Research Article

Hikikomori in Japanese Community Perspective

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Abstract

This research is entitled "Hikikomori in Japanese Community Perspective". Data was collected by distributing questionnaires to Kobe Women's University students. Through this research, several opinions from the Japanese community will be obtained regarding the understanding of Hikikomori. In this study, two concepts are used: the definition of Hikikomori and the definition of Anthropophobia. By the result, the definition of Hikikomori is as follows; someone who always shuts himself up in the house for a long time, , someone who is not connected with society, someone who is isolated because he doesn't have good relations with society, someone who doesn't work or attend school, and someone who depends on his parents for his life. The causes can be divided into two; internal and external. The causes from oneself (internal) include no desire to be involved with other people, unfamiliar with society, failure at work, feeling confused with the community environment, dissatisfaction with their personal life, lack of enthusiasm for life, not being good at communicating with others, has not found identity, rarely communicates with the outside world, does not fit in with people in society, stress, trauma, feel unprofitable or unfit for work or school, feels tired of social life, feels bored with social life, in his life, there are opportunities to self-isolate, embarrassed, feel like doing nothing, unstable physically and mentally, feel confused about public relations. Meanwhile, the causes from external parties include bullying, harassment, changes in community behaviour, and intimidation.

Keywords: Hikikomori; Japanese society; Questionnaire

1. Introduction

One of the implementations of bushido teachings in Japanese society is the existence of a culture of shame. Junshi's actions (suicide following the master's death) and Karoshi's actions (died from overwork) are also influenced by the culture of shame. Although nowadays this is not the case, the representation of the culture of shame is still rooted in the personality of Japanese society. One of them is known as the Hikikomori phenomenon. According to Kuswarno (2009: 2) the phenomenon occurs due to problems and changes in the surrounding environment. The phenomenon is also caused by a rapid change of something from an environment, region, city, even country.

Based on a survey by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, 1.2% of the Japanese population has experienced hikikomori; 2.4% of the population in their 20s have experienced hikikomori once (1 in 40). Compared to women, there are four times as many hikikomori males. One in 20 family members whose parents have a college education has experienced hikikomori. There is no relationship between affluent or not economically well-off families (Murakami: 2013). The data was detailed again in January 2015,

the Wall Street Journal released a report on hikikomori or self-isolation in Japan. In research conducted by the Japanese Ministry of Health, it is known that there are 500 thousand to 2 million hikikomori people in the country. This is related to competition in the world of work and education that causes social deviations such as *ijime, hikikomori, kyoufuso* and so on which are starting to be experienced by Japanese people. (Janti. 2006:188)

Some of the studies that have been done on Hikikomori include Arundhina (2007) in his thesis entitled "Hikikomori in NHK Novel Ni Youkoso! And it has to do with the lack of parental participation". This research aims to understand a Japanese social problem that is hikikomori and to find out about the lack of the role of parents in children's lives through an understanding of Tatsuhiko Takimoto's NHK ni Youkoso! Both in novels and in real life. Setyawan (2015) in his thesis entitled "Hikikomori as a Gender Problem in Japan". The study aims to shed light on the link between hikikomori and gender issues in Japan. Pradhana (2016) in his research entitled "Hikikomori: Social Diseases or Lifestyle (?)". This study discusses the phenomenon of hikikomori that is being experienced by adolescents in Japan today which is a lifestyle that is common in upper-middle family environments and hikikomori which is considered to have become a social disease must be overcome immediately. In addition, this study also discusses the causal factors and solutions that can be used to overcome the phenomenon of hikikomori. Darmayasa (2020) in a thesis titled "Hikikomori Phenomenon on NHK Ni Youkoso Anime by Tatsuhiko Takimoto". This study discusses the causes, impacts, and healing efforts of hikikomori in Tatsuhiko Takimoto's NHK ni Youkoso anime. Fawwaz (2018) in a thesis entitled "The Process of Self-Actualization of Character Tatsuhiro Satou to Escape from Hikikomori's Life in NHK ni Youkoso Anime!".

The difference between previous research and research conducted is that previous research discussed Hikikomori based on data sources in the form of literary works while this study directly asked the Japanese people. In addition, the main question in this study is the Japanese people's understanding of Hikikomori and the behind the phenomenon. Based on the survey above, what is interesting to study is the extent to which the development of the hikikomori phenomenon in Japanese society today. Through this research, several opinions from the Japanese community will be obtained regarding the understanding of Hikikomori.

2. Methods

In this study, two concepts are used, namely the definition of Hikikomori and the definition of Anthropophobia as the main of research. The concept section explained the use of questionnaires in the data retrieval process.

2.1 Definition of Hikikomori

Hikikomori is a social phenomenon as a term for people who belong to this social group. Based on the Indonesian Wikipedia, Hikikomori (引きこもり, ひきこもり, or 引き籠もり). It literally means to withdraw, to shut oneself up. So, Hikikomori is a Japanese term for a phenomenon among teenagers or young adults in Japan who withdraw and isolate themselves from social life. He added hikikomori are people who refuse to leave their homes and isolate themselves from society by continuously being indoors for periods exceeding six months. One of the reasons is because they are embarrassed to meet outsiders because of threats (bullying) or because they are ashamed of themselves.

Tamaki (1998: 6) in his book entitled, "Hikikomori as a Social Phenomenon: Unending / Ongoing Adolescence" explains as follows :

"…hikikomori is not the name of a disease, but a symptom" and that "according to the field of psychology one

is not supposed to set a diagnosis from hikikomori, but rather the symptoms that eventually comes to accompany it."

Dziesinski, (2003) describes the causative factors of hikikomori which are divided into 4 categories, namely school environmental factors, family factors, social environmental factors, and individual factors.

2.2 Definition of Anthropophobia

A phobia is an abnormal and irrational (difficult to explain the reason) fear of something (either an object or a situation) in excess. The word phobia itself comes from the Greek "Phobos", which means "fear". The word phobia was first introduced as a medical term by Celsus, a Roman author of encyclopaedias. He lived in the first century B.C., but the word phobia itself only appeared in psychiatric literature in the 19th century.

Based on the book DSM-IV-TR (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 4th edition, Text Revision), phobias are classified into 3 categories namely :

Agoraphobia. It comes from the Greek word meaning "fear in public". Agoraphobia is the fear of crowds and open spaces. Some sources include Agoraphobia in the category of social phobia. People with agoraphobia will have difficulty in living daily life. Situations such as queuing in public places, eating in public places, taking public transportation, and the like will become very scary. Not only public places that many people, but agoraphobia sufferers are also afraid of open places (e.g., empty roads, empty fields). They feel more comfortable when surrounded by something (e.g., trees). At a less severe level, the sufferer will only feel uncomfortable, but at a more severe level, the sufferer can experience panic attacks. For cases of severe cases, they will lock themselves at home and don't want to go out.

Social phobia, which is the fear of being observed and humiliated in public. This causes the person to avoid social situations. Situations that become scary for the sufferer, for example speaking in public, performing in public, and so on. Simple phobia (simple phobia). A simple phobia is a type of phobia that arises because of only one trigger in the form of a specific object or situation.

Hikikomori sufferers can be classified into the type of social phobia. One of the symptoms of someone suffering from Hikikomori is having a fear of interacting with other people and prefers to isolate themselves for a certain period. More specifically, people who shut themselves off from the outside world are usually diagnosed as having "anthropophobia" which is a term for a condition where a person is afraid to interact with other people.

Anthropophobia comes from the words "Anthro" which means "people" and "Phobia" which means "fear". Anthropophobia can be defined as a condition of a person who has a fear of dealing with someone or other people. Anthropophobia is complete fear of other people, even he is afraid of family, friends, or people in his own environment. People with Anthropophobia perceive anyone as threatening, uncomfortable, or potentially causing trouble.

Symptoms of "anthropophobia" can be diagnosed from the actions of a person shutting himself up, which gradually becomes more and more afraid to interact with other people. Therefore, in dealing with hikikomori perpetrators, extra attention is needed to each symptom, especially the fear they have in their minds towards outsiders.

There is a hikikomori who goes out at night or early in the morning so as not to meet with friends or neighbours, and there is also a hikikomori who tries to hide his situation as a hikikomori by ostensibly working and attending school but spends his time aimlessly such as walking and riding the train (Furlong, 2008: 3).

2.3 Questionnaire

According to Arikunto (2006), Questionnaire is a written statement that is used to obtain information from the respondent in the sense of personal reports or things he knows. While according to Sugiono (2008), a questionnaire is a technique of data collection conducted by giving a set of questions or written statements to respondents to answer.

From the two definitions, it can be concluded that the questionnaire is a set of methods / techniques for collecting data by giving several questions or written statements to the respondent about the person or things he knows.

The aim of questionnaire in this research is to confirm that the social phenomenon known as hikikomori is indeed true and to measure the Japanese people's concern for the hikikomori phenomenon which tends to become a social problem in the country.

3. Result and Discussion

In this section analysed the data obtained from the questionnaire. Distribution of questionnaires in Kobe Women's University-Japan, 70 questionnaires were obtained. Questions were posed to Kobe Women's University students who came from various regions in Japan. From the data was then analysed as follows:

3.1 To what extent do Japanese people know about the Hikikomori phenomenon

Based on the results of the questionnaire, all informants said they knew about hikikomori which had become a phenomenon in Japanese society.

3.2 Definition of Hikikomori Based on Japanese Public Perception

The following is the definition of hikikomori from the perception of the Japanese people collected in the questionnaire.

(1) Always lock himself at home, isolate himself from society.

(2) Do not leave the house or room. And refuse to engage with the community before the problem is solved.

(5) Not connected to outside society and someone who is isolated

(6) Not working and always staying at home.

(7) I think that person is someone who stays in the room for a long time and doesn't want to get involved with other people.

(8) Staying at home, people who are not familiar with society and have a bad environment.

(10) Spending time indoors or at home.

(11) Didn't go out, always spend time indoors.

(12) The people who lock themselves in their homes and didn't want to have anything to do with society

(13) Not leaving the house, feeling confused in the community.

(14) Didn't go out of their own room or house.

(15) Not working and living at parent's expense.

(18) Not working or going to school just spending time at home.

(19) Stay at home and didn't go out in 365 days.

(20) I know, people who lock themselves at home, didn't try to make money and didn't want to get involved with other people.

(21) Someone who does not leave the house.

(22) Someone who doesn't leave the house and spends all day in the room.

(23) I know. Someone who spends time at home without leaving the house due to injury, bullying, and many other reasons.

(24) Always stay at home without going out because he hasn't found his true self.

(25) Didn't leave his own house or room because he rarely communicates with the outside.

(26) I know. People who lock themselves at home.

(27) Staying at home without working because he didn't fit in with people and society.

(28) Someone who locks himself at home and doesn't go out because of stress and trauma.

(29) Someone who doesn't go out and always stays at home because he's not interested in outsiders.

(30) Someone who does not leave the house or room and closed communication with the community. I think the main cause is bullying and harassment.

(31) Someone who locks himself at home.

(33) A person who neither works nor goes to school due to the influence of a mental illness who considers himself or herself unprofitable or unfit for school and work.

(34) Someone who doesn't want to leave the house because they are tired of social life.

(35) Someone who stays at home all day and doesn't go out because he is bored with his social life.

(36) Someone who just stays at home for a long time because in his life he could lock himself up somewhere.

(39) Someone who does not go out and spend time at home due to child abuse, poverty, and others.

(40) A person who locks himself in a place and has not come out of that place since then.

(41) A hikikomori is someone who doesn't go to school or work but locks himself up at home due to bullying and other reasons.

(42) Someone who locks himself at home due to bullying, stress, and dissatisfaction with society.

(43) Someone who always stays at home does not work or go to school.

(44) Neither work nor leave the house but stay at home for years and isolate himself from society.

(45) People who are not good at interacting, are shy and always lock themselves in the house.

(46) People who do not leave their homes because they cannot stand the bullying or stress, they experience due to social pressure and choose to run away from responsibilities.

(47) People who always stay at home don't work and go to school. This is a mental illness that causes a person to not feel the benefits of going to work or going to school.

(48) Neither go out nor leave the room.

(49) Not leaving his room and everyone has their own reasons.

(50) Lock himself in a place and didn't come out other than that place.

(51) Does not work and just locks himself in the house.

(52) Do not leave the house, and do not want to be involved with the community because they feel that their personal needs are not being met.

(53) Always stay at home and didn't go out for 365 days.

(54) Staying at home without getting a job. Almost never comes out. Quit a job or don't want to work and don't feel like doing anything.

(55) Did not leave the room or the house. shut themselves off from outside relations. I think the main cause is bullying, harassment, and stuff.

(56) Did not go out and lock yourself at home because of trauma. There are people who help (e.g., parents)

(57) Lives daily life at home, rarely goes out, and shuts himself in the room. I think that because I don't want to be involved with human and environmental relationships, it's like not accepting yourself and not being able to live a life that suits you.

(58) A person who lives at home without a job or a child who cannot go to school. I think it's because of human relations and bullying.

(59) Did not go to school or society and spend time isolating themselves from the environment.

(60) Did not go out and always stay in the room. I think it's because of having a bad experience that social relations and human relations don't go well.

(61) People who always stay at home without working and using their parents' money.

(62) Locked himself at home and did not want to be involved in social life.

(64) Not participating in society, various problems arise related to the background of the individual that take a long time to resolve.

(65) Lock yourself in your house or room and didn't go out. Because the problem of bullying resulted in them refusing to come out.

(66) For various reasons, can't go out. They shut themselves up because they feel confused about society and human relations.

(67) Most of the day is in the room or home. because he has a mental illness, he has no place in society and does not work.

(68) Did not go to school and did not work for approximately 6 months. I think the cause is that they feel confused about relationships with other people.

(69) Did not leave the room or the house. This is because people who fail to find work or who have disability are not supported properly.

(70) Lock yourself in the house, and don't get involved with the community. Has no place to work. People who have mental problems.

As for some definitions of Hikikomori from the perception of Japanese society as follows, namely someone who always shuts himself up or isolates himself in the house for a long time (from one month to years), someone who does not leave the house and refuses to do activities with other parties, someone who is not connected with society, someone who is isolated because he doesn't have good relations with society, someone who doesn't work or attend school, and someone who depends on his parents for his life.

3.3 Causes of Hikikomori

The causes of hikikomori can be divided into two, namely the cause of the perpetrator's self (internal) and the cause of external parties (external).

3.3.1 Causes of Hikikomori from himself (internal), include

(7) I think that person is someone who stays in the room for a long time and doesn't want to get involved with other people

(9) Unaccustomed to society and failing at work.

(13) Not leaving the house, feeling confused in the community. Dissatisfied with his personal life.

(16) Relations with the environment are not working well and I think I have neglected and lost touch with the surrounding environment.

(17) Unable to find a place to work and not knowing the vitality to live.

(18) Did not work or go to school only spend time at home because they do not want to be involved with the surrounding environment.

(22) Not leaving the house and spending all day in the room. Few people have jobs because the population of people who are not good at communicating with others has increased.

(24) Always stay at home without going out because he has not found his identity.

(25) Did not leave the house or room because they rarely communicate with the outside world.

(27) Staying at home without working because they don't fit in with people and society.

(28) Yes. Lock himself at home and don't go out because of stress and trauma

(29) Did not go out and always stay at home because they are not interested in outsiders.

(32) Because many people in Japan are currently experiencing stress, these people have become a society that is always connected to the internet and locks themselves at home to isolate themselves from the surrounding environment.

(33) Not working or going to school because of the influence of mental illness

who considers himself unprofitable or unfit for school and work.

(34) Do not want to leave the house because they are tired of social life.

(35) People who stay at home all day and don't go out because they are bored with their social life.

(36) Staying at home for a long time because in his life he could lock himself up somewhere.

(38) Not good at communicating with people and shut up because of shame.

(45) People who are not good at interacting, are shy and always lock themselves in their shells.

(47) People who always stay at home don't work and go to school. This is a mental illness that causes a person to not feel the benefits of going to work or going to school.

(52) Do not leave the house, and do not want to be involved with the community because they feel that their personal needs are not being met.

(54) Staying at home without getting a job. Almost never comes out. Quit a job or don't want to work and don't feel like doing anything.

(57) Lives daily life at home, rarely goes out, and shuts himself in the room. I think that because I don't want to be involved with human and environmental relationships, it's like not accepting yourself and not being able to live a life that suits you.

(62) Locked himself at home and did not want to be involved in social life.

(63) Physically and mentally unstable, and unable to leave the room within a certain distance

(66) For various reasons, cannot go out. They shut themselves up because they feel confused about society and human relations.

(67) Most of the day is in the room or home. because he has a mental illness, he has no place in society and does not work.

(68) Did not go to school and did not work for approximately 6 months. I think the cause is that they feel confused about relationships with other people.

(69) Did not leave the room or the house. This is because people who fail to find work or who have disability are not supported properly.

(70) Lock himself in the house, and don't get involved with the community. Has no place to work. People who have mental problems.

3.3.2 Causes of Hikikomori from outside (external) parties, including

(3) Due to environmental problems, bullying and isolation from the surrounding environment prevent the person from leaving the house.

(4) I know, because of his relationship with the community he does not leave the house. I think bullying and harassment in the workplace are also the cause.

(23) I know. Spending time at home without leaving the house due to injury, bullying, and many other reasons.

(26) I know. People who lock themselves at home, the reason is experiencing bullying at school, there is a change in people at home, so they don't want to go to school.

(30) Do not leave the house or room and close communication with the community. I think the main cause is bullying and harassment.

(37) Not leaving the house due to unbearable stress and bullying is something that cannot escape reality.

(39) Not going out and spending time at home due to child abuse, poverty and others.

(41) Hikikomori are people who do not go to school or work but lock themselves at home due to bullying and other causes.

(42) Locked away at home due to bullying, stress, and dissatisfaction with society.

(46) People who do not leave the house because they cannot stand the bullying or stress experienced due to social pressure and choose to run away from responsibilities.

(55) Do not leave the room/house. avoid external relations. I think the main cause is bullying, harassment, and so on.

(58) A person who lives at home without a job or a child who cannot attend school. I think it's because of human relations and bullying.

(60) Do not go out and always stay in the room. I think it's because of having a bad experience those social relations and human relations don't go well.

The causes of hikikomori can be divided into two, namely the cause of the perpetrator's self (internal) and the cause of external parties (external). The causes of Hikikomori from oneself (internal) include no desire to be involved with other people, unfamiliar with society, failure at work, feeling confused with the community environment, dissatisfaction with their personal life, lack of enthusiasm for life, not good at communicating with others, has not found identity, rarely communicates with the outside world, does not fit in with people in society, stress, trauma, feel unprofitable or unfit for work or school, feels tired of social life, feels bored with social life, in his life there are opportunities to self-isolate, embarrassed, feel like doing nothing, unstable physically and mentally, feel confused about public relations. Meanwhile, the causes of Hikikomori from external parties include bullying, harassment, changes in community behaviour, and intimidation.

4. Conclusion

Data was collected by distributing questionnaires to Kobe Women's University students. There are 70 data which are then analysed. Of the 70 data, all informants said they knew about the hikikomori phenomenon in Japan.

As for some definitions of Hikikomori from the perception of Japanese society as follows, namely someone who always shuts himself up or isolates himself in the house for a long time (from one month to years), someone who does not leave the house and refuses to do activities with other parties, someone who is not connected with society, someone who is isolated because he doesn't have good relations with society, someone who doesn't work or attend school, and someone who depends on his parents for his life.

The causes of hikikomori can be divided into two, namely the cause of the perpetrator's self (internal) and the cause of external parties (external). The causes of Hikikomori from oneself (internal) include no desire to be involved with other people, unfamiliar with society, failure at work, feeling confused with the community environment, dissatisfaction with their personal life, lack of enthusiasm for life, not good at communicating with others, has not found identity, rarely communicates with the outside world, does not fit in with people in society, stress, trauma, feel unprofitable or unfit for work or school, feels tired of social life, feels bored with social life, in his life there are opportunities to self-isolate, embarrassed, feel like doing nothing, unstable physically and mentally, feel confused about public relations. Meanwhile, the causes of Hikikomori from external parties include bullying, harassment, changes in community behaviours, and intimidation.

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