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A Study on Actual Conditions of Juvenile Delinquents

Migrating into Larger Cities

— Second Interim Report —

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With the progress of industrialization and the changes in the social structure developing in the Japanese society, there has recently been a remarkable degree of social mobility recognized in the population at large. Among those who have migrated into larger cities are a number of juveniles who commit delinquent acts as a result of failure to adjust themselves to the new environment of urban areas.

In this survey, a comparison was made between the delinquent juveniles who have migrated from rural areas into big cities (hereinafter referred to as "native group"), with regard to the various aspects of their characters. Surveyed for this purpose were approximately 700 juvenile delinquents who were, as of 1973, either detained in the Juvenile Detention and Classification Homes or placed by the Family Court under probationary supervision of the Probation-Parole Supervision Offices of these cities.

While the First Interim Reports made a comparison between the migrated group of delinquent juveniles and the native group of them and further between the juveniles in the former group by the area of origin, such as Tohoku (the North-eastern section of Honshu (the Main Island)), Kyushu (a big island adjacent to the South-western end of the Main Island) and Okinawa Islands, the present reports concerns another comparative analysis of the same data classified in the following way which was conducted in an effort to find out what factors there are that are responsible for juvenile delinquency during the stage of migration of the juveniles.

1. Classification of the migrated group by the time of commission of delinquent acts

The juveniles in the migrated group were classified into three sub-groups by the time of commission of delinquent acts: those whose delinquent acts were committed before the time of their migration, those whose delinquent acts were committed after

their migration and those whose delinquent acts were committed both before and after their migration.

Comparison of these three sub-groups, being conducted in various combinations, should make it possible, for instance, to investigate the distribution of delinquencies committed after migration in such groups, or to examine the same point with the group of juveniles whose delinquent acts were committed before the time of migration.

## 2. Classification of the native group by the previous criminal records

The juveniles in the native group were classified by the previous criminal records into four sub-groups: those without previous criminal records, those with previous record of dismissal after hearing by the Family Court without any further action taken, those with previous records of being placed under probationary supervision of Probation-Parole Supervision Offices, and those with previous records of being committed to Juvenile Training School or being disposed otherwise.

The four sub-groups were enumerated in the progressive order of aggravation in delinquency, with each group standing for, at least in this paper, the degree of delinquency at a specific stage in the course of aggravation.

## 3. Classification of both groups of juveniles by the type of delinquent act

The juveniles in both groups were classified by the type of delinquent act into six sub-groups, each group of juveniles being divided into the following three: those who committed larceny, those who committed violent offenses such as extortion, violence, bodily injury and intimidation, and those who committed sexual offenses such as rape and indecent act.

The distribution of the three sub-groups in each of the two groups showed that the rate of violent offenses committed was higher in the native group than in the migrated group, and that, as far as the migrated juveniles were concerned, such offenses were least committed by those whose previous delinquent acts were committed before their migration.

The comparison of the above given four sub-groups of the native juveniles, whose classification was based on the previous records, and each of which sub-groups was assumed to indicate the degree of delinquency in the course of aggravation, disclosed that the proportion of the more aggravated delinquency was found higher in the sub-group with worse previous records. And such a tendency was observed in almost all aspects of the data studied in this paper.

With the advancement of the juveniles in the degree of delinquency as appeared in their previous records more of offenses were found committed without accomplice rather than committed in group; and, when offenses were seen getting their accomplices from their playmates, former fellow-inmates or hooligans rather than from their old school companions coming from their home towns. As to the family relations,

the rate of those without parents or protectors and that of those on unpleasant terms with their family members were much higher in the juveniles at the advanced stage of delinquency. In regard to employment conditions, a higher rate of job-changes was accounted for by those with previous records of aggravated degree of delinquency; and a rising number of juveniles with such unfavourable backgrounds, who naturally had a very limited number of persons to rely on, were observed to turn to their own families as a last resort for help in their job-hunting activities in the face of the difficult relations they had with them. As for the self-image of such juveniles, less of positive acceptance of one's present as well as past self-image and a rising interest in delinquency were recognized in those juveniles at the advanced stage of delinquency.

To generalize our findings on the different aspects of these juveniles in their classification based on the degree of delinquency, what the degree of delinquency as grasped in this paper stands for could be described as the loss of (or rather the process of losing) one's positive social resources and social relations at one's disposal in the context of one's association with friends and families and one's chances for jobs and acquaintanceship.

Another comparative analysis which was conducted with the migrated group of juveniles on the basis of classification by the time of commission of delinquent acts as in the order of delinquency before migration, delinquency after migration and delinquency both before and after migration, revealed that in almost all items of analysis, difference of findings among these juveniles corresponded with the above given order of classification and took a similar course of change as observed in the case of the preceding comparison (of the native group of juveniles) by the degree of delinquency. However, in some items of analysis, no significant difference was observed between those whose delinquent acts were committed after migration and those whose delinquent acts were committed both before and after migration, and in some cases the above order was observed to be reversed. The items of analysis in which such a reversal of order was observed with those delinquent acts were committed after migration, that is, the intermediate group, showing the highest figure, include the rate of offender's having no prior relations with the victim of the offense committed, that of those having the real parents, that of those who, while on bad terms with one's own family, had a desire to improve such relations, that of those finding one's new job by himself after quitting the former one and that of those positively accepting one's self-image. All those findings on the migrated group of juveniles might be interpreted to indicate that these juveniles, even long after influence of their family environment to a great extent.

In the comparison of the juveniles by the type of delinquent acts, there were, on

one hand, a set of items of analysis under which the findings of distinct features were observed to change in the order of the juveniles committing sexual offenses, those committing violent offenses and those committing larceny, and, on the other, another set of items where such findings were observed only with the juveniles committing violent offenses. Among the former items were the rate of those on bad terms with their family members, that of those changing their jobs with an increasing frequency and that of those who found or were forced to find their new jobs by themselves, all of which items were given earlier in the comparison of the juveniles by the degree of delinquency. What is characteristic of the juveniles committing violent offenses is that in respect of a number of items of analysis the findings showed the maximum score in such juveniles in the migrated group when they showed the minimum in those in the native group, or vice versa; the items which showed the maximum in the native group were the rate of the offender's getting an accomplice from his playmates, that of offender's having prior relations with the victim of the offense committed, that of the offender's having prior experience of being himself a victim of a crime, that of the offender's having step parents and that of the offender's having negative feelings against himself, all of which items may be considered to measure the degree of aggressiveness of the subject in his attitude toward others in the community.

No doubt, all delinquent juveniles are not quite alike and, what is more, those committing offenses against the property such as the crime of larceny and those committing offenses against the person like violent offenses naturally differ with each other because the family relations and the offenders attitude toward others must have acted differently upon the development of the juveniles depending on which category they belong to, and there were examples which indicated that the types of offenses they committed were actually influenced by these factors.

In other words, the rate of those found with the specific factors such as adoptive parents, foster parents or step parents which are reasonably supposed to cause psychological complications and aggressiveness was higher in the juveniles committing violent offenses than in other juveniles, while, on the other hand, more indices representing the advanced degree of delinquency were found in the juveniles committing larceny than in other category of juveniles.

Among other factors that may be responsible for the juvenile delinquency during the stage of migration into urban areas are family relations and job-changes.

The results of the comparative analysis are summarized in the following table.

Pattern of aggravation		A	B	C
Item of analysis				
Delinquency	Type of offense	The rate of violent offenses gets higher		
	Commission of offense with or without accomplice.	The rate of offenses committed without an accomplice gets higher.		The rate of offenses committed without accomplice gets higher. In the case of offenses committed with an accomplice, the proportion of the accomplice being at advanced stage of delinquency gets greater.
	Prior relations with the victim of the offense		The rate of offender's having no prior relations with the victim gets higher.	
Family environment	Parents	The rate of those without parents gets higher.	The rate of those having real parents gets higher.	The rate of those with adoptive or step parents gets higher, and that of those without parents also gets higher.
	Family relations	The rate of those on difficult terms with own family gets higher.	The rate of those having complicated relations with own family gets higher.	The rate of those on difficult terms with own family get higher.
	Attitude of the offender toward his family environment	The rate of those with negative feelings toward ones own environment gets higher.	The rate of those having a desire to improve his attitude toward his family gets higher.	Attitude toward his family environment changes worse.
Employment Conditions	Frequency of job changes	Frequency of job-changes increase.		Frequency of job changes increases.
	Manner of finding a new job.		Increasing rate of those finding a new job by himself in contrast to declining rate of those turning to his parents for help.	The rate of those turning to own parents for help gets higher.

\* A: Delinquency before migration → Delinquency before and after migration / Delinquency after migration.  
 B: Delinquency before migration / Delinquency before and after migration → Delinquency after migration.  
 C: Without prior record of delinquency → With prior record of lighter degree      With prior record of graver degree.



**END**