

Original Paper

Prevalence and Correlates of Enjo Kousai, School Girl and Boy Prostitution, in Japan

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Received: January 11, 2018 Accepted: January 16, 2018 Online Published: January 30, 2018

doi:10.22158/jar.v2n1p37

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22158/jar.v2n1p37>

Abstract

Utilizing an ecological risk framework, this study investigates individual, familial, and extra familial risk factors that correlate to involvement in Enjo Kousai (school girl/boy prostitution) among Japanese youth. The sample (N=802) for this study is a diverse and fairly representative sample of post-secondary students from a range of vocational schools, colleges, and universities in the Sapporo area of Hokkaido, Japan. Nearly one out of 10 males and one out of 25 females reported engaging in this behavior. This research suggests that both females and males who experience certain life events are at higher risk for being involved in Enjo Kousai. For females, a history of sexual abuse, drug use, depressive symptoms, a parent who has been in prison, and a father who visits Fuzoku (brothels) were significant predictors of involvement in Enjo Kousai. For the male sample, a history of sexual abuse, drug use, a parent who has been in prison and living in an unsafe neighborhood were significant predictors of participating in Enjo Kousai.

Keywords

Enjo Kousai, school girl prostitution, school boy prostitution, risk factors, Japanese youth, youth, prostitution

1. Introduction

Enjo Kousai has been loosely translated into English as “amateur prostitution” (Sakuraba, Matsui, Fukutomi, Narita, Kamise, Ui, & Kikushima, 2001), “juvenile prostitution” (Kiyonaga, Tsukimura, Tozaki, & Uchiyama, 1989; Uchiyama, 1996), “child prostitution” (Takeda, 1998), “compensated dating” (Amakawa, 2003; End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism Online Data Base (EPCAT), 2006; US Department of State, 2014), and “school girl prostitution” (EPCAT, 2006; Ito & Okabe, 2006). In each of these translations the defining characteristic is that the purchaser of services is an adult and the individual being requested to provide services is a minor.

In a study of college women in Tokyo, 70% of the women acknowledged that in their childhood they had experienced older men trying to solicit them for sexual activity (Kakuchi, 2001). However, it is unclear how many Japanese youth engage in Enjo Kousai; the few studies that have been published in Japan have yielded estimates of Enjo Kousai that involves sexual interaction that range from 0.3% (Arimoto, 2000) to 4.6% of females (Fukutomi, 1997). Even less is known about male Enjo Kousai, and the assumption had previously been made within the Japanese adolescent research community that this was a female topic. Yet, in a rare study that included male youth, Arimoto (2000) reported that males were more likely than females to engage in Enjo Kousai that involved sexual interaction (5.2% vs. .03%). It is the aim of this research to better understand the level of participation in Enjo Kousai and the correlates or predictors of participation in Enjo Kousai.

Although there is limited research on the prevalence and correlates of Enjo Kousai, a number of Japanese international and non-governmental organizations have examined the phenomenon of Enjo Kousai. End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism (ECPAT), a non-governmental organization that works in collaboration with UNICEF and the European Union World Conference Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, has been compiling records of child prostitution in Japan. Interestingly, Japan is the only country in Asia where child prostitution is not related to poverty (EPCAT, 2003). Enjo Kousai is the means of obtaining luxury items that Japanese students would otherwise not be able to afford, such as designer handbags and clothing (Akaori et al., 1999; Kiyonaga, Tsukimura, Tozaki, & Uchiyama, 1989). Sakuraba and his associates (2001) reported that students who involve themselves in Enjo Kousai enjoy the attention from their male suitors. Okawara (1989) believes that Japanese males who solicit these youth are influenced by the historical Japanese notion of male superiority and do not view prostitution as an immoral or illegal act but rather as a matter of “aesthetic”. Until 1999, the age of consent in Japan was 13. Perhaps by having the age of majority so young, Japanese men did not feel any qualms about propositioning children as young as middle school students. However, child pornography and prostitution laws were enacted in 1999 to redefine a child as a person less than 18 years of age (EPCAT, 2003).

In Japan, there is a continuum of aberrant sexual behavior involving children; it ranges from involvement in Enjo Kousai, meeting young girls in “host clubs” (Japan Times, 2018a), “rifu” (massage), osanpo (tour guides) (Japan Times, 2018b) to purchasing child pornography. EPCAT (2003) reported that 80% of the available world market of child pornography is produced in Japan. Some of these children are trafficked from other countries to be filmed in Japan. A study in 1996 by Kyofukai, a Japanese human rights organization, found that child pornography was openly available in 97% of Japanese mainstream bookstores. Though laws on child pornography were created in 1999, the child pornography industry in Japan has not been dismantled, but has become more secretive and is now using the Internet to transmit their material.

Although a desire for material goods may make Enjo Kousai attractive to some youth, it seems likely that most youth are not willing to trade sex for money. A key question that requires further study is

what are the characteristics of the youth who become involved? In a ground-breaking study of female youth published in Japanese, Fukaya (1997) concluded that the youth who participated in Enjo Kousai tended to be emotionally unstable girls who often had troubled relationships with their parents. They also tended to engage in other risky behaviors such as associating with peers who engaged in risky behaviors. Fukaya proposed that young girls who lack confidence in themselves and struggle in their relationships with parents may seek reassurance from older men who shower them with attention and cash.

Realizing that Enjo Kousai is a uniquely Japanese issue, our research was guided by our partnership with Japanese scholars, academics, and youth workers. We tried to better understand the phenomenon of Enjo kousai using a Japanese lens with a risk factor framework. We drew both from Western research results to help determine which risk factors may be deleterious for Japanese youth and from Japanese collaborators who reviewed the risk factors established in earlier studies in the West and Japan (Fukaya, 1997) and selected those that fit Japanese culture best. We also integrated risk factors that have been suggested in the Japanese popular press as contributing to the aberrant behavior of Japanese youth but have not been empirically investigated. These variables included father's involvement in Fuzoku (brothels), and mother's involvement in Telekura (telephone sex). Both have been suggested in the Japanese popular press as increasing sexual behavior in youth.

In studies conducted in North America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand, risk factors are found at the individual level as well as in the key contexts where adolescents and young adults spend much of their time, including the family, peer group, school, and neighborhood (Fergusson & Horwood, 2003; Luster & Small, 1997; Werner & Smith, 1998). Youth exposed to several risk factors are at particularly high risk for developing problems (Sameroff et al., 2003). Specific risk factors associated with prostitution in earlier studies are noted below.

At the individual level, a history of sexual abuse (Abramovich, 2005; Chen et al., 2004; Kramer & Berg, 2003; Noell et al., 2001; Schissel & Fedic, 1999) and drug use (Kuyper et al., 2005; Ludwig & Pittman, 1999; Pedersen & Hegna, 2003) have been found to be common risk factors for entry into prostitution. Depressive symptoms have been linked to Enjo Kousai (Fukaya, 1997; Fukutomi, 1997; Maruta, 1999; Matsuura et al., 2002).

Within the family microsystem, having a parent who has spent time in prison (Leichtentritt & Arad, 2005) and parental favoritism of a sibling (Lung, Lin, Yu, & Shu, 2004) are known risk factors for risky sexual behavior and entry into prostitution. Also included in the family risk factors are the two Japanese risk factors noted above: mother involvement in Telekura (telephone sex), and father's frequenting Fuzoku (brothels). Although, little is known about these risk factors other than what is sensationalized in the Japanese popular press, a recent study in the U.S. found a relationship between what is communicated about father's sexual behavior and what is practiced by the son (Lehr, 2001).

The extrafamilial factor of living in an unsafe neighborhood has also been cited in the literature for risky sexual behavior (Albus, Weist, & Perez-Smith, 2004; Dunlap, Golub, & Johnson, 2003). In

earlier studies, promiscuity and prostitution were found at higher levels in neighborhoods that had higher levels of violence. Fukaya (1997) reported that rates of Enjo Kousai were higher in urban Tokyo than suburban Saitama.

In summary, utilizing an ecological risk framework (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Small & Luster, 1994) based on prior research, this study examines the correlates of Enjo Kousai among Japanese youth. Individual risk factors include: a history of sexual abuse, drug use, and depression. The family risk variables investigated are: parent's prison history, parental favoritism of a sibling, mother's involvement in Telekura (telephone sex), and father's frequenting Fuzoku (brothels). The extrafamilial risk factor of living in an unsafe neighborhood was also investigated.

Given the limited amount of research on this topic, we drew on research conducted in the West and in Japan when selecting potential influences of youth prostitution. Japanese co-investigators also helped to identify predictor variables that may be important to Japanese youth that have not been extensively studied previously. Thus, this research represents a team effort between American and Japanese researchers to explore an important but largely neglected topic.

2. Methods

2.1 Sample Selection

The sample for this study was selected from the Sapporo area, on the northern island of Hokkaido, Japan. Sapporo is the fifth largest city in Japan with a population of approximately 1.79 million. To obtain a diverse and fairly representative sample of post-secondary students in the Sapporo area, a range of vocational schools, colleges, and universities that differed in terms of size and prestige were targeted for inclusion in the study. Post-secondary institutions were the selected venue due to the high level of participation (74.1%) of Japanese youth in post-secondary education (Japan Information Network, 2004). Nine different post-secondary institutions participated in this study. Many of these institutions were not accustomed to research being done at their campuses. Often lengthy discussions with school administrators were held prior to meeting with faculty and students, but eventually all the institutions consented. The institutions that agreed to our request for surveying their students were three vocational colleges (23.9% of the total respondents), two two-year colleges (41.8% of the total respondents) and four four-year universities (34.3% of the total respondents). Even though we were able to obtain high levels of completed surveys from vocational students, their institutions were often very small. Therefore, parity between the different types of institutions was not obtained. In all, 802 students participated in the study. Surveys were completed during class sessions and, with few exceptions, all students in the classrooms filled out the surveys. Physical education classes were selected due to the fact that all Japanese college students are required to take Physical Education.

2.2 Participants

Of the respondents, 38% were female and 62% were male. There were more male respondents because fewer females were enrolled in the schools that had the largest numbers of respondents. The age of

those surveyed was from 18 to 21 years old.

Slightly over half (54.3%) of the respondents lived with their families. Less than ten percent (9.6%) lived in dormitories, with the remainder living in apartments (35.7%) or with another family (.4%). Nearly half (49.3%) of the respondents saw their mothers daily; however, only 1.5% saw their fathers daily. This is not an uncommon phenomenon since Japanese men often work very long hours. The educational attainment of over half of the mothers of the respondents (52.3%) was a high school diploma and the other mothers had some level of post-secondary training. Among the fathers of the respondents, 41.5% had a high school diploma and the rest had some post-secondary education. Most respondents (92.4%) had at least one sibling.

2.3 Measures

Two instruments were used in the investigation: 1) The Life Events Survey for Japanese Youth (LESJY), and 2) the Demographic Information questionnaire. The instruments were designed to assess a range of outcomes and contextual factors. For the purposes of this study, the items selected for analysis measure Enjo Kousai and the risk factors identified in previous studies or in discussions with Japanese scholars. A description of each instrument is provided below. Copies of the instruments are available from the first author.

2.3.1 The Life Events Survey for Japanese Youth (LESJY)

The LESJY measures potential risk factors; it has 114 items and responses are given on a five-point Likert scale. The LESJY combines items from Stephen Small's Teen Assessment Project (TAP) Survey (Small & Luster, 1994), with items found in the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY) 1997 (Center for Human Resource Research, 2002), and items created by the investigator based on the risk literature in North America, Europe, New Zealand, and Australia. Also included in the LESJY are items that are of particular concern in Japan. The LESJY instrument was developed for this study in collaboration with Japanese researchers who reviewed and modified the wording of each item to make sure that it was culturally appropriate and that the meaning of the terms would be understood by Japanese youth. All measures were translated into Japanese by a native speaker and then translated by another individual back into English to ensure proper translation. Both translators were bilingual and had studied in both Japanese and American universities and were familiar with the nuances of psychological language in both cultures.

2.3.2 Demographic Information Questionnaire

Basic demographic information was collected regarding the age, sex, and family composition of the respondents, and the academic background of the respondents' parents. The demographic information questionnaire was developed by both Japanese and American investigators.

2.3.3 Subscales

All items were scored on a five-point Likert scale. A total score for each subscale was constructed by averaging the item scores for each subscale. Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each subscale that was based on multiple items. A description of each subscale is provided below beginning with the risk

factors assessed in this study.

2.3.3.1 Developmental Risk Factors Subscales

2.3.3.2 History of Sexual Abuse

There were three items in this subscale. They included: I was touched inappropriately by a stranger (chikan) on a train or a bus; I was pressured to have sex when I did not want to; and I was sexually abused by an adult. Responses ranged from never (0) to four or more times (4). High scores indicated a greater frequency of sexual abuse. Cronbach's alpha was calculated at .72.

2.3.3.3 Drug Use

The Drug Use subscale included six items. Each item asked about the consumption of certain drugs over the last year. The items were: I use marijuana; I use inhalants (paint thinner, lighter fluid); I use prescription drugs for non-prescription purposes; I use cocaine/crack; I use steroids; and I use ecstasy or other designer drugs. Responses ranged from never (0) to daily (4). High scores indicated more drug use. Cronbach's alpha was calculated at .92.

2.3.3.4 Depressive Symptoms

The depressive symptoms subscale included seven items: I felt lonely; I did not feel like eating, my appetite was poor; I had trouble keeping my mind on what I was doing; I felt depressed; I felt sad; I did not like myself; and I thought about killing myself. Responses ranged from never (0) to always (4). Cronbach's alpha was .84.

2.3.3.5 Family Microsystem Risk Factors Subscales

2.3.3.6 Maternal Favoritism of Sibling

This was a single-item measure. It was: Growing up, my mom favored my sibling (s) over me. If the respondent had no siblings, they were asked to leave the question blank. Ninety-two percent of the respondents had siblings. Responses ranged from never (0) to always (4). High scores indicated greater parental favoritism of a sibling.

2.3.3.7 Paternal Favoritism of Sibling

This was a single-item measure. It was: Growing up, my dad favored my sibling (s) over me. If the respondent had no siblings, they were asked to leave the question blank. Responses ranged from never (0) to always (4).

2.3.3.8 Reports Mother Is Involved in Telekura (Telephone Sex)

In the Japanese popular press, there have been colorful discussions of the frequency of housewives' involvement in Telekura (telephone sex) and the negative impact of that behavior on their children. Particularly, how Telekura may increase aberrant sexual behavior in the mother's offspring. Though participation in this activity cannot be verified by the respondent's mother, over 20% of the respondents believed that their mother had some involvement with Telekura. There were two items in this subscale: I believe that my mom was involved with Telekura to meet people, and I believe that my mom was involved with Telekura to make money. Responses ranged from never (0) to four or more times (4). Scores on the two items were summed and high scores indicated presumed maternal

involvement in Telekura. Pearson's correlation for the two items was calculated at .79.

2.3.3.9 Reports Father Visits Fuzoku (Brothels)

Though frequenting brothels cannot be verified by the respondent's father, nearly one quarter of respondents believed that their father had visited a Fuzoku at least once. This was a single item: I believe that my father has gone to Fuzoku. Responses ranged from never (0) to four or more times (4).

2.3.3.10 Parent Has Been in Prison

There were two items that comprised this subscale: My dad was incarcerated, and my mom was incarcerated. They were measured by how often each parent was in prison; responses ranged from never (0) to four or more times (4). A score was computed by summing the two item scores. The correlation between the two items was .72.

2.3.3.11 Neighborhood Not Safe

This subscale had five items. They were: Growing up, my neighborhood was not safe after dark; Growing up, street gangs operated in my neighborhood; Growing up, I knew people who were involved in street gangs; Growing up, Yakuza (mafia) operated in my neighborhood; and Growing up, I knew people who were involved in Yakuza (mafia). Response ranged from never (0) to always (4). High scores indicated living in a less safe neighborhood. Cronbach's alpha was calculated at .80.

2.3.3.12 Enjo Kousai

This was a single item. The question was: I was involved in Enjo Kousai (I had sex or performed sexual acts to obtain things I wanted). In Japanese the term Enjo Kousai, as noted in the introduction, is implied that there is age and status discrepancy between provider and receiver of services. Responses ranged from never (0) to four or more times (4). High scores indicated a greater frequency of Enjo Kousai. For the logistic regression analysis, this item was recoded into a dichotomous variable—ever involved in Enjo Kousai or never involved in Enjo Kousai.

3. Results

The results section is divided into four parts. First, descriptive statistics are presented for the outcome measure—Enjo Kousai. Second, the correlations among the risk factors are examined. Next, the bivariate relations are presented; t-tests were conducted to compare youth who engaged in Enjo Kouai with youth who did not participate in Enjo Kousai on each of the predictor variables. Finally, the results of the logistic regression analysis are shown to determine which of the risk factors are predictive of the outcome variable when other predictor variables are controlled.

3.1 Enjo Kousai—Descriptive Statistics

As an initial step in the analysis, descriptive statistics were computed for the Enjo Kousai measure. This step was taken to gauge how prevalent Enjo Kousai was among Japanese youth enrolled in post-secondary institutions in the Sapporo area. In addition, descriptive statistics were computed for all of the predictor variables, and t-tests were computed to determine if males and females differed on any of the variables of interest. The results are presented in Table 1.

In this sample, a total of 7.4% responded that they had been involved in Enjo Kousai. Nearly ten percent (9.5%) of the male sub-sample responded that they had been involved in Enjo Kousai, and 4.3% of the female sub-sample reported involvement in Enjo Kousai. The Japanese youth who acknowledged their involvement in Enjo Kousai were academically diverse; there were youth who attended the most prestigious universities as well as those attending vocational schools.

Given the large sample size, t-tests revealed significant gender differences on all of the predictor variables. Consistent with many prior studies, a history of sexual abuse was more common among female respondents. In contrast, male respondents scored higher on many family risk factors, such as having a parent who had been in prison, mother's involvement in phone sex (Telekura), and father visiting brothels (Fuzoku). We could not determine if males were more likely than females to be aware of these problems, if they were more likely to report these problems, or if indeed these problems were more common among the families of males in the sample.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

| Risk Factors | Full Sample | Female Sub-sample | Male Sub-sample | Gender Difference in scores |
|--|---------------|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| | <i>M (SD)</i> | <i>M (SD)</i> | <i>M (SD)</i> | <i>t-test</i> |
| <i>Individual Risk Factors</i> | | | | |
| History of Sexual Abuse | .40 (.75) | .45 (.63) | .36 (.79) | 34.78** |
| Drug Use | .61 (.59) | .44 (.36) | .73 (.68) | 38.85** |
| Depressive Symptoms | 1.31 (.80) | 1.21 (.66) | 1.37 (.87) | 8.65** |
| <i>Family Risk Factors</i> | | | | |
| Parent has been in Prison | .16 (.64) | .04 (.36) | .23 (.74) | 51.89** |
| Believe Mother Involved in Telekura | .18 (.65) | .07 (.45) | .24 (.77) | 50.49** |
| Believe Father Visits Fuzoku | .60 (1.25) | .45 (1.12) | .71 (1.32) | 20.04** |
| Mother Favors Sibling | 1.13 (1.24) | .94 (1.17) | 1.26 (1.26) | 9.56** |
| Father Favors Sibling | 1.12 (1.24) | .89 (1.18) | 1.27 (1.26) | 9.75** |
| <i>Extra familial Risk Factor</i> | | | | |
| Neighborhood Not Safe | .99 (.93) | .81 (.77) | 1.11 (1.02) | 16.34** |
| Enjo Kousai | .18 (.71) | .10 (.53) | .23 (.80) | 45.01** |

Note. Standard deviations are presented in parentheses next to mean scores.

t-test scores that have a gender differences significant at the .01 level** (two-tailed).

t-test scores that have a gender differences significant at the .05 level* (two-tailed).

3.2 Bivariate Analysis—The Relations among the Risk Factors

As the next steps in the analysis, Pearson correlations were computed to determine the relationships among risk factors (Table 2). Due to the large sample size, many of the variables were significantly correlated with each other. Using Cohen's (1988) interpretation of the magnitude of correlations, a correlation greater than .5 is considered large, a correlation that ranges from .3 to .5 is considered moderate, and a correlation less than .3 is considered small. Most of the correlations among the variables were small to moderate in magnitude.

It was originally thought that collinearity might be a problem in the data set due to the fact that all information is from the same respondents and that some of the variables are conceptually related to each other. However, a collinearity diagnostic was run that showed that the variables had a high tolerance and that multicollinearity was not likely to be a significant problem in the analysis.

A review of the correlation matrix in Table 2 shows that many of the predictor variables were related to each other in expected ways. For example, a history of sexual abuse is associated with drug use by the youth. Likewise, many of the family risk factors were correlated; for example, respondents who thought their mothers favored a sibling also tended to believe that their fathers favored their sibling. Living in an unsafe neighborhood was also associated with higher levels of risk on both the individual (e.g., drug use) and family (e.g., parent in prison) risk factors.

Table 2. Pearson Correlation between Risk Factors

| Risk Factors | History of Sexual Abuse | Drug Use | Depressive Symptoms | Parent has been in Prison | Believe Mother Involved in Terekura | Believe Father Visits Fuzuko | Mother Favors Sibling | Father Favors Sibling | Neighborhood Not Safe |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| History of Sexual Abuse | 1.0 | | | | | | | | |
| Drug Use | .49** | 1.0 | | | | | | | |
| Depressive Symptoms | .28** | .31** | 1.0 | | | | | | |
| Parent has been in Prison | .60** | .70** | .26** | 1.0 | | | | | |
| Believe Mother Involved in Terekura | .56** | .64** | .30** | .72** | 1.0 | | | | |
| Believe Father Visits Fuzuko | .29** | .31** | .19** | .33** | .35** | 1.0 | | | |
| Mother Favors Sibling | .22** | .27** | .48** | .23** | .28** | .17* | 1.0 | | |
| Father Favors Sibling | .21** | .29** | .44** | .24** | .28** | .17* | .74** | 1.0 | |
| Neighborhood Not Safe | .32** | .41** | .33** | .29** | .29** | .26** | .27** | .29** | 1.0 |

Note. Correlation is significant at the .01 level** (two-tailed), Correlation is significant at the .05 level* (two-tailed).

T-tests were conducted to compare those who reported ever engaging in Enjo Kousai and those who never engaged in Enjo Kousai on each of the risk factors. Separate analyses were conducted for females and males, and the results are presented in Table 3.

For the most part, the results showed that those who engaged in Enjo Kousai differed significantly from those who did not in ways that were consistent with expectations; that is, those who participated in Enjo Kousai had higher scores on the risk factors than those who did not engage in Enjo Kousai. Among the females, there was a significant difference between those who participated and those who did not in regard to sexual abuse history, depressive symptoms, father's involvement in Fuzoku, mother and father's favoritism of sibling, and living in an unsafe neighborhood. Among the males a significant difference was found between those who participated in Enjo Kousai and those who did not and all of the risk factors.

Table 3. Independent Sample T-Tests between Enjo Kousai Participation and Risk Factors

| | Full Sample | Female sub-sample | Male sub-sample |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| | Differences between those who did and did not engage in Enjo Kousai | Differences between those who did and did not engage in Enjo Kousai | Differences between those who did and did not engage in Enjo Kousai |
| Risk Factors | | | |
| <i>Individual Risk Factors</i> | | | |
| History of Sexual Abuse | -12.27** | -3.84** | -13.17** |
| Drug Use | -7.66** | -1.98 | -7.96** |
| Depressive Symptoms | -9.14** | -5.28** | -7.09** |
| <i>Family Risk Factors</i> | | | |
| Parent has been in Prison | -7.68** | -1.31 | -8.66** |
| Believe Mother Involved in Telekura | -7.25** | -1.67 | -7.54** |
| Believe Father Visits Fuzoku | -6.55** | -2.52* | -5.83** |
| Mother Favors Sibling | -7.03** | -4.04** | -5.42** |
| Father Favors Sibling | -6.14** | -3.76** | -4.53** |
| <i>Extra familial Risk Factors</i> | | | |
| Neighborhood Not Safe | -9.18** | -3.32** | -7.90** |

t-test scores that have a difference significant at the .01 level** (two-tailed).

t-test scores that have a difference significant at the .05 level* (two-tailed).

3.3 Multivariate Analysis

Having examined the bivariate relationships among the variables, the next step in the analysis was to conduct a logistic regression analysis to determine which risk factors were related to Enjo Kousai when other factors were controlled. Once again, separate analyses were conducted for males and females. The risk factor variables were entered simultaneously in the logistic regression equation, and the results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Logistic Regression Analysis: Predictors of Enjo Kousai for Youth with Siblings

| | Full sample Beta Coefficient (Standard Error) | Female Sub-sample Beta Coefficient (Standard Error) | Male sub-sample Beta Coefficient (Standard Error) |
|--|---|---|---|
| <i>Risk Factors</i> | | | |
| <i>Individual Risk Factors</i> | | | |
| History of Sexual Abuse | 1.43** (.27) | 2.68** (.83) | 1.61** (.37) |
| Drug Use | .70* (.30) | 3.27** (1.32) | .81* (.37) |
| Depressive Symptoms | .75* (.33) | 2.09** (.79) | .46 (.43) |
| <i>Family Risk Factors</i> | | | |
| Parent has been in Prison | .44 (.37) | -4.89** (1.90) | 1.01* (.45) |
| Believe Mother Involved in Telekura | -.18 (.35) | 1.36 (1.28) | -.37 (.45) |
| Believe Father Visits Fuzoku | .14 (.16) | .77** (.31) | -.11 (.26) |
| Mother Favors Sibling | .22 (.22) | .45 (.37) | .13 (.31) |
| Father Favors Sibling | -.08 (.21) | .03 (.41) | -.38 (.29) |
| <i>Extra familial Risk Factors</i> | | | |
| Neighborhood Not Safe | .43 (.25) | -.14 (.50) | .77* (.35) |
| Constant | -6.44** (.73) | -11.09** (2.65) | -6.11** (1.00) |

Nagelkerke R square full sample .64.

Nagelkerke R square female sub-sample sample .64.

Nagelkerke R square male sub-sample .75.

Note. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$.

The risk factors were useful for predicting Enjo Kousai in Japanese youth. The Nagelkerke R square for the model was .64 for the full sample, .64 for the female sub-sample, and .75 for the male sub-sample.

The variables that were significantly related to Enjo Kousai for the full sample were the three individual risk factors: history of sexual abuse, drug use, and depressive symptoms. For the female sub-sample, history of sexual abuse, drug use, depressive symptoms, parent has been in prison, and father visits Fuzoku were significant predictors of involvement in Enjo Kousai. However, contrary to expectations, females who had a parent who was in prison were less likely to be involved in Enjo Kousai than other females. For the male sub-sample, history of sexual abuse, drug use, parent has been in prison and living in an unsafe neighborhood were significant predictors of participating in Enjo Kousai. In contrast to the results for females, having a parent who had been in prison increased the risk of involvement in Enjo Kousai for males.

An additional logistic analysis was run so that the 8% of youth who did not have siblings were included in the results. The variables mother favors a sibling and father favors a sibling were not included in this analysis. The results are presented in Table 5. The results presented in Table 4 and Table 5 are very similar. The inclusion of singletons in the logistic analysis for Table 5 did not change the variables that were significant predictors of Enjo Kousai.

Table 5. Logistic Regression Analysis: Predictors of Enjo Kousai for Youth with or without Siblings

| | Full sample Beta Coefficient (Standard Error) | Female Sub-sample Beta Coefficient (Standard Error) | Male Sub-sample Beta Coefficient (Standard Error) |
|--|---|---|---|
| Risk Factors | | | |
| <i>Individual Risk Factors</i> | | | |
| History of Sexual Abuse | 1.37** (.26) | 2.30** (.71) | 1.54** (.36) |
| Drug Use | .70* (.29) | 3.43** (1.24) | .69* (.33) |
| Depressive Symptoms | .85** (.30) | 2.27** (.70) | .45 (.39) |
| <i>Family Risk Factors</i> | | | |
| Parent has been in Prison | .48 (.37) | -4.65** (1.74) | .98* (.45) |
| Believe Mother Involved in Telekura | -.12 (.34) | 1.55 (1.17) | -.29 (.42) |

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Believe Father Visits Fuzoku | .15 (.16) | .73** (.27) | -.11 (.25) |
| <i>Extra familial Risk Factors</i> | | | |
| Neighborhood Not Safe | .47* (.24) | -.19 (.48) | .75* (.32) |
| Constant | -6.51** (.73) | -10.28** (2.26) | -6.38** (1.00) |

Nagelkerke R square full sample .64.

Nagelkerke R square female sub-sample sample .60.

Nagelkerke R square male sub-sample .74.

Note. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$.

4. Discussion

It is clear that Enjo Kousai is a behavior that is participated in by both Japanese male and female youth. Nearly one out of 10 males and one out of 25 females reported engaging in this behavior. Moreover, this research suggests that both females and males who experience certain life events are at higher risk for being involved in Enjo Kousai. For females, the logistic regression analyses indicated that sexual abuse history, drug use, depressive symptoms and father's involvement in Fuzoku, increased the likelihood that they were involved in Enjo Kousai. Unexpectedly, females who had a parent who spent time in prison were less likely to be involved in Enjo Kousai than other females. One possible explanation is that parental punishment for illicit activities deterred females from engaging in behavior that would be illegal if money was received expressly for providing sexual services. However, this finding should be interpreted with caution until replicated given that parental imprisonment was unrelated to Enjo Kousai among females in the bivariate analysis.

Among the males, a significant difference was found between those who participated in Enjo Kousai and those who did not participate on all of the risk factors in the bivariate analysis. In the logistic regression analysis, males were more likely to be involved in Enjo Kousai if they had a history of sexual abuse, used drugs, had a parent who had been in prison, or lived in an unsafe neighborhood.

Surprisingly, maternal involvement in the Japanese sex industry-Telekura—was not related to involvement in Enjo Kousai for either male or female youth. However, paternal involvement in Fuzoku was related to Enjo Kousai for females only. The lack of relation between Enjo Kousai and these parental behaviors cannot be explained by a low rate of involvement in these activities by parents; to the contrary, one in five youth thought their mothers had been involved in Telekura and one in four youth thought their fathers had been involved in Fuzoku.

The literature has been relatively silent regarding Enjo Kousai in males. To our knowledge, this is the first research that examines predictors of Enjo Kousai among males. It is unclear why attention has been paid previously to the deleterious effects of Enjo Kousai in females, but so little attention has been

focused on the involvement of male youth in this activity. Some of our Japanese colleagues believe that there is more freedom for Japanese male youth to experiment sexually and thereby Enjo Kousai is not interpreted culturally as being as deleterious for males as females. However, from our research, it is clear that both males and females who participate in Enjo Kousai are experiencing increased difficulties in negotiating their youth and thus are in need of the support and concern that has been afforded to females involved in Enjo Kousai.

In our research we found that Enjo Kousai was more prevalent in Japanese male than female youth. This is consistent with the results of a study by Arimoto (2000) 5.2% male vs. .03% female, although the percentage of males reporting involvement in Enjo Kousai was higher in our study than in the study conducted by Arimoto. We considered the possibility that male bravado or exaggeration of their sexual exploits at a particular school (e.g., a school with a disproportionate percentage of male students) might account for the higher percentage of male reported involvement in Enjo Kousai this can not be ruled out. However, we found that the percentage of males who reported engaging in Enjo Kousai was fairly consistent across schools and school types, such as vocational schools and schools with competitive admissions standards. To further our understanding of Enjo Kousai among males, it will be important to investigate the gender of the adults who are paying these male youth for sexual services in future studies.

The high rate of participation in this study by Japanese youth can be interpreted as the desire to share their feelings, motivations and personal history under the safety of anonymity. A certain amount of latitude seems to have been given to discuss issues with a stranger that they may have not discussed with those to whom they are closest. Once the respondents had been assured that this information would not be able to be traced back to them, they seemed eager to participate. Many respondents seemed to be amazed that people wanted to know what they really thought. Others found the task difficult because they had never been asked many questions about their inner feelings. Many respondents have taken a battery of tests on a monthly basis since elementary school. But none had ever been asked to take a survey that asked them what they truly thought and were told that any answer would be correct.

Given that many of the Japanese youth reported feelings and behaviors that do not conform to the traditional image of the ideal Japanese youth, we believe that most youth responded truthfully to the questions in the survey. However, there is no way to verify that this is the case. Another limitation of the study is that all of the information came from a single source. Shared method variance may have contributed to the relations between predictor and outcome variables. Although it would have been desirable to obtain information from another source, limited resources precluded us from doing that. Moreover, the youth is likely to be the only person who can answer some of the questions that were of interest to us, such as the questions about their involvement in Enjo Kousai. The availability of only cross-sectional data is also a limitation. We cannot be certain of the temporal ordering of some events. For example, drug use or depression may be a reaction to Enjo Kousai rather than a cause of it. In

general, no causal relations can be determined from correlational analyses with cross-sectional data. Thus, the findings must be interpreted with appropriate caution. In addition, the measures used were developed for this study, and this study provides the first data on the reliability of the measures and the extent to which the measures are associated with each other in predictable ways. Clearly, further testing of these measures is necessary in future studies. Our Japanese collaborators viewed the items as appropriate for use in Japan, even though the selection of items was based largely on Western research; nevertheless we cannot rule out the possibility that the interpretation of some of the items by the participants was slightly different in the Japanese context.

Despite these limitations, we believe that this study adds significantly to the literature on Enjo Kousai and the findings will be of particular interest to the people of Japan. The number of Japanese youth who acknowledge Enjo Kousai involvement is substantial and warrants real concern for the well being of Japanese youth. This research will be shared with both Japanese scholars and officials in the hope of instituting programs that promote the health of Japanese youth and that strengthen the support and understanding for youth in their home and at school.

Furthermore, when creating programs aimed at reducing the risk factors that are correlated to Enjo Kousai, to the extent possible, we believe that programs should be designed to address the specific concerns of both genders. Moreover, the research should be of interest to government policy makers responsible for protecting children from harm. Recently, there are some Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) forming to combat the exploitation of Japanese youth (Noyori-Corbett & Moxley, 2017a; Noyori-Corbett & Moxley, 2017b). It is hoped that they are successful.

Acknowledgments

Many thanks to the Yasuda Foundation, Toko Oshio, Tom Luster and the Youth of Japan.

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