on top, this paper proposes a paradigm for future programs in Japan and Korea (hereinafter called the “parental programs”). The survey subjects in Japan were the staff at Kobe Boys’ Town (a child protective care institution), the Child Abuse Prevention Center (a private sector), and the Empowerment Center (a private sector), and the survey subjects in Korea were the staff at

the Central Child Protection Agency, and at child protection agencies in Seongnam City, Suwon City, and Ulsan City. This paper does not, however, handle parents who committed sexual abuse, out of an awareness that programs are required for those parents alone.

In the West, which has made child abuse a social problem earlier than in Japan or Korea, programs for parents who abuse their children have also been implemented earlier. Merely imitating the Western programs, however, would not be suitable for the characteristics of child abuse in Japan and Korea, or for Japanese and Korean culture. Consequently, what sort of programs conforms to Japanese and Korea culture? The problem and concern of this paper is this very point. At this time, we want to search for a paradigm for Japanese and Korean programs by comparing Japan and Korea, which has a similar culture to Japan’s, such as Confucianist culture and a culture

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in which mother and child are closely bonded, etc.

None of the existing research compares Japan and Korea. In addition, the existing research regarding Japanese programs is as follows: Jun'ichi Shoji (Shoji, 2003)¹⁾, Yoko Kato (Kato, 2003)²⁾, Child Abuse Prevention Countermeasures Support and Therapy Research Association (Support and Therapy Research Association, 2004)³⁾, Jun Saimura (Saimura, 2005)⁴⁾, Yuri Morita (MY TREE Parents Program practice group, 2006)⁵⁾, Keiji Noguchi (Noguchi, 2008)⁶⁾, and Tomoko Hirooka et al. (Otsuka, Tamura, Hirooka, 2009)⁷⁾. The problem remains, however, that comparative research between the programs is lacking. In addition, the following exist as theoretical research: Satoru Nishizawa (Nishizawa, 1994)⁸⁾ and Tadashi Nakamura (Nakamura, 2010)⁹⁾.

In the midst of this, our research firstly clarifies the statistics on child abuse in Japan and Korea, and the legal regulations on programs for parents; secondly, clarifies the details of programs for parents in Japan and Korea, and thirdly clarifies the characteristics of child abuse in Japan and Korea and the paradigm of the programs for parents that conform to Japanese and Korean culture. This paper elucidates points 1 and 2, and will elucidate point 3 in a separate continuation paper.

II. The Statistics of Child Abuse in Japan and Korea, and Legal Regulations on Programs for Adults

1. Government Statistics on Child Abuse

It was around the start of the 1990s, approximately 20 or 30 years behind the West, that child abuse became a social problem and the Japanese government came to focus on it. In Korea, it was around the end of the 1990s, approximately a further 10 years later, that child abuse became a social problem and the government came to focus on it. Since then, the number of cases of child abuse consultation has continued to grow widely in both Japan and Korea (Japan: from 1,101 cases in

FY1990 to 44,211 cases in FY2009; Korea: from 4,133 cases in FY2001 to 9,478 cases in FY2007). The description below is based on national Japanese data for FY2009 (Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare, hereinafter "MHLW", 2010)¹⁰⁾ and national Korean data for FY2007 (Central Child Protection Agency, 2008)¹¹⁾(¹⁾.

In Japan, regarding people who abuse children, biological mothers are far more prevalent than biological fathers (58.5% of biological mothers, 25.8% of biological fathers), whereas in Korea, biological fathers are more prevalent than biological mothers (biological fathers 50.0%, biological mothers 27.2%). Further, Japan is characterized by the prevalence of non-biological fathers (Japan 7.0%, Korea 1.1%). (See Fig. 1.) In addition, in Korea, 30.6% of families in which abuse occurs are father-child families.

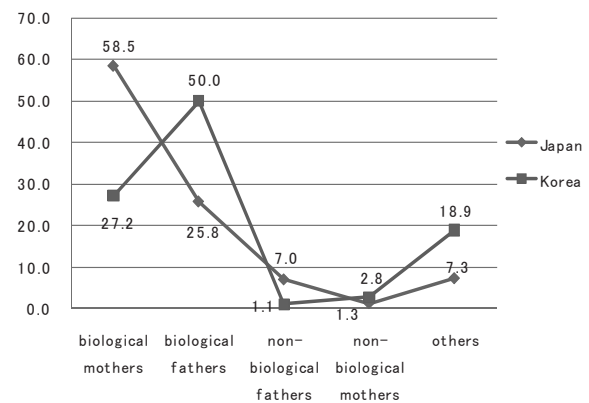


Fig. 1. People who abuse children (%)

The majority of abused children in both Japan and Korea are of nursing and preschool age, or elementary school age. In Japan, pre-school age children are somewhat more prevalent than

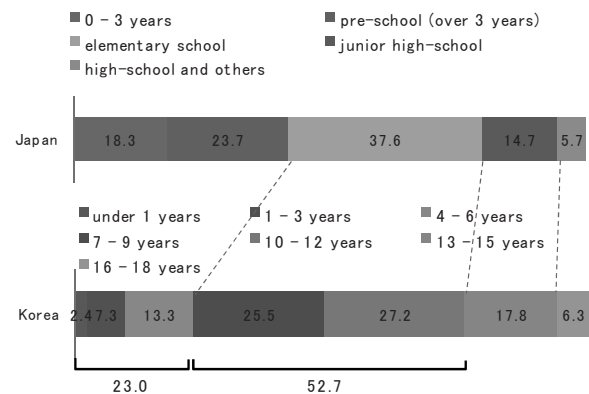


Fig. 2. Age of abused children (%)

elementary school children (preschoolers 42.0%, elementary school children 37.6%), whereas in Korea, elementary school children outnumber preschool age children (preschoolers 23.0%, elementary school children 52.7%). (See Fig. 2.)

The types of abuse are characterized as follows: in Japan, the most common is physical abuse, followed by neglect (physical abuse 39.3%, neglect 34.3%), whereas in Korea, neglect is most common, followed by psychological abuse (neglect 37.6%, psychological abuse 30.1%). (See Fig. 3.)

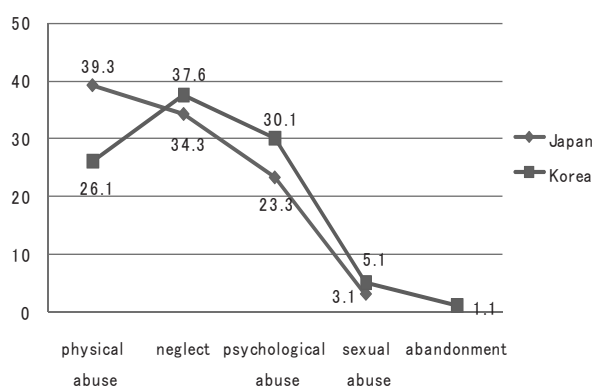


Fig. 3. Types of child abuse (%)

2. Legal Regulations of Programs for Parents Who Have Abused Their Children

In Japan, the “Act on the Prevention, etc. of Child Abuse”, which was established and enacted in 2000, exists as a legal regulation on child abuse. Meanwhile, in Korea, the events of child abuse have been regulated since 2000 by the revised Child Welfare Act. Further, in recent years, there has been a movement in Korea to attempt to enact special laws that specifically target child abuse.

There are also countries involved with courts having abusive parents undertake programs. In Japan, however, despite “instructions to guardians who have committed child abuse” is regulated by Paragraph 11 of the Act on the Prevention, etc. of Child Abuse and by Paragraph 28 of the Child Welfare Act, there is no legal regulation for the family courts to instruct abusive parents to undertake programs directly. In this way, Japan’s

problem is the point that the family courts do not have the legal regulation to order abusive parents to undertake programs directly, it is not the case that all parents that have abused their children undertake programs. In Korea as well, although there are movements that present new legal proposals on making programs obligatory to the Diet, they are embracing the same problems as Japan.

III. The Implementation Status and Details of Programs for Parents who Have Abused their Children in Japan and Korea

1. The Implementation Status of Programs for Parents in Japan and Korea

Owing to the legal regulations described above, it is not the case that all Japanese child consultation offices implement systematic programs for parents who have abused their children. Besides, although only some do, family and child consultation rooms in social welfare offices, health centers, child protective care institutions and NPOs implement systematic programs. In Japan, there are three comparatively widespread systematic programs ⁽²⁾.

- (1) MCG (Mother and Child Group);
- (2) MY TREE Parents Program;
- (3) Commonsense Parenting Program.

In Korea, there are 44 child protection agencies nationwide that handle child abuse, and one central child protection agency that unifies them. As of March 2009, three of the child protection agencies had implemented programs for parents that they had each themselves created. The three sites in question are the Seongnam City Child Protection Agency, Suwon City Child Protection Agency, and Ulsan City Child Protection Agency. Moreover, the names of these programs are as follows:

- (1) Child Abusers Group Therapy Program: Hope rewritten;
- (2) Child Abusers Education and Therapy Program: Becoming truly good parents;

Table 1 : Program Details

Program Name	Japan		Korea		
	MCG	MY TREE Parents Program	Child abusers group therapy program : Hope rewritten	Child abusers group therapy program : Becoming truly good parents	
	<p>Open Groupwork</p> <p>Supplying a safe location and healing through the participants being able to discuss whatever they like.</p>	<p>Total 15 sessions (1 course: 6 months)</p> <p>1. Group preparation meeting, 2. A safe meeting place, 3. Parent and child empowerment, 4. Shared "I am important" work, 5. The fuel of respect, the "amount of spirit energy", 6. Practice in listening to feelings, and practice in speaking about feelings, 7. The 6 problems of punishment, 8. Controlling emotions, 9. New methods of teaching manners for us to try, 10. Feelings of self-worth and eliminating negative talk to oneself, 11. Practice in praising yourself, practice in being praised, practice in praising children, 12. Assertiveness (expressing opinions), borrowing other people's strength, 13. Imprisoned by femininity, masculinity, and being a "proper" mother, the distortion of society by gender-based roles and work, 14. MY TREE, 15. Alumni association, work on looking back</p>	<p>Total 13 sessions (1 course: 5 months)</p> <p>1. Learning the development and characteristics of children by age (5 sessions), 2. Individual consultations with parents who have abused their children, 3. Group work for parents who have abused their children (8 sessions: (1) Discussing current lifestyles and human anguish to cheer up participants, (2) Discussing marital problems, and then discussing problems with the children, (3) Discussing the difficulties of raising children, (4) Discussing harsh experiences in childhood together with understanding how childhood experiences are linked to today, (5) Considering the anguish of children from a child's standpoint, (6) Discussing anger control and stress management when angry with your children, (7) Learning ways of communicating with children, (8) Discussing lifestyles from now on), 4. Family Camps</p>	<p>Total: 12 sessions (generally 1 per week)</p> <p>1. Group formation and contracts, 2. Understanding and insight into yourself and your children. Child development process and methods of childrearing, lecture on child abuse, and in particular raising awareness of where to position abuse on the line extending from teaching manners, communicating the psychological side effects in children of abuse and the importance of transforming parental awareness in that regard while reading and understanding the results of groupwork to map where the responsibility lies for the outbreaks of previous abuse, and to confront parents' psychological scars (psychodramas and role play using chairs), attempting to actively approach the desires and problems of the parents themselves from childhood to now, and deepening self-insight), 3. Problem-solving practice and transformation practice (learning non-violent communication techniques, and methods of coping with differences in outlook between children and parents. Reconstructing actual events that embroiled parents and children (i.e., children of elementary school age or older whose treatment has progressed to the required extent), and learning to replace the mistaken convictions and actions of the parents themselves with the suitable actions they have learned to date. Further, in controlling angry emotions, to understand the limits that can be expressed by personal anger, and to learn methods of suppressing angry emotions (deep breathing and avoidance actions, etc.) through timeout methods. In addition, to review their studies to date, and to check the relationship between parents and children, and to check the positive coping with children's reactions, and the changes in personal attitude), 4. Achieving plans and transformations (forming support networks while considering formal and informal social</p>	<p>Child assailant program : Parents who will do anything</p> <p>Total 6 sessions (1 course: 1 month)</p> <p>1. Group orientation, 2. Understanding children's personalities (Children's personalities are all different just as their faces are all different, so communicating the importance of understanding this fact. Communicating that if this fact is not understood, the risks of the children rebelling, resulting in parental abuse, increase), 3. Understanding children's development (e.g., playing videos about bonding, and communicating the importance of bonding for children's development), 4. Self-awareness of one's own childhood (Remembering how the parents themselves were educated by their parents as children. The majority has experienced abuse, but the parents dramatically reenact the abuse they themselves suffered from their parents in the past. During the reenactment drama, verbal violence such as the parent shouting at the child to "die", and physical violence such as striking, are reenacted. Although they could not speak up as children, they can say "No" during the drama. Through this, the people in parental roles come to feel sorry as they cannot understand their children's feelings), 5. Anger control (New video entitled "Anger and the Living Time Bomb" to understand the conditions under which the person themselves grows angry, and what they do as a consequence. Further, the participants consider methods of avoiding anger when they start growing angry in their everyday lives, for example, counting 1, 2, 3...., or moving into another room. In addition, they are taught when scolding children not to scold without giving a reason, and to explain that they are scolding out of concern. Moreover, to write down incidents that have happened to their children recently, and to judge whether or not that was really a situation in which it was necessary to get angry, and if the anger was unnecessary, to tear up the paper), 6. Effective communications methods (Practicing love messages) If the abuse is severe, individual consultations are implemented in parallel to the group program described above. Finally, everyone attends family camp.</p>
Program Details					

Source: The descriptions for Japan are quotes and references from eds. Child Abuse Prevention and Countermeasure Support and Treatment Research Council, 2004. *Supporting and Treating Children and their Families*. And the descriptions for Korea are quotes and references from materials by four child protection Agencies (Central center, Seongnam City, Suwon City, and Ulsan City).

(3) Child Assailants Program: Being parents who will do anything.

Further, in 2009, the country asked university professors to create a standardized program for parents who had abused their children, and subsequently, as of December 2011, 25 bodies had implemented programs for parents who had abused their children. It is not the case, however, that all these bodies have implemented the standardized program¹²⁾(i.e., another standardized program was also created in 2003).

2. Program Details for Parents Who Have Abused Their Children

The details of the programs for parents who have abused their children in Japan are as described below.

1) MCG (Mother and Child Group)

MCG is a program started by Tomoko Hirooka, director and consultant of the Child Abuse Prevention Center (social welfare foundation), while being modeled on alcohol dependency self-help groups with the support of the psychiatrist Satoru Saito. This is the first self-help style of group work in Japan for mothers who have abused their children. This program is mainly being implemented by child consultation offices, health centers, and the Child Abuse Prevention Center in the Kanto region. In addition, the Tokyo child consultation offices have created three types of family groups, a mothers' group, a fathers' group, and an all family members' group. And they are holding group work under the name of the "Tokyo Method". The characteristic of this program, which is a "non-program", is the point that it does not focus on supplying participants with a knowledge of children and child abuse, but that the group workers, although talking for a little, supply a place of relaxation and healing basically by letting the participants discuss whatever they like. Participants speak in turn, and people who do not want to speak may pass. The contents discussed are diverse, including participants' children and

their fathers, child protective care institutions and child consultation offices, and work, etc., but past events are very rarely discussed. Participants may attend as often as they like, and may also take a break and then resume.

2) MY TREE Parents Program

The MY TREE Parents Program has for many years nurtured specialists in child abuse and violence against women in America, and currently Yuri Morita, who is the sponsor of the empowerment centers, has created a unique program based on involvement in the enactment of laws concerning the prevention of child abuse, which started in 2001. This program is mainly implemented by child consultation offices and family and child consultation rooms in the Kansai region, and civilian groups that support childrearing in Kamagasaki, which is an impoverished neighborhood.

This program uses group work (including role play) based on 15 themes, but on each occasion, there are the following:

- (1) Time for learning (learning work);
- (2) Time for everyone to speak (talking about oneself);
- (3) Time to follow the individual (individual following time).

The characteristic of this program is the point that not only does its content attempt to heal and empower participants, but also to communicate to participants a knowledge of child abuse and gender.

3) Commonsense Parenting Program

In 2000, Keiji Noguchi, the head of the child protective care institution Kobe Boys' Town introduced to Japan the Commonsense Parenting Program, which is held at Boys Town, which is a sister institution to his, to train facilitators to practice the program. This program is implemented at child consultation offices, family and child consultation rooms, and child protective care institutions.

During this program, participants watch videos and implement group work based on six themes, through which the overall aims are as follows:

- (1) Child management skills training (Changing parent and child actions by looking at patterns that support the child's actions);
- (2) Acknowledgement reconfiguration and troubleshooting training (Changing the view of children's actions as there is a tendency for parents who abuse their children to take all their child's actions negatively);
- (3) Transforming the cycle of escalating abuse into a positive cycle through stress management and anger control.

As this is a behavioral therapy program, the focus is not on the importance of offering healing and communicating knowledge regarding child abuse, but the characteristics of this program are lessons in transforming the actions of the participants while adopting role play and asking the following three questions:

- (1) Have I communicated to my child clearly?
- (2) Have I used expressions that communicate my feelings to my child?
- (3) Has my child understood me?

Next, the details of the programs for parents who have abused their children in Korea are as described below.

4) Child Abusers Group Therapy Program: Hope Rewritten

This program was created by a university professor, and comprises 13 themes implemented by the professor at the Seongnam City Child Protection Agency. Participants in this program range from parents with light child abuse to parents with serious child abuse invited by the staff. The characteristic of this program is the point that as well as communicating knowledge regarding child abuse, there is a combination of individual counseling and group work (including role play), amidst which, participants not only look back upon their own past, but also consider how their past is linked to the present, as well as

discussing their current parent/child relationship and their relationship with their partner.

5) Child Abuser Education and Therapy Program: Becoming Truly Good Parents

This program was created by psychological specialists, and is a program using group work comprising 12 themes. The program characteristics communicate knowledge regarding child abuse, but also take in psychodramas using chairs to understand parental desires and problems from the past to the present, as well as recreating events in which conflict has actually occurred between parents and children by parents and children (only children who are older than elementary school age and whose "treatment" has progressed to a certain level participate) to replace the mistaken convictions and actions of the parents themselves with the suitable actions they have learned to date.

6) Child Assailant Program: Parents Who Will Do Anything

This program is one with its content shortened by the staff at Ulsan City specialist child welfare organization from the standardized program presented by the country in 2003. This is a group work comprising six themes implemented by the staff of the Ulsan City Child Protection Agency. (For serious abuse, however, individual consultations are also implemented.) The characteristic of the program is the point that as well as communicating knowledge regarding child abuse, it is also reenacts personal understanding of the past. For example, physical violence such as striking, and verbal violence such as the parental character telling the child to "die!" is recreated through role play by the people playing the parent and the child. Through this, the people in parental roles come to feel "sorry as they cannot understand their children's feelings".

We have shown the contents of the programs for parents who abuse their children in both Japan and Korea, and the details of the Japanese and

Korean program contents are as shown in Table 1. Further, all programs apart from MCG have contents that communicate to the participants techniques for controlling anger and methods of communicating with children.

IV. Conclusion

The above description has clarified the government statistics on child abuse in Japan and Korea, the legal regulations for abusive parents, and the details of programs for abusive parents.

Regarding government statistics on child abuse in Japan and Korea, in Japan, the majority of abuse is physical abuse and neglect, and abuse by biological mothers. Meanwhile, in Korea, the majority of abuse is neglect and psychological abuse, and abuse by biological fathers (moreover, in single father families).

In Japan and Korea, there is no legal regulation for the family courts to oblige abusive parents to participate in programs, and consequently there is the problem that the opportunities for abusive parents to change are not sufficiently assured. In future, it is hoped that Japan will also revise the law so that family courts will oblige abusive parents to undertake programs.

Further, although we clarified the details of six typical programs for parents who abuse their children that are implemented in Japan and Korea, the results of this analysis will be revealed next time in "Research into Programs for Abusive Parents in Japan and Korea (2)".

Notes

(*1) The Japanese government did not publish national data regarding the family structure in which child abuse occurs or the factors of child abuse, so this could not be handled.

(*2) There are also programs implemented in addition to the ones described here, but they are not particularly widespread.

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日韓の虐待をした親に対するプログラムに関する研究（1）

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