

Problems in the Probation System since the 2000s, Japan and UK :

What to Expect from the 'Narrative Approach'

TAKAHASHI, Yuki

There have been strong concerns about 'reducing re-offending' in the probation system in Japan and the U.K since the 2000s. Under such circumstance, evidence-based practice and risk-management have been more and more emphasized. On the other hand, the 'narratives' of those experiencing that and the process of 'desistance' or 'recovering' have been focused on in the field of medicine, social work, and criminology.

Such thought process can provide an effective antithesis for today's tendency to pursue 'reducing re-offending'. In the probation system, however, more concern tend to be directed at 'reducing re-offending' effectively and efficiently than respecting the process of each person's 'desisting'.

This article points out that today's probation system in Japan and the U.K has the problem of imposing a specific way of 'desistance', though the 'narrative-based practice' in social work and the 'desistance study' in criminology respect each other's process of desisting. In addition, this article considers how the person experiencing that, such as 'ex-offender' or 'addict', can support others in the official probation system. In conclusion, I argue that we should reevaluate the way that volunteer probation staff in Japan (*hogoshi*) has supported ex-offenders and make space for those not necessarily upholding the official probation system to support ex-offenders.