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Japanese juvenile delinquency

By Ken Y-N (February 9, 2011 at 16:51) · Filed under Polls, Society

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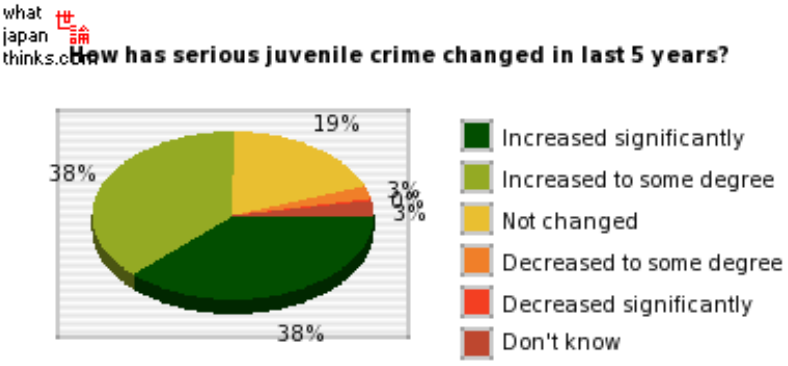
This is a survey I wanted to split into two parts, but it didn't really lend itself to it, so instead here is a big survey from the Cabinet Office Japan into juvenile delinquency.



Demographics

Between the 25th of November and the 5th of December 2010 3,000 members of the general public selected at random from resident registers were approached for face-to-face interviews. 1,886 people, or 62.9% of the sample, agreed to do so. 54.5% of the sample were female, 9.9% in their twenties, 16.3% in their thirties, 16.1% in their forties, 16.4% in their fifties, 22.1% in their sixties, and 19.1% aged seventy or older.

I must admit to not having seen much in the way of delinquency. I don't think kids hanging out outside convenience stores really is an issue, and although I occasionally hear noisy motorcycle gangs, I don't associate it with delinquency, just criminality and ineffective policing.

Research results

> ### Q1: Do you feel that compared to five years ago, the number of serious incidents involving juveniles has increased or decreased? (Sample size=1,886)

Increased significantly	37.8%
Increased to some degree	37.8%
Not changed	18.7%
Decreased to some degree	2.7%
Decreased significantly	0.4%
Don't know	2.7%

Q2: What kinds of juvenile delinquency do you think has increased in the last five years? (Sample size=1,886, multiple answer)

Lack of self-control causing outbursts	62.5%
Brutality, violence	47.6%
Age group has got younger	42.3%
Unclear motivations	31.5%
Rash motives such as curiosity, thrill-seeking	25.9%
Gang-based	24.4%
Coercion by others	11.8%
Nothing has increased	3.2%
Other	0.7%
Don't know	3.2%

Q3: What kinds of juveniles do you think are becoming delinquent? (Sample size=1,886, multiple answer)

Juveniles growing up with guardians not interested in their education, upbringing	55.9%
Juveniles who feel isolated at both home and school	44.4%
Juveniles who have been abused by their guardians, etc	36.2%
Juveniles who don't appear to have any problems	34.9%
Juveniles with problems with their relationships with friends	28.9%
Juveniles who don't fit in at school	28.7%
Juveniles growing up with guardians too strict with their education, upbringing	28.6%
Juveniles who have a history of hooliganism, crime	14.2%
Other	1.0%
Don't know	3.4%

Q4: What kinds of juvenile delinquency do you think have been an actual problem around you? (Sample size=1,886, multiple answer)

Bullying	19.6%
Theft of bicycles, motorcycles	17.1%
Shoplifting	16.9%
Smoking, drinking, loitering about outside, late at night	16.8%
Lashing out from trivial sparks	15.2%
Purse-snatching by bicycle, motorcycle riders	14.2%

Biker gangs (bosozoku)	8.6%
Domestic violence	5.2%
Violence in schools	4.4%
Stimulant, cannabis, ecstasy, glue sniffing, other drug abuse	4.1%
Stabbing incidents	3.8%
Robbery, intimidation	3.6%
Carrying knives	3.3%
Child prostitution, other sexual activity	2.9%
Other	0.8%
Nothing in particular	44.3%
Don't know	4.5%

Q5: What kinds of juvenile delinquency do you think are a problem in wider society? (Sample size=1,886, multiple answer)

Bullying	53.0%
Lashing out from trivial sparks	48.8%
Stabbing incidents	46.4%
Stimulants, cannabis, ecstasy, glue sniffing, other drug abuse	42.4%
Shoplifting	29.0%
Smoking, drinking, loitering about outside, late at night	28.6%
Domestic violence	27.1%
Child prostitution, other sexual activity	23.6%
Purse-snatching by bicycle, motorcycle riders	23.3%
Robbery, intimidation	22.3%
Violence in schools	17.9%
Carrying knives	16.9%
Biker gangs (bosozoku)	16.8%
Theft of bicycles, motorcycles	16.3%
Other	1.3%
Nothing in particular	2.1%
Don't know	2.8%

Q6: What do you think are the problem with the character, nature of today's juveniles? (Sample size=1,886, multiple answer)

No patience, cannot control their own emotions	72.5%
Cannot properly communicate with others	51.2%
Self-centered, don't or can't understand the other person's position of feelings	50.8%
Lack of societal ethics, morals	39.1%
Emotional immaturity	37.5%
Strong emotional dependence	36.1%
No purpose in life, no goals	33.1%

Slapdash behaviour	21.2%
No independence, easily influenced by those around them	20.0%
Strong feelings of inferiority	14.1%
Strong rebellious spirit	12.0%
Thrill-seeking	11.5%
Other	0.8%
Nothing in particular	0.7%
Don't know	2.5%

Q7: What elements of the societal environment do you think are problems with regards to juvenile delinquency? (Sample size=1,886, multiple answer)

With the spread of mobile phones, internet, etc, can easily meet up with strangers	63.4%
With the spread of mobile phones, internet, etc, can easily obtain violent, sexual, suicide-related information	47.3%
Easy to obtain books, videos on violent, sexual subjects	43.5%
Karaoke halls, game arcades, internet cafes, etc are open until late at night	40.1%
With the spread of mobile phones, internet, etc, it becomes harder to discover who juveniles are associating with, getting up to	38.9%
Can easily obtain stimulants, cannabis, ecstasy, glue for sniffing, other drugs	31.8%
Lots of karaoke halls, game arcades, internet cafes, etc	28.4%
Few facilities, locations for juveniles to play, do sports	22.4%
Can easily obtain knives	20.2%
Inundation of telephone dating clubs, one-on-one chat lines	16.8%
Lots of tobacco, alcohol vending machines	16.1%
Supermarket, etc, surveillance is weak	5.9%
Other	1.1%
Nothing in particular	2.1%
Don't know	2.5%

Q8: What societal trends do you think are problems with regards to juvenile delinquency? (Sample size=1,886, multiple answer)

Lack of interest in other children, weakening of local bonds	57.4%
Morals standards of society on the whole have dropped	48.5%
Society on the whole has lost its spiritual richness, considerate nature	42.8%
Insufficient time for children and guardians to spend together in society on the whole	37.9%
A society where it is difficult for juveniles to have dreams, hopes	37.0%
Deterioration of child-rearing abilities	36.1%
Prolonging of reliance on guardians, young people being slow to stand on their own two feet	25.9%
Widening of disparity within society	23.6%
Society on the whole spoiling children	21.5%

Sexualisation of young teens, pre-teens	16.5%
Tendency to attach too much importance to school background	15.1%
Other	0.7%
Nothing in particular	0.6%
Don't know	2.4%

Q9: If you were to see an unknown juvenile smoking, see a group of juveniles hanging out in a park late at night, etc, what would you do? (Sample size=1,886)

Tell them off	11.9%
Want to tell them off, but pretend I didn't see them (to SQ)	49.2%
Not think it was worth telling them off, so overlook the matter	12.2%
Inform the police	17.9%
Inform the school	4.3%
Other	1.3%
Don't know	3.1%

Q9SQ: Why would you pretend you didn't see them? (Sample size=928, multiple answer)

Worried that they'd attack me	70.9%
They wouldn't listen if I told them off	18.3%
Too much bother to tell them off	4.3%
They are other people's children, so nothing to do with me	2.6%
Someone else will tell them off	2.0%
Other	1.5%
Don't know	0.3%

Q10: Who has the biggest role in stopping juvenile delinquency? (Sample size=1,886)

Family	76.4%
Local society	12.9%
Police, other official organisations	5.2%
Schools	3.7%
Other	0.1%
Don't know	1.7%

Q11: In order to try to prevent juvenile delinquency, what sorts of things do you think guardians, etc should do within the family unit? (Sample size=1,886, multiple answer)

Increase time spent talking, etc, with children	67.1%
Praise when praise is needed, scold when scolding is needed	65.9%

Listen to the child's feelings, words	46.7%
Be aware of the responsibilities as a parent of child-rearing	44.0%
Get all the family to cooperate in child-rearing	40.8%
Don't bottle up child-rearing problems, but instead discuss with others	33.6%
Have consistent behaviour when dealing with the child	29.9%
Set rules for the child's use of the internet, mobile phones	27.9%
Understand the characteristics of children's bodies, minds	19.7%
Try not to make the principles of child-rearing based around academic achievement	17.7%
Other	0.9%
Nothing in particular	0.2%
Don't know	1.4%

Q12: In order to try to prevent juvenile delinquency, what sorts of things do you think schools should do? (Sample size=1,886, multiple answer)

Deal firmly with children	51.9%
Have closer contact with families	39.0%
Understand each and every child	38.9%
Sufficent education for the spirit, such as moral education	36.6%
Raise the leadership ability of those involved in student guidance, etc	34.6%
Establish specialists in schools who can talk with children about their worries, etc	28.0%
Hold school events when children can interact with local residents	27.8%
Cooperate, coordinate with police, child consultation centres, social welfare functions, etc	27.5%
Promote activities to experience volunteering and other social services, the natural environment, jobseeking, etc	26.0%
Cooperate, coordinate with PTA, probation officers, other local people	21.6%
Education such as anti-delinquency lessons	16.7%
Deal more strictly with delinquent children	16.1%
Other	1.1%
Nothing in particular	1.1%
Don't know	3.0%

Q13: In order to try to prevent juvenile delinquency, what sorts of things do you think the residents of the local community should do? (Sample size=1,886, multiple answer)

Scold other people's children when they are naughty	50.2%
Regularly greet the local children	46.9%
Get to know the neighbours, interact with fellow parents and families	45.8%
Make opportunities for children's play, sports, other experiences	29.9%
Get interested in the school by participating in school activities, etc	26.4%
Carry out activites to clean up the local environment by working to eliminate pornographic advertising, vending machines, etc	23.4%

Cooperate with government agencies to create local support systems	22.6%
Participate in or cooperate with volunteer activites regarding healthy child-rearing	20.9%
Participate in local child-related events, gatherings	16.1%
Other	0.4%
Nothing in particular	2.8%
Don't know	2.7%

Q14: When juveniles are arrested for delinquency, many of their crimes are not enough to warrant being sent to a reformatory, but instead they remain in the community. To help them get back onto the right track, what do you think is necessary? (Sample size=1,886, multiple answer)

Have locals who they can discuss problems with	52.6%
Make them lead a regular lifestyle	43.4%
Get them employed, make them attend school regularly	43.1%
Get the understanding of the locals regarding their recovery, return to society	42.5%
Get them to review how they were delinquent, hear how victims feel, and make them think about victims' feelings	40.7%
Give them an age-appropriate degree of social responsibility	37.4%
Get them to review how they were delinquent, and think about their problematic behaviour	35.9%
Give them various experiences like community service, widen their field of vision	30.3%
Ensure they stay away from bad people	24.5%
Strict guidance if they appear to be reoffending	20.9%
Make them meet their victims and directly apologise	20.9%
Other	1.1%
Don't know	3.3%

Q15: In order to prevent juvenile delinquency, what sorts of measures would you like to see the police, other governmental organs taking? (Sample size=1,886, multiple answer)

Stronger crackdowns to clean up the internet, such as on dating sites or others harmful to children	51.7%
Stronger guidance to juveniles encountered smoking, drinking, loitering at night, etc	48.3%
Promote the creation of scheme for families, schools, local residents to create a society where juveniles will not fall into delinquency	44.8%
Strengthen ongoing support for helping juvenile delinquents get back on their feet through creating places for them to hang out, support in job seeking, education, etc	40.6%
Consultations with troubled juveniles, their guardians	39.6%
Stronger crackdowns on juvenile crime	36.8%
Stronger crackdowns to clean up the local area, such as on adult entertainment businesses	31.3%
Strengthen ongoing support for juvenile victims of crime through home visits, counseling, etc	30.2%
Promote to the general public the importance of preventing juvenile delinquency,	15.9%

helping juvenile delinquents get back on their feet	15.9%
Strengthen educational activites to instil social norms in juveniles, such as proactively hold juvenile delinquency prevention classes, etc	15.1%
Other	0.9%
Nothing in particular	1.6%
Don't know	2.3%

Q16: Regarding activities that the police, other official organisations carry out to prevent juvenile delinquency, what sorts of activities would you personally want to participate in? (Sample size=1,886, multiple answer)

Juvenile street cleaning, graffiti removal	34.3%
Juvenile sports activities	30.8%
Outreach to juveniles at nighttimes in downtown areas, etc	18.3%
Juvenile study support	13.9%
Juvenile cooking classes	12.1%
Keeping in touch with, talking to juveniles on an idividual basis	10.8%
Don't have time to participate	14.2%
Don't want to participate	12.2%
Other	1.7%
Don't know	4.2%

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Cameron Smith said,
February 9, 2011 @ 18:36

The latest figures I can find are to 2008, but it appears that juvenile crime has been *decreasing* since a peak in 2002, and much faster than any demographic shift could explain. I'm not surprised about the perception of rising crime – it's fed by the media. Things appear to have been much worse about twenty or so years ago.

Stats to 2008 are here: http://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/nenkan/1431-25.htm
and a 2006 government white paper here: http://hakusyo1.moj.go.jp/en/55/nfm/mokuji.html
which contains this handy graph: http://hakusyo1.moj.go.jp/en/55/image/image/h004001001003e.jpg
which shows rates as a percentage of the overall age group.

Of course, these are events as recorded by police, which will under-report the true figures. However, I don't know of any reason why this measure should show an artifical fall over time in juvenile delinquency measures, so it does look as if things aren't as bad as people think. This is par for the course across many countries – a persistent belief that crime is worse now than before, particularly when it comes to children being victims or criminals.

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