

Necessity and Challenges of Converting Emergency Contraceptives to OTC in Japan

Comparative research between Japan and
the UK conducted from a SRHR perspective

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About this thesis

ECPs ... Emergency Contraceptive Pills

OTC ... Over-the-Counter

SRHR ... Sexual and reproductive health
and rights

BACKGROUND

ECPs are not available at pharmacies
in Japan

SUBJECT

OTC conversion of ECPs

PURPOSE

Needs, Challenges, Causes

METHOD

Compare policies, laws, education
Survey

Thesis Structure and Research Questions

1. **Current Status of ECPs in Japan and the UK**

What is ECPs?

2. **SRHS in Japan and the UK**

Relationship between SRHR and OTC conversion of ECPs

3. **Differences in Reproductive Policies between Japan and the UK**

Why is SRHR neglected in Japan?

What is the key to ideal policy?

SRHR in Japan

Contents : Analysis of the Cabinet Office's 1st ~ 5th “Basic Plans for Gender Equality”

Results : The Japanese government disrespects SRHR and is going against the global trend

~~SRHR = Women's Rights~~

~~SRHR in School Education~~

~~Freedom of Abortion~~

“Appropriate sex education”

“NO excessive content”

SRHR in the UK

Contents : Identify the UK's stance on SRHR concerning its definition

Results : **The UK has systems and policies that respect SRHR**



Free contraceptives

Free abortion

ECPs in pharmacy

The right to **self-determination**
and access to services related to
reproduction is guaranteed

Why OTC conversion has not progressed in Japan?

“ECPs should be treated seriously and not prescribed easily”



- Wide and easy access to ECPs should be guaranteed as a **SRHR = human rights**
- The use of ECPs is an **individual right and freedom**

“Risk of resale, abuse, misuse”



- There is no resale if it is easily accessible at reasonable price
- Study shows that after using ECPs, **people would rather use regular contraceptive methods**

Why is SRHR downplayed in Japan?

Contentes : Maternal Health Act

Results :

Mother's health and rights < Fetus

It is not allowed to perform an abortion on the basis of the mother's mental health

Male consent is required for abortion



Male-dominated society
fetus-centred mind

To achieve the ideal policy

Contents : The process by which the UK legalized abortion in Northern Ireland

Results : The parliament **collected more than 21,000 opinions from the citizens to make an ideal law for them**

- ✓ To incorporate the **voice of the people**
- ✓ Education for citizens
- ✓ knowledge and skills for legislator
- ✓ female legislators

CONCLUSIONS

Necessity to make ECPs OTC

- **SRHR = Women's Rights = Human Rights**
- To protect users from inferior goods

Causes and Challenges

- **Fetus-centered mind**
→ patriarchy=Male-dominated social structure

Improvements

- **School education** for primary and secondary students
- Education and awareness reform for legislators
- Increase the number of female legislators