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VALUES AND SOCIAL ORIENTATIONS OF JAPANESE YOUTH IN INTERCULTURAL COMPARISON

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The study of the values and social orientations of Japanese youth as compared to those of youth in the rest of the world is especially interesting from a sociological and psychological point of view. From the sociological perspective, knowledge of values and social orientations of today's youth allows us to answer questions on societal stability or changes in society. Societal changes may arise from new ideas, belief and behavioral patterns of youth which are in conflict with those of the previous generation or which are more suitable for coping with modern societal problems.

Of course, knowledge of the prevailing value orientations and their distribution in different age groups alone do not suffice to make predictions about continued stability or change in a society. However, – and here we come to the psychological side of the question – values and social orientations are important factors for such analyses since they can be understood as basic orientations which guide human behavior. Knowledge of a person's value system allows us to predict what goals individuals and groups set for themselves and what kinds of activities they plan to help them achieve these goals.

Though value orientations are first of all cognitive-motivational variables influencing individual action, they also achieve social relevance in as much as any individual action is embedded in a wider social context in which individuals interact and influence each other, and thus contribute to the stabilization of or a change in the wider social environment. Here, the psychological and sociological functions of value orientations become obvious.

When discussing possible consequences of adolescents' values and social orientations for society, we have to take into account the fact that adolescents are, first of all, going through a period of transition from childhood into adult life. How adolescents cope with the developmental tasks related to this period of their biography is, on the one hand, a question of their

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psychological resources and what kinds of developmental tasks they have to deal with; on the other hand, it is a question of the social environment, such as family support, work conditions, etc. Again, thought must here be given to interactions between individual and societal conditions which influence the way adolescents organize their transition into adulthood (Lerner and Busch-Rossnagel 1981). Cross-cultural research has demonstrated how important it is to note the cultural specifics of developmental tasks and the subjective representation of those tasks by youth. Both affect the way youth deals with such tasks (Trommsdorff 1989a).

A comparison between the values and social orientations of adolescents from different societies is – from a sociological perspective – a basis for formulating questions on the possible stability and change of these societies (Eisenstadt 1956); from a psychological point of view, more knowledge could be gained on development through the life span, e.g., what universal or culture-specific processes take place with respect to identity formation – the most important developmental task of adolescents; and to what extent achieving autonomy or independence is a universal or rather a Western pattern of adolescent development based on different cultural belief systems. It may very well be that in other, e.g., collectivistic, societies in which conformity to social norms is an important value, individual autonomy is not considered as a relevant developmental goal, and may induce conflicts between adolescents and their social environment.

In the following sections, data will be presented from international surveys on adolescents' values and attitudes with respect to different areas of life, such as family, work, and society at large. In the second section, the data will then be discussed with respect to other studies and theoretical notions of personality development. Finally, the question of stability and change in Japanese society will be treated.

1. INTERNATIONAL SURVEYS ON ADOLESCENTS' VALUES AND SOCIAL ORIENTATIONS

The data referred to was published by the Youth Affairs Administration (1989). This study has been carried out every five years since 1972, the last one in 1988. National survey institutes in several Western and Asian countries collected data by using the same questionnaires. Thus we can presently compare adolescents' values in different countries and at different periods of time during the last decade, and in some cases, the last 15 years.

In each country, about 1,000 adolescents between 18 and 24 years of age participated. Some of these adolescents were already working, some

were students, and a few already had families of their own. 92% of the Japanese and 87% of the German adolescents were neither married nor had children.

However, the methodological basis of this study has its shortcomings. The functional equivalence of the measurements is unclear, for example we do not know how the questions were subjectively interpreted by the young people in the different cultures and how valid their answers are. For example, in Japan it is necessary to take into account social desirability in responses and to differentiate between *"honne"* and *"tatemae"* (private and public responses) more than for those in other countries. These and other questions should be taken seriously in cross-cultural research (Trommsdorff 1989b). They remain unanswered and make the interpretation of the survey data difficult. We also have to take into account the fact that we are dealing with aggregate data, based on the means of male and female youth from different age groups and social backgrounds. Thus we should be aware of misunderstandings when talking about youth in general. The present survey data are very rough simplifications of certain attitudes and beliefs of adolescents from different parts of the world. They should not be generalized but rather seen as being embedded in the specific cultural, social, and psychological context of the respondents. As long as the shortcomings of data are borne in mind, we are well on the way to arriving at more theoretically founded questions for future research.

1.1 INTERCULTURAL COMPARISON: JAPANESE YOUTH AND YOUTH IN THE REST OF THE WORLD

In the following study we will focus on three important areas for development: family, work and society. These will be studied in intercultural comparison of the youth of Japan and other countries and in intracultural comparison of the youth of Japan in the last decade.

1.1.1 FAMILY LIFE

Starting from the assumption that Confucian values of harmony, acceptance of authority and a patriarchal family system influence Japanese adolescents' social orientation we will focus on certain aspects of social relations within the family which are relevant for these values.

Satisfaction with life at home: Contrary to our assumption, more German than Japanese adolescents were satisfied with their life at home. This may partly be related to the fact that German adolescents had more

opportunities to leave the family in case of dissatisfaction and to live alone. (83% of the unmarried Japanese as compared to only 60% of the German adolescents still lived with their parents.) The main reasons Japanese give for their dissatisfaction are economic problems such as having a low income (37%) and living in homes that are too small (27%), while German adolescents mentioned too much tension in the family (54%). German adolescents reported the highest level of tensions at home, followed by Australia (54%) and the USA (45%). This data is in line with our assumption that the stabilization of and orientation towards harmonious social relations are basic characteristics of Asian people.

The relationship between adolescents and their parents comprises other aspects as well – values regarding **gender role differentiation** and fathers' and mothers' roles in the socialization of their offspring. With respect to gender roles, adolescents were asked whether the ideal mother is one who puts her family before her outside work or activities. Most German and Japanese adolescents (more than 85%) answered in the affirmative, thus accepting the traditional role of mothers.

Differences between youth in both cultures occurred with respect to the **parents' role in socialization.** 13% of Japanese and 3% of German adolescents agreed with the statement that the **mother** should be strict with her children. (Only Swedish adolescents favored a strict mother to such a small degree as German adolescents did.) On the other hand, most adolescents in all countries preferred a mother who tries to be a friend to her children. Here, the highest percentage of agreement occurred in Germany (91%) and almost the lowest in Japan (76%). However, Chinese adolescents agreed even less (62%). These answers indicate a general pattern of adolescents preferring a warm relationship with their mother; at the same time, however, Japanese and Chinese adolescents accept the setting of rules by the mother relatively more.

Another question on mothers' roles referred to adolescents' preferences for having their mothers follow their own ideas without depending on husband or children (Q9). More Japanese than German adolescents agreed (73% vs. 55%). This indicates that Japanese adolescents perceive their mother as too dependent. This data is relevant for the theoretical discussion on dependency and autonomy in personality development which follows later in this paper.

Let us now turn to the **father.** The literature on child development and family structure has, in recent years, discovered the necessity of dealing with the father's role in socialization (cf. Lamb 1987). Concern over the "fatherless" Japanese family had been expressed in the early seventies (Wagatsuma 1977).

The role of the father in the family structure is partly dealt with in the surveys. The questions covered the areas of power, the father's role in providing the family income, and his emotional relationship with his children. With respect to authority in the family, the question was asked as to whether or not the father takes the lead in important family matters. Answers to this question may be useful in detecting the degree of the father's authority or the degree to which the division of roles in the family is unequal. In the Japanese family, in accordance with Confucian values, the father is more likely to be regarded as an authority as compared to Western families where there is an increasing tendency towards equality in gender relations. As a matter of fact, 78% of the Japanese adolescents viewed the father as the family leader, as compared with only 60% of the German adolescents and only 49% in Sweden.

A further question dealt with the conflicting roles of family and work: The statement "The ideal father puts his family before his work" was chosen by fewer Japanese than German adolescents (58% vs. 75%). (Swedish and Australian adolescents had an even stronger preference for a family-oriented father, i.e. more than 93%) (Q7). Here again, Confucian work values combined with a belief in the patriarchal family system are evident.

The preference for a strict father was much stronger among Japanese than German adolescents (31% vs. 3%). Again, this conforms to the traditional value of obedience to authority. Accordingly, a similar preference was observed in other Asian countries which adhere to Confucian values (32% agreement among Korean and Chinese adolescents). In contrast, a father who tries to be a friend to his children was preferred less by Japanese than by German adolescents (56% vs. 88%). Again, Chinese and Korean adolescents had a preference pattern very similar to that of the Japanese, while German adolescents did not differ much from those of other Western countries. (Swedish adolescents showed the highest preference for a father who tries to be a friend to his children.)

The pattern of these results on the "father as a friend" is consistent with the above mentioned results on attitude towards a strict father. In countries where a patriarchal system prevails – that is, in Confucian cultures like Korea and Japan – the father is regarded as the decision maker in important matters; he should be strict with his children and he should demonstrate his authority rather than shift to an egalitarian relationship with his children. A clear differentiation in status has always been highly valued in the traditional Asian family. The hierarchical structure of the family system still is relevant to the value orientations of present-day Jap-

Table 1: Values of Japanese and German Adolescents

Life areas	Japan		Germany	
	1978	1988	1978	1988
Family				
Father decides in important family matters	55.6	60.2	47.4	46.8
Ideal father puts				
- job before family	33.0	18.1	13.0	12.1
- family before job	44.0	58.4	64.3	74.6
Ideal father is				
- strict with his children	32.3	31.3	6.1	3.3
- friends with children	53.6	56.4	76.0	88.2
Mother should not depend on husband/children	67.3	72.9	37.8	55.4
Support my parents under all circumstances	34.5	25.4	33.9	32.0
Satisfied with life at home	37.1	33.0	54.9	56.1
Too much tension at home	24.2	25.3	69.4	54.1
Men should go out work/ women stay at home	50.4	30.6	28.8	19.6
Work place				
Satisfaction through[1]:				
- job	30.5	21.5	26.1	22.6
- life outside	48.5	56.7	55.0	53.6
Promotion: mainly seniority (also performance)[1]	36.0	39.2	14.3	13.8
Men work to				
- earn money	54.5	64.5	70.1	60.1
- find self-fulfillment	34.5	25.7	15.3	22.8
One should have social contact with superior	73.4	58.1	48.2	45.7

Table 1 continued

Life areas	Japan		Germany	
	1978	1988	1978	1988
Society				
Reasons for becoming successful: luck/fate	43.8	51.8	30.9	28.9
When dissatisfied with society				
- use only voting rights	39.3	41.4	48.8	39.0
- actively use legal means (e.g., petitions)	26.0	19.0	32.2	39.1
- violence	3.2	2.7	3.0	4.1
- drop out	13.4	16.9	4.8	6.6
- no answer	18.1	20.0	11.2	11.2
Societal problems cannot be solved by individuals	64.7	70.8	46.2	41.1
Dissatisfaction with society	37.4	30.8	11.8	17.7
Goals in life:				
- get rich	35.4	38.7	17.3	20.8
- live as I like	41.2	46.6	60.6	60.3
Serve own country	46.4	41.0	33.8	29.4
Sacrifice own interests to serve country[2]	20.3	13.3	41.5	41.0

Source: Youth Affairs Administration 1989
Note: Percentage of affirmative answers
[1] Fulltime working youth
[2] Respondents who want to serve own country (Q36,b)

anese adolescents; this contrasts markedly with the egalitarian values of Western youth.

However, results revealing Japanese adolescents reluctance to care for their **old parents** do not conform to the traditional value pattern. When asked about their intention to unconditionally support their parents in their old age, Japanese as compared to German adolescents were less willing to give such support to their parents (25% vs. 32%). In France and the

USA, more than 50% and in Korea and China more than 66% were willing to support their parents "no matter what the circumstances are" (Q10). Here, distinct cultural differences with respect to values concerning the aged and social obligations towards them can be seen.

This data on the interpersonal relations in the family prompts questions on the **emotional quality** of the family. An indicator for the emotional relationships within the family can be seen in adolescents' answers to the question about who they would talk to when they had problems (Q47). Japanese adolescents were far less willing to talk to their parents than German adolescent (53% vs. 77%). Furthermore, in both countries mothers were trusted more than fathers. However, Japanese as compared to German adolescents would prefer to talk to friends when they had problems (48% vs. 34%).

Japanese adolescents seem to perceive themselves as growing up in a not very supportive family climate. This contradicts results from studies on the developmental conditions of children in Japanese families (Hendry 1987; Kornadt 1989; Stevenson, Azuma and Hakuta 1986; Kornadt and Trommsdorff 1990). Should this be seen as a peculiarity of personality development beyond childhood – a period in the life course which is not usually covered by the literature – or have we come across an indicator of social change in Japanese value orientations? We will come back to these questions later.

Let us first look at some data concerning the values of Japanese adolescents with respect to the **family as an institution**. Japanese as compared to German adolescents were more convinced that "it is better to marry" (Q49) (53% vs. 25%). Swedish adolescents agreed least (19%), and French and Korean adolescents agreed most (35% and 46% respectively). At least one third of adolescents from all countries except Japan, Singapore, and China (13% and less) thought it was not necessary to get married.

This data indicates that Japanese adolescents hold a relatively strong belief in the family as an institution and a strong preference for a normative life course in the traditional sense. It is obvious that social expectations regarding a formal compliance with traditional values guide Japanese adolescents' family orientations. This tendency can also be observed with regard to gender stereotypes. 31% of Japanese and 20% of German adolescents agreed with the statement: "Men should go out to work while women stay home and take care of the house." Korean adolescents agreed with this statement more than any other group (36%), while Chinese and Swedish adolescents agreed the least (9% and 6%).

Again, on a formal level, the traditional family system which includes strict gender role differentiation is highly valued by Japanese youth. Here, Confucian values are still quite pronounced.

1.1.2 WORK AND SOCIETY

Now we turn to adolescents' attitudes toward work and society which are important aspects of dealing with developmental tasks during the transition to adulthood. Here, we assume that there will be a stronger tendency for Japanese adolescents to adhere to the Confucian work ethos, frugality, discipline, acceptance of seniority and loyality to one's superiors. These values have often been considered the basic factor underlying Japan's economic success (Dore 1987; Vogel 1979; Reischauer 1988).

In fact, with regard to work-related attitudes, Japanese as compared to German working youth preferred salary increase and promotion based on seniority rather than on performance (mainly seniority: 39% vs. 14%; mainly performance: 32% vs. 46%). In addition, the socio-emotional quality of relationships to the superior was stronger for Japanese than for German adolescents: 58% vs. 46% answered in favor of having contact with their superior after working hours. This preference indicates the continued influence of the traditional Japanese belief that social structure and status should be based on seniority.

However, data from the international survey also showed that the value of work for Japanese youth was more related to material than to work goals ("to earn money" 65% of Japanese and 60% of German adolescents agreed).

Japanese adolescents' **relationship to society and nation** were different from that of German adolescents: the Japanese were less willing to sacrifice their own interests (13% vs. 41%). They were also more proud to be citizens of their country (75% vs. 52%). On the other hand, Japanese adolescents were less satisfied with their society than German adolescents (52% vs. 74% satisfaction; 31% vs. 18% dissatisfaction). To express dissatisfaction, adolescents chose different activities besides voting, e.g., unconventional behavior such as petitioning and demonstrating: Japanese 19%, German youth 39%; dropping out of society: 17% vs. 7%, respectively.

Here we come to another area of the person's relationship to the social world: to what extent does one believe in one's own ability to reach one's goals (**belief in personal control**) or in the potential of external influences (powerful other persons or powerful non-personal sources like fate)? 71%

of the Japanese and 41% of the German adolescents agreed that solving problems is beyond the capacity of the individual. Japanese, Chinese, and Korean adolescents agreed most (71%, 69%, 58%) and Swedish adolescents agreed the least (11%). The same tendency to rather believe in external forces rather than in one's own ability was apparent in answers to the question about whether luck or fate is more important for success (52% vs. 29%). Japanese adolescents were found to believe in personal abilities, effort, and luck/fate to a certain extent (each just over 50%), while German adolescents considered personal abilities and effort alone to be important (more than 66% agreement).

Dissatisfied adolescents who only use their voting rights (Q37-1) said they would not take more **active measures** since they believed that individuals have no impact on problems involved (SQ37-1) (71% Japanese vs. 41% German adolescents). These results indicate a stronger tendency for Japanese adolescents to give up their own influence with respect to changing the social world according to their own interests partly on account of their belief in authority and partly on account of their belief in luck, which runs parallel to their disbelief in their own abilities.

1.1.3 SUMMARY

In many areas of life, Japanese adolescents prefer different values and have different social orientations to Western adolescents. Some of these values are strongly related to traditional Confucian values; the other orientations reveal little belief in personal control.

1.2 INTRA-CULTURAL COMPARISON: VALUE CHANGES IN JAPANESE ADOLESCENTS DURING THE PAST DECADE

After having examined Japanese values and social orientations in comparison with those of Western youth, we will now focus on possible changes in the value-orientations of Japanese youth.

1.2.1 FAMILY LIFE

Adolescents' relationships to their parents have changed considerably during the last ten years. More adolescents want their mothers to pursue their own interests and goals. Today, adolescents are more worried about the dependence of their mother on the father and children than 10 years ago (73% vs. 67%).

Another important change has occurred with respect to the relationship to the father. An increasing number of Japanese adolescents prefer a father who puts his family before his job (44% ten years ago vs. 58% now).

Furthermore, social responsibility for aging parents has decreased considerably over the last ten years: whereas 35% of adolescents would have given their parents unconditional support in their old age ten years ago, this number had decreased to 25% by 1988. A clear tendency can also be observed for traditional gender roles to be less readily accepted by Japanese adolescents today ("men should go out to work") (Q48). Ten years ago there was 50% agreement; in 1988 only 31% agreed.

To summarize, present-day youth has shifted away from the traditional family roles, even though cultural differences (e.g., in comparison to German adolescents) are still quite obvious. From a perspective of intracultural change, it seems that the traditional close family ties are loosening and changes in the family structure are underway.

1.2.2 WORK AND SOCIETY

With respect to work values, a change to less work-oriented values can be observed. Japanese adolescents increasingly believed that life outside work gives them more satisfaction than work itself (49% ten years ago vs. 57% in 1988). This decrease in work orientation corresponds with the increased belief of Japanese youth that the ideal father should put his family before his job (44% vs. 58%).

Similarly, the value of work is increasingly related to materialistic goals ("to earn money": 55% vs. 65%) and decreasingly related to a work ethic ("to find self-fulfillment": 35% vs. 26%).

The changing traditional work values can also be seen in the declining preference for having social contact with a superior after work (73% in 1978 and 58% 10 years later).

However, a belief in individualism does not mean an increasing belief in personal control and efficacy. A decreasing number of Japanese adolescents would not participate in activities such as petitions, etc., when dissatisfied with society (26% vs. 19%) but would rather become dropouts (13% to 17% in 1988). Japanese adolescents have become more reluctant to sacrifice their own interests for their country (20% to 13% in 1988).

Furthermore, an increasing percentage of Japanese youth believes that problems cannot be influenced by the individual (65% to 71%). Similarly, the tendency of Japanese youth to believe in luck or fate as a means to success is increasing (44% to 52%).

1.2.3 SUMMARY

If we take a look at all the data on Japanese adolescents' values and social orientations during the last decade, a pattern of increasing individualism and a decreasing willingness to adapt to traditional values and life styles emerges. Adolescents' ties to family and society seem to be weakening, and at the same time, their belief in their own efficacy and individual control is waning.

What do these data suggest from a psychological and sociological point of view? Let us first consider some theoretical notions on the development of adolescents which may be useful for the integration of these and other data on Japanese youth.

2. DEVELOPMENTAL TASKS OF ADOLESCENTS IN CULTURAL COMPARISON

An important developmental task for adolescents is to achieve independence from their parents and other persons of authority, to become autonomous, and to develop their own resources, that is, abilities and motivation to solve problems and tasks in their private and work life. One of these tasks consists in the establishment of intimate relationships outside the family; another task is to take over social responsibility in different domains of life. These tasks may be structured differently in different cultures. However, universally such developmental tasks require certain abilities, above all the motivation to cope with these tasks.

Whether and to what extent Japanese adolescents face different developmental tasks to those faced by youth in other countries, and whether their motivation and ability to cope with these tasks differs from that of youth in other cultures, depends partly on their personality development and social conditions. Their present value orientations give some indication of their ability and motivation to cope with developmental tasks. However, the present data from the international survey cited are insufficient as an empirical basis, especially since this study was not designed to test theoretical hypotheses or assure the validity of the data.

2.1 ACHIEVING INDEPENDENCE

For adolescents in the Western cultures one of the most important tasks is the psychological separation from the parents. This task of individuation has to be kept in balance with family relatedness (Feldman

and Gehring 1988). As has been shown by several studies with American samples, family context and adolescent development interact with each other (Grotevant and Cooper 1985; Youniss and Smollar 1985). However, these aspects have hardly ever been studied in non-Western families.

Japanese adolescents have to distance themselves especially from their mothers (Kawai 1981). As Rohlen (1983) has shown, Japanese adolescents try to become independent from their parents and to develop close relationships outside the family. This is also obvious from the survey data.

Especially for Japanese male adolescents, the problem of distancing themselves from the close, intimate relationship with the mother becomes severe, as several studies have pointed out directly (DeVos 1984; Kawai 1981; Tanaka 1984). Close mother-son ties may interfere with individuation (Spiro 1984) and, at the same time, with the internalization of social values (Doi 1973). Gjerde and Shimizu (1989) have shown that the mother-child relationship alone is not a useful predictor for adolescents, especially for the son's development; the parent's marital relationship, or at least agreement between the parents on socialization techniques, has to be taken into account as well. Thus, family climate and the father's role need to be considered when making predictions about adolescent development.

Parental roles in Japanese families are still strictly differentiated according to gender. Again, the survey data are in line with other studies on the Japanese family (e.g. Lebra 1986; Sugiyama 1984). The wife's responsibilities are to fulfill household tasks; these represent the "inside" (*uchi*). The husband's role is to work; this represents the "outside" (*soto*).

Similarly, several studies have shown that Japanese fathers contribute little to the parents' tasks of socialization within the family (Shwalb, Imaizumi and Nakazawa 1987). That is why some authors have described Japanese families as "fatherless" (Wagatsuma 1977). A "fatherless" family poses a problem when the entire burden of socialization is laid on the mother's shoulders, while the father refrains from his functions in the family or pursues his role in the socialization of the offspring in only very restricted periods of time, for example at weekends. As has been widely recognized in the literature, the relationship of girls and boys to their mother has different effects on child development as compared to their relationship with their father. This is related to differential effects of same-sex vs. cross-sex models.

Even though during adolescence the Japanese father may adopt a more active role in the socialization of his adolescent children (Lebra 1986), his children still miss his active participation in family life. This can be seen from the survey data where these specific needs were articulated by the

Japanese adolescents. They increasingly favored a father who takes more interest in the family (even though this preference was still much lower than for German or other Western youth).

However, this data should not be generalized. Social desirability and public concern about the role of the father and the functions of traditional gender-role differentiation may have affected the adolescents' responses. Such public concern was articulated, e.g. by the Youth Affairs Administration before this survey took place (see Sōmuchō Seishōnen Taisaku Honbu 1987).

This partial change with respect to gender roles should not obscure the fact that Japanese adolescents today still have a relatively strong preference for the traditional gender-role differentiation and accept this as a natural part of family and society (cf. Trommsdorff, Suzuki and Sasaki 1987). In our own studies on Japanese as compared to German adolescents' value orientations, we also found a very clear preference among Japanese adolescents for the traditional role differentiation. We also found clear cultural differences in adolescents' attitudes with respect to the socialization functions of mothers and fathers. The emotional relationship to the mother was much stronger than to the father (Trommsdorff 1986). At the same time, however, Japanese adolescents considered their mothers to be the most influential in the socialization process whereas German adolescents considered their father to be most influential (Trommsdorff and Iwawaki 1989).

Again, this result supports the assumption that for Japanese youth, the task of achieving independence from the parents has a different quality than for adolescents of Western countries where parental roles are structured differently. This data on the family structure prompts questions about the emotional quality of the family climate and the adolescent's developmental task to achieve autonomy. In the case of the Japanese, the **emotional** ties between adolescents and their mothers seem to be too strong to be appreciated by the former. However, it remains unclear from the survey data whether the adolescents are more likely to feel too dependent on their mothers or believe that their mothers are too dependent on them. The mutual interdependence (*amae*) irritates adolescents and makes them want to loosen these ties. Japanese adolescents have to achieve independence from a mother who believes in "one-ness" (*ittaikan*) between mother and child and whose self-concept is based on the belief of serving her children. This is a very different situation compared to that of German adolescents who are striving to achieve independence from a relatively "independent" mother, who – from the beginning – regards her children as partners and independent persons (Trommsdorff 1989c).

Achieving independence is influenced by the family climate. The function of the family climate for further development as touched on by the work of Gjerde and Shimizu (1989) leads to questions about the extent to which basic differences between Japanese and Western adolescents' development are related to differences in family climate.

The relevant data from the survey is not easy to interpret. On the one hand, the strong emotional bonds between Japanese adolescents and their mothers are experienced by the former as hindering their own individuation. On the other hand, the degree of tension experienced at home is quite small as compared to that of Western adolescents. It seems very clear from this and several other studies (Hendry 1987; Kornadt 1989) that harmonious relationships prevail and represent an important value for Japanese families. However, we have to take into account the fact that the emotional quality of the family is almost entirely restricted to mother-child-relationships. It should also be remembered that Japanese adolescents are dissatisfied with their families.

Here, we may have come upon an important cultural difference which could be the basis for the different processes of development in Japan and the West. The continuous experience of harmonious relations in the mother-child-relationship, which is the basis for the family climate, does not really support a need for independence and autonomy. In contrast, one might expect adolescents who have grown up in such a socio-emotional climate of attachment and security to develop a need for this kind of social environment – a need which fits cultural values and social expectations. In contrast, Western adolescents' experience of individuality since childhood contributes to the pronounced need to achieve further independence; independence is strived for as a valuable goal. The task of achieving independence suits their own needs and the expectations of the social environment as well. Here, the question arises as to whether such different orientations, based on different experiences during childhood and adolescence, are factors which should be taken into consideration in the prediction of social stability or change.

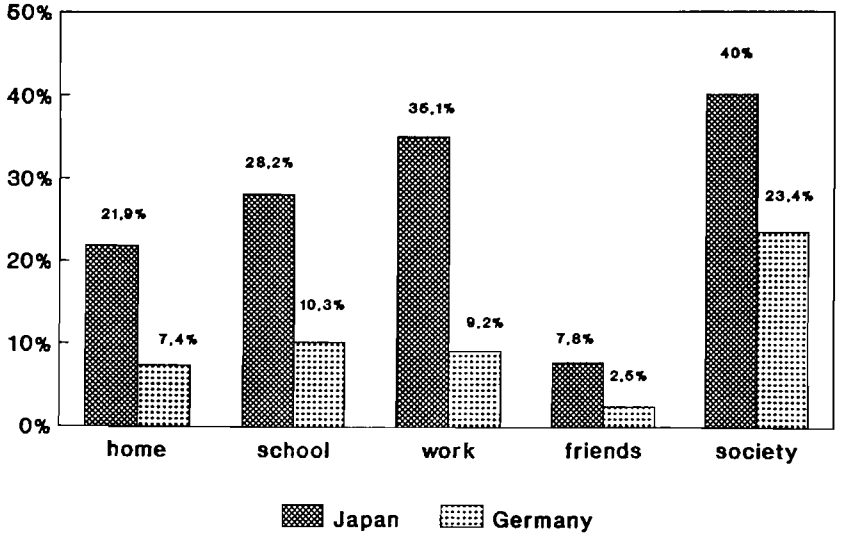
2.2 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND RESPONSIBILITY

A further important developmental task of adolescence consists in taking over social responsibilities in family and society.

On the one hand, Japanese adolescents are quite comfortable being embedded in a harmonious family life and – compared to adolescents in the West – basically accept traditional principles of social differentiation

and status (seniority system; gender roles). Accordingly, one may assume low interest in social and political activity on the part of Japanese in contrast to Western youth who would try to change social situations which do not meet their needs. On the other hand, however, the survey data indicates that Japanese adolescents experience relatively high dissatisfaction with their family, friends, school and society. This dissatisfaction may be an indicator for frustration experienced on account of non-fulfilled goals and make these adolescents feel as if they play a marginal role in society.

Figure 1: Dissatisfaction with different areas of life (sum of those "somewhat" and those "very dissatisfied")



The survey data indicates egoistic attitudes and a rejection of social responsibility in several respects: Japanese adolescents were much lesser willing than adolescents from most Western countries to support their parents (no matter what the circumstances) in their old age. Obviously, the supporting of old parents is regarded as a burden for which Japanese adolescents would rather not feel responsible. This contradicts traditional values regarding family bonds and seniority principles and implies possible change with respect both to the family system and the still valid function of the family as an institution of social support. In addition, a relatively large number of Japanese adolescents would rather not give up their own

interests to do something for society: this indicates very limited readiness for taking social responsibility as compared with adolescents from other countries.

Here we observe an egoistic orientation which should not be mistaken for individualism. Although the survey indicates that Japanese adolescents want to lead a life according to their own wishes, and this could be considered as a value of individuality, this could also imply freeing oneself from social responsibilities and constraints.

The relatively marked materialistic orientation – one of Japanese adolescents' goals is to become rich – hardly indicates any marked degree of social concern. This does not confirm the assumptions of Inglehart, who predicted a shift away from materialist towards postmaterialist values in affluent industrialized societies (Inglehart 1977; 1982).

Finally, the inclination of Japanese adolescents, in cases where they perceive their society to be dissatisfactory, to leave things to authority or to resign by dropping out demonstrates very little readiness for taking social responsibility in order to change disturbing situations. This contrasts with the attitudes of adolescents in other parts of the world.

3. SELF-TO-ENVIRONMENT RELATIONSHIPS AND CONTROL ORIENTATION

These observations and their interpretation suggest to explore what kind of relationship between self and environment Japanese as compared to other adolescents have developed; in particular to what extent they incline towards active control of the person over his/her environment.

3.1 DEVELOPMENTAL CONDITIONS AND THE QUALITY OF CONTROL ORIENTATION

If we think of development as the establishment of certain self-environment relationships, a person's beliefs regarding how to relate to the environment should be especially revealing. The individual may be more or less convinced of his/her ability to control his/her own development and to control his/her relationship to the environment.

Especially in societies in which the life course is largely regulated by social norms and leaves only few decisions to the individual, a belief in one's personal abilities and responsibility is probably less pronounced. In these societies, people tend to develop a belief in the validity of existing authority and social rules and learn to follow such rules in order to become

an accepted member of the group and achieve a respected position in society. When people grow up in a cultural and social context where other people are trying to set their goals and behavior in accordance with the limitations of the given situation, other persons' expectations, and social norms, they learn to value such behavior.

This kind of learning environment could be prevalent in Japan. From a Western point of view, this sounds very conformity-oriented. However, that would be too simple. From our data on socialization in Japan, we can clearly observe a pattern of mutual consideration for other people's needs and expectations in following a general goal of achieving harmony in social relationships (Trommsdorff 1989c; Kornadt and Trommsdorff 1990). Such values easily become internalized on account of the close emotional attachment between mother and child. As we can see from our studies on mother-child interaction in Japan as compared to Germany, even in conflict situations the Japanese mother thinks of her child as a good child, she expects and believes that, in the long run, her child will understand and do what she wants, and that basically mother and child are an inseparable unit. The German mother, on the other hand, thinks of her child as an independent person who has and should develop and pursue his/her own will, and become independent. In cases of a conflict, however, the Japanese mother gives in, while the German mother insists on her demands, feels attacked by her child, and feels insecure in her role when using sanctions (Kornadt and Trommsdorff 1990).

Thus, Japanese children and adolescents internalize the belief in adopting the expectations first of the mother, and then of their close social environment in a process of assimilation with the environment, while German adolescents learn to actively structure their relationship with the social environment by changing it according to their own ideas and goals. Accordingly, very different strategies with regard to interpersonal relationships develop: in Japan, these are based on a belief system of "social control" and in the West, based on a belief system of "individual control" orientation. This concept of control orientation (cf. "primary" and "secondary" control: Weisz, Rothbaum and Blackburn 1984) seems useful for differentiating between cultural value systems and explaining related individual attitudes and behavior (Trommsdorff 1989c).

3.2 CONTROL ORIENTATION AND BEHAVIOR

For "social control" oriented adolescents like Japanese adolescents, it seems appropriate to refrain from involvement in social and political

activities, and especially from unconventional behavior. "Individual control" oriented adolescents, however, such as German or American adolescents, are strongly motivated (in cases where they are dissatisfied with society) to actively try to change the situation even by using unconventional means such as demonstrations, etc. "Social control" oriented adolescents believe that political changes should be carried out by experts, as such changes are believed to be beyond the control of the individual. "Individual control" oriented adolescents would rather take the initiative themselves. This control orientation is related to the belief in "standing in" rather than "standing out" (Weisz, Rothbaum and Blackburn 1984). Accordingly, "social control" oriented persons believe that external social rules and norms regulate the individual's life course. In the case of occupational careers, for example, promotions should be based on seniority, while individual achievement is less important. This view contrasts with that of "individual control" oriented adolescents, who believe in personal achievement and ability. Furthermore, belief in luck or fate is more characteristic of adolescents who believe in "social control" than of "individual control" oriented adolescents.

Both of these value orientations have specific consequences for individual development and society. The more "social control" oriented Japanese adolescents grow up in a social environment of harmony in interpersonal relations. This harmony is a precondition and also a consequence of this belief. The "individual control" oriented adolescents in the West grow up dealing with social conflicts which are both basis and result of this kind of value orientation.

While "individual control" oriented persons seem to be more willing to take an active role in changing dissatisfying social conditions, "social control" oriented persons would rather retreat into passivity. The anticipation of conflict may act as a barrier against Japanese adolescents engaging in this kind of active involvement. However, more seems to be needed for active involvement, such as a belief in personal responsibility and in the effectiveness of one's own behavior.

Here the concept of self becomes relevant. As we have already established, one of the most important life tasks in the development of adolescents is the development of self identity. Where an adolescent grows up with "social control" beliefs, the tendency will be for him to develop a rather modest self concept. In addition, the self concept will be strongly related to and even a part of the social context (Marsella, DeVos and Hsu 1985). In contrast, growing up with "individual control" beliefs, the self concept will be characterized by an increasing focus on autonomy. How-

ever, there is presently not enough empirical data to hand to support the assumption that the nature of developmental processes in identity formation depend on the cultural context. It will be the task of further studies to elaborate on the relation between value orientations and identity formation in a cross-cultural perspective and clarify possible differences in the developmental tasks and processes of adolescents from different cultures.

3.3 CONTROL ORIENTATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

From a sociological point of view, the question arises as to what extent Japanese youth will contribute to change or stabilization in the present social conditions, i.e., the enormous productivity, technological development, and the political situation in Japan.

The survey data indicates a shift in the value orientation of Japanese youth in the direction of a more egalitarian gender-role differentiation in the family (mother's and father's role), less work-orientation, and a stronger orientation towards individual freedom and materialistic well-being (self-fulfillment in work is less valued, social activities with one's superior after work are less accepted; the ideal father should put family before work). This increased value put on the separation between work and private life plus the increasing tendency for women to join the labor market will presumably contribute to more change in the working values of the Japanese. This change is presently being massively supported by governmental demand for consumer activity, leisure, and consumption.

Considerable change may also be expected with respect to decreased participation in social and political activities. An increasing number of Japanese adolescents reject the idea of sacrificing their own interests in order to serve their country. This tendency contrasts sharply with that of the youth of other cultures. Furthermore, the choice of Japanese adolescents to express dissatisfaction with society by dropping out prompts the question of whether and to what extent the present cohort of Japanese youth will really withdraw as active citizens when faced with frustrations. The decreasing willingness to take responsibility for their own family, the aging parents, in particular, indicating an increasing materialistic and egoistic attitude of the youth may lead to the setting up of new institutions for social support and loosen family ties; this could create the basis for different developmental conditions for the next generation. Furthermore, the increasing belief that luck or fate are the most important factors for success may serve as an excuse for rejecting achievement, discipline and social responsibility.

Here the question arises as to whether values of social responsibility become less important for the present cohort of Japanese adolescents only during this specific developmental stage or remain less important even while the cohort is growing up and taking on the role of an adult.

4. CONCLUSIONS: LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND FURTHER QUESTIONS

Beside the methodological problems of cross-cultural studies on aggregate level discussed above, possible misleading effects resulting from cohort and age-specific trends should be mentioned. Do the discussed phenomena merely characterize persons at a certain period of their development, or do these phenomena indicate more basic changes in the developmental conditions of adolescents and in adolescents' and other age groups' value orientations? In order to answer these questions, developmental studies on value changes over the life span which combine a cross-sectional and longitudinal approach need to be done. However, from other studies on change in Japanese value orientations we know that the traditional role differentiation in the family and the high priority of work against leisure have decreased in the population as a whole. Furthermore, a rather passive attitude toward political participation has emerged as a prominent pattern in other age groups (Akiyama and Muramatsu 1985).

This indicates that adolescents' values and social orientations as measured by this international survey are validly reflecting a response to changing social conditions – e.g., the changing family structure, school and work conditions – which do not necessarily any longer serve as a secure context for the development of self-identity any longer. It may be that the social institutions in which adolescents grow up – especially family and school – no longer offer the strong emotional support which is the necessary basis for identity formation in adolescence. The relatively high dissatisfaction of Japanese adolescents with society, school and friends, and even with their primary group indicates a lack of socio-emotional integration. These institutions may also be reluctant to define developmental tasks for the adolescent; they may think of this age group as one which should not be restricted by adult obligations, but rather enjoy a temporary period of "freedom". The belief seems to prevail that many restrictions resulting from preparation for entrance examinations should be compensated for by spoiling children and adolescents as long as possible.

Japanese adolescents may have adopted this thinking and thus refrain from taking on adults' roles and responsibilities without internal conflict

and even without considering this alternative seriously. They enjoy a specific developmental stage and feel free from societal demands during this moratorium. That would be quite a realistic attitude since it is in keeping with corresponding social expectations.

However, the question arises as to whether these kinds of social expectations prevent adolescents from the necessary anticipatory socialization. How can adolescents develop sufficient ability and motivation to cope effectively with the manifold opportunities for learning about these demands later on? It seems that in Japan very strict age segregations coincide with specific developmental tasks, while an integration of the different stages of the life course hardly takes place.

What kinds of effects this may have on personality development at the level of the individual and on society as a whole remains unclear. More detailed studies on the processes of development during the life course and analyses of the interdependent effects of person and society in different cultures are thus necessary. Only then will we be able to answer questions like the previous one, namely, how Japanese adolescents will cope with ongoing social change and different areas of life, and to what extent their behavior will affect the future of Japanese society.

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