

The Structure and Functions of the Baha'i National Youth Committee of Japan

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Abstract:

This paper discusses the National Youth Committee of the Baha'is of Japan, a committee which is part of the Baha'i Administration. This committee's view of the role of today's youth in society is quite different from the view that Japanese people have in general. The general view is that young people are in a "moratorium" period; that is, they are placed on the fringe of society, and their self-identity is very unclear. However, the type of youth that our Baha'i community is aiming to develop is quite different. We feel that young people should have a definite role and take initiative in actively changing society.

This paper analyzes the structure and functions of the National Youth Committee, which is made up of young people who believe that they have the special role described above. The author clarifies the situation that the committee is placed in by investigating its actual functions. The interaction within the committee and between committee members and outside people is also analyzed. Such interaction changes the structure of an organization in one way or another while the organization is maintained and developed. The author classifies the committee's functions into positive and negative ones. By doing so, the author tries to seek ways to revitalize the Youth Committee, which has an important role to play in Japanese society.