

Abstract of Doctoral Thesis

A Historical Study on Changes in the Social Positioning of *Taisyuyaku*

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Over-the-counter (OTC) drugs were called “*taishuyaku*” in Japan from the pre-WW2 era until about the 1970s. This was not a difference in name only; *taishuyaku* were positioned differently from today’s OTC drugs. This thesis’s first purpose is to clarify these circumstances.

There has been very little research on the regulating of OTC drugs for reasons other than harmful side effects. Previous studies have focused mainly on analyzing the spread of health supplementing OTC drugs during the “health boom.” This thesis’s second purpose is to clarify how these health supplements have been repositioned and what factors have affected this transition.

In this study I conduct discourse analysis on articles and advertisements in newspapers, magazines (general and specialized), and newsletters of citizen groups, as well as government records and administrative documents.

First, I trace the positioning of liver agents, liquid drugs, health drinks, and tranquilizers from their boom in popularity in the 1960s to their current status. I confirm that tranquilizers, which are now prescription drugs, used to be sold OTC as remedies effective in relieving fatigue and malaise.

Second, in the 1960s, side effects of OTC drugs emerged, and criticisms and demands regarding these drugs were made by various stakeholders such as the pharmaceutical industry, retailers, physicians’ associations, and consumers. I classify the policies implemented in response to these issues into regulations concerning their manufacture, sale, and promotion/advertising.

Finally, I show that the movement critical of health supplements, promoted by figures such as Dr. Kosei Takahashi, urged the Ministry of Welfare to reevaluate the authorization of medicines in 1971, and clarify how this was influenced by the public health insurance system's desire to resolve the insurance budget deficit for medications. I then show how this has encouraged the popularity of health supplements as medical drugs in today's society.