

Basic Knowledge on Bullying Issues

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The present situation in Taiwan looks similar to Japanese situation in late 1970's. Usual violence in school will be reduced by introducing the police to school and applying criminal laws to children. However, new form of aggression will not decrease easily.

Part 1: Bullying (*Ijime*) and Violence (*Bouryoku*) in Japan

Discovery of *Ijime*

In the later half of 1970's Japan, the act called *Ijime* (いじめ) began to attract attention of a part of teacher and researcher as a problem in school. Two education magazines (*Monthly Student Guidance* [Gekkan Seitoshidou], January 1980 and *Education Psychology* [Kyouiku Shinri], February 1981) featured this topic as an educational issue. This was, so to speak, the starting point of *Ijime* research in Japan.

However, school violence (*Kounai Bouryoku* 校内暴力) was frequent in the whole country then. Most of people have little interest in *Ijime*, even if it was warned that the act was damp and shady and obstinate attack, exceeding a degree for harassment and so dangerous for children.

When 1980's began, the school with serious troubles came to ask the police to intervene in school violence. Violence in school gradually went to the calming by middle of 1980's. As a result, the scene openly using physical strength, including teacher's corporal punishment, disappeared from the campus. (Figure 1)

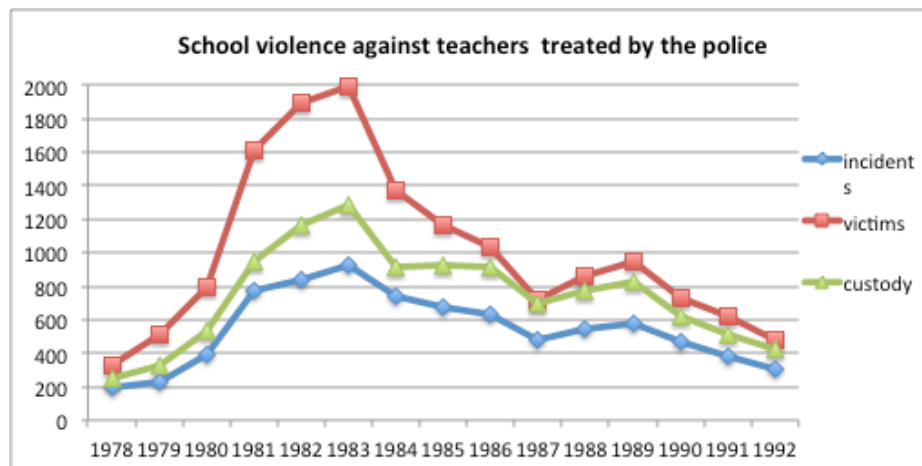
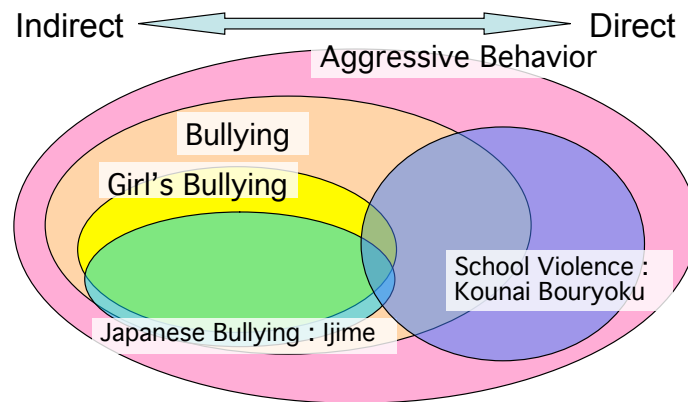


Figure1: School violence against teachers treated by the police (1978-1992)
[from White Paper on Police (1979-1993)]

As school violence was decreasing, people began to notice a new form of aggression. Usual violence gave material damage to victims with using physical strength openly, whereas new aggression gave mental harm to victims in nonviolent form. Japanese people called it *Ijime* and tried to make a line from usual violence.

By contrast, bullying in Europe had no clear line from violence. Bullying research developed on the basis of old *Mobbning* research focusing on high-risk boys delinquency. Now, the concept of bullying includes wide acts from usual physical violence to cyber attack and the discussion is often confused. Anyway, *Ijime* in Japan should not be considered fully equivalent to bullying in the West, even the word *Ijime* is directly translated to the word bullying in English.

'Ijime' and bullying: the location of concepts



Source: Taki (2001)

Figure2: Location of concepts on bullying

Characteristics of *Ijime*

The evidence-based study in Japan shows that *Ijime* is;

- Oriented mental suffering but not hard physical one
- with invisible way (unobvious physical way, legal way or not criminal way)
e.g. ignoring, spreading rumour, pushing hitting jokingly, calling names, by internet and so on
- by ordinary children (with temporal problem) including high-risk children.

It looks daily experience like mean behaviour and negative attitude. However, if such acts are applied to someone repeatedly by a few, or cumulatively by many, they turn frequent victimization and become serious harm.

The International Bullying Survey Project (=NIER project) developed the new definition and scales focusing on the bullying like *Ijime* (=Ijime bullying) and gave students the following explanation before completing the questionnaire. This shows what *Ijime* bullying is.

Students can be very mean to one another at school. Mean and negative behaviour can be especially upsetting and embarrassing when it happens over and over again, either by one person or by many different people in the group. We want to know about times when students use

mean behaviour and take advantage of other students who cannot defend themselves easily.

Necessity of distinction between *Ijime bullying* and violence

The risk to overleap and the possibility of wrong intervention are two big reasons why we need to distinguish *Ijime bullying* from violence.

First, most of people tend to judge that violence with physical damage is more serious than *Ijime bullying* without physical damage. Invisible attack and the mental scars arrest people's attention less than visible attack and the physical scars. *Ijime bullying* is easily overleaped when *Ijime bullying* and violence happen at the same time and are expressed with a same word. If hard violence, especially with a kind of weapon, happens daily, people's attentions are easily arrested to hard violence but not bullying.

Second, usual violence needs physical power and/or a kind of weapon. It means that not everybody can join it. *Ijime bullying* needs no physical power and/or no kind of weapon. It means that anybody can easily join it. The intervention of violence can focus to extraordinary children with high-risk, but the intervention of *Ijime bullying* must focus to not only extraordinary children but also ordinary ones.

Ijime bullying can be classified as a kind of violence, but should be differentiated from usual violence. It is a typical *Indirect Aggression* but not *Direct Aggression*.

Part 2: Incidents, Causality and Strategy

How *Ijime bullying* happens in Japan and other countries

NIER project mentioned above made a longitudinal survey among 5 countries. Students answered questions about experiences with victimizing others and victimization from others by assessing from 'never' to 'several a week' in 5 points. The sub-categories for the questions are as follows:

- physically (for example, hitting, kicking, spitting, slapping, pushing you or doing other physical harm) on purpose, jokingly
- physically (for example, hitting, kicking, spitting, slapping, pushing you or doing other physical harm) on purpose, harshly
- by taking things from you or damaging your property
- verbally (for example, teasing, calling you names, threatening, or saying mean things to you)
- socially (for example, excluding or ignoring you, spreading rumours or saying mean things about you to others or getting others not to like you)
- by using computer, email or phone text messages to threaten you or make you look bad.

Figure3 & 4 shows the comparison of mean score for each category among 5 countries. The answer of the experience of victimization and victimizing is scored as below; 'more than a week'=3, 'none'=1 and the others 'sometimes'=2. Participants are 823 children in Japan, 103 in Australia and 146 in South Korea (Spring in 2004) and 205 in Canada and 119 in USA (Fall in 2005).

Figure 3 shows the results of victimizing others in boys. Australia, Canada, Korea and USA show the similar patterns. The type 'pushing and hitting (jokingly)' is the highest and 'teasing and calling names' follows. The types 'excluding and ignoring' and 'teasing and hitting (harshly)' are the second group. The types 'taking and damaging property' and 'using computer and e-mail' are the least. Korea shows the highest 'pushing and hitting (jokingly)' among five countries. Japan shows the highest 'excluding and ignoring' and 'teasing and calling names' are the same level as the other countries.

The Japanese pattern is that physical or criminal type, i.e. 'pushing and hitting (jokingly)', 'pushing and hitting (harshly)' and 'taking and damaging property', are low.

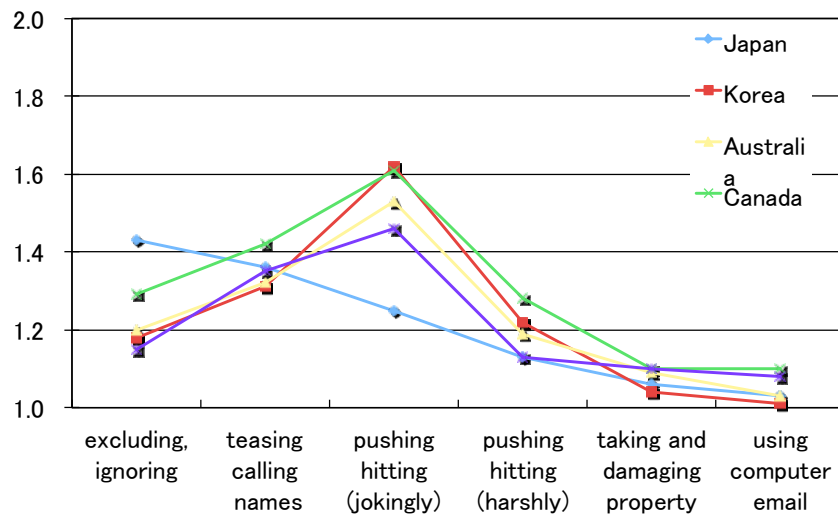


Figure 3: Grade 5 Boys Victimized Mean Score among 5 countries [Taki *et al.* (2008)]

Figure 4 shows the results of victimizing in girls. Australia, Canada and USA show the similar patterns. The types 'teasing and calling names' and 'pushing and hitting (jokingly)' are highest and 'excluding and ignoring' follows at almost the same level. The types 'pushing and hitting (harshly)' and 'taking and damaging property' and 'using computer and e-mail' are the second group. Australia shows less criminality than Canada and USA in the second group types, i.e. 'pushing and hitting (harshly)' and 'taking and damaging property'. Korea is almost the same as the three countries, but shows the highest 'pushing and hitting (jokingly)'. Japan shows the highest 'excluding and ignoring' and 'teasing and calling names' at the same level as the other countries.

The Japanese pattern is, as same as boys, physical or criminal type, i.e. 'pushing and hitting (jokingly)', 'pushing and hitting (harshly)' and 'taking and damaging property' are low.

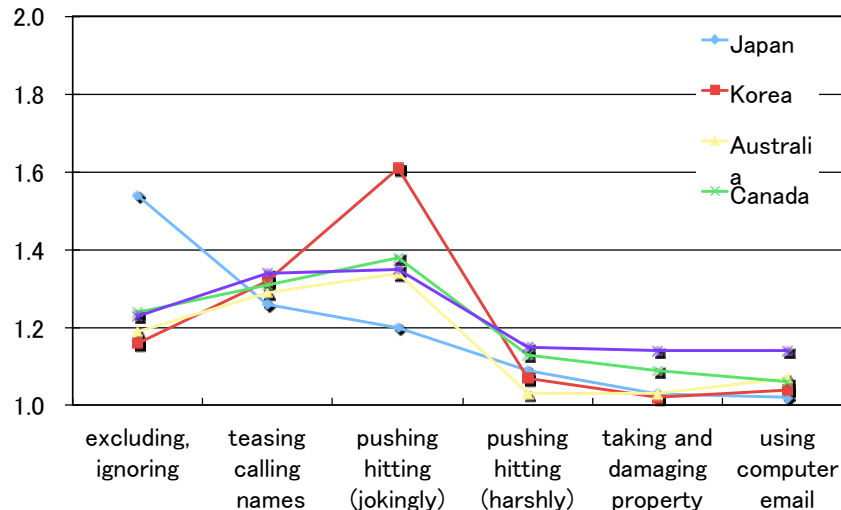


Figure 4: Grade 5 Girls Victimized: Mean Score among 5 countries [Taki et al. (2008)]

The most of assailants of *Ijime bullying* choose the easiest way and the chosen form are often affected by the accessibility in their cultural context. The differences between Japan and the others and in girls between Australia and the other English-speaking countries might be affected by the tolerance against physical violence. In the less tolerate culture against physical violence, children choose the less criminal way.

Ijime bullying happens among any children

'It is possible that serious Ijime may happen at any school, at any classroom and among any children'. (Emergency Appeal by Minister of Education, in 1996.Jan.30)

In Japan, some researches based on a longitudinal survey shows that *Ijime* happen among most of children. Taki (1992) pointed out it by three waves longitudinal data from 1985 to 1987 and Taki (2001) did it from by six waves data 1998 to 2000. NIER and MEXT (2005) also show the evidence by twelve waves data from 1998 to 2003. NIER project shows that *Ijime bullying* in other countries were similar to Japanese findings.

Figure 5 shows that many different children became victims one after another for three years. Participants were 687 students in 1st grade of Junior-high school in June 2004 and followed twice a year until 3rd grade in November 2006.

At first survey (1st grade, June), 56 victims answered 'more than once a week', 67 did 'a few a month', 163 did 'once or twice this term' and 401 did 'never'. At second survey (1st grade, November), the number changed to 70, 86, 200 and 331. From these figures, people easily misjudge that 14 (=70-56) new victims should answer 'more than once a week' at second survey. However, new frequent victims were not 14 but 47 (=70-23). Only 23 students continued to be frequent victims from the first survey to second survey. Finally, only two students (0.3%) were continuously frequent victims until 6th survey point and only 135 students (19.7%) were continuously 'never'.

These results show that there was few extraordinary children victimized continuously and over

80% of students were involved in *Ijime bullying* in three years. We can get almost same results of assailants and also same results of victims and assailants in primary.

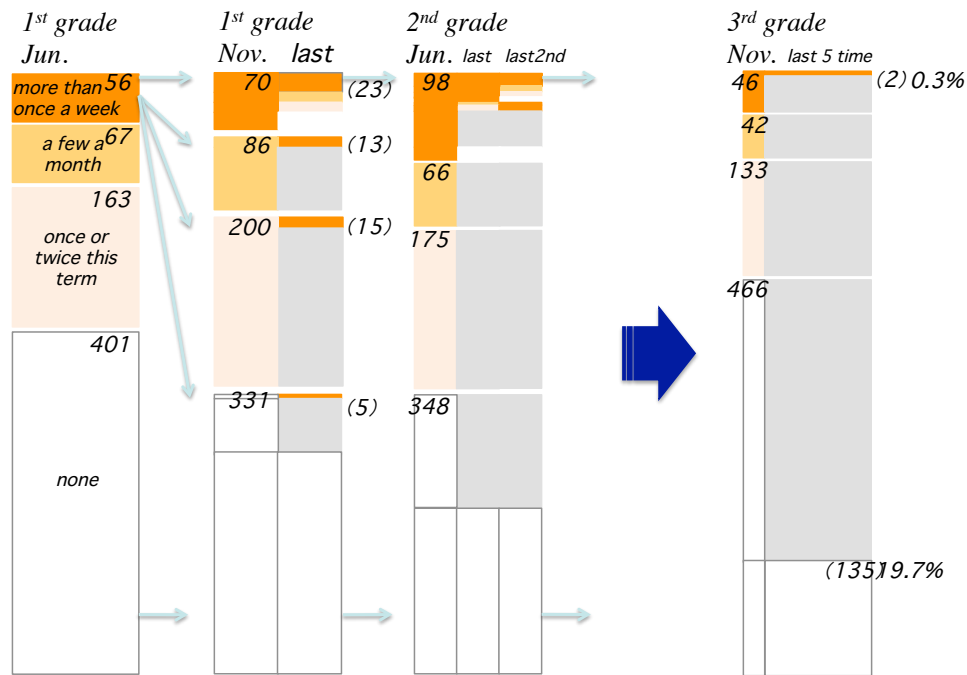


Figure 5: No succession of victimised experience [NIER (2009)]

Why ordinary children bully others

The fact that there were over 80% of victims in three years rejects the old fashioned explanation to the effect that extraordinary children from high-risk family make troubles. New causality should be composed of temporal and contextual factors but not socio-economical factors or personal temperament. Figure 6 & 7 are the results of the statistical program AMOS for estimating the coefficients among those factors. The participants are 400 boys and 414 girls of grade 7 in 2004.

Each scale in the diagram is as bellows:

- Bullying others: experience of victimizing
'excluding', 'teasing' and 'hitting (jokingly)' among the six forms of *Ijime bullying* above
- Stress: symptoms of stress

feel sick and tired	get sick a lot	get headaches
get irritated	get angry easily	feel like shouting
don't have much energy	don't feel interested	can't concentrate on school work
worry about things	feel very lonely	get depressed
- Stressor: sources of stress
 - a. Study stressor:

teachers ask me questions I can't answer	can't understand my lessons	get low test results
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 - b. Teacher stressor:

teachers tell me off	teachers take a personal interest	teachers don't treat me fairly
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- c. Peer stressor:
 - put me down because of my school marks
 - classmates call me names
 - put me down because of the way I look
- d. Family stressor:
 - importance is put on doing well at school
 - my family expects too much
 - get nagged in my family
- Social support: positive relationship with others
 - a. Teacher support:
 - If I left out, I am encouraged
 - if I express, I am listened
 - try to understand me
 - b. Peer support:
 - If I left out, I am encouraged
 - if I express, I am listened
 - try to understand me
 - c. Family support:
 - If I left out, I am encouraged
 - if I express, I am listened
 - try to understand me
- Views: the personal and competitive views on 'victory or defeat'.
 - unhappy, if not do better in my school-work
 - unhappy, if not look better than classmates
 - unhappy, if not do better at sport and hobby

Generally speaking, a path model is good when GFI, AGFI and CFI are closer to 1. Furthermore, RMSEA under 0.05 means good model and over 0.10 means bad. Therefore, in figure 6 for boys, the values of GFI, AGFI, CFI, and RMSEA indicate that this model explains how boys bully others quite well.

Although views, social support, and stressors have high direct and indirect effects on stress, only peer stressor has a direct effect (.508) to bullying. The results indicate that boys' behaviour is mainly considered as a direct reaction from peer stressors. However, views and study stressor also show high indirect effects to bullying via peer stressor (.223 and .236). The figure also shows that peer and family support increase teacher stressors. It implies that peer and family culture work as counter culture against the teacher.

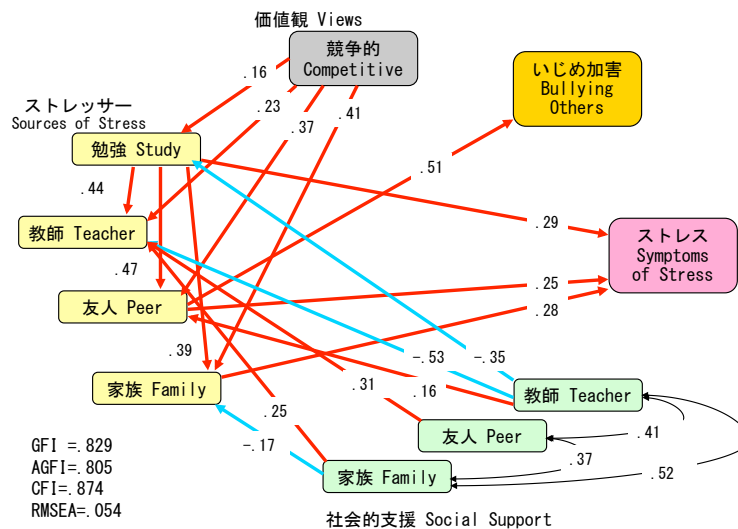


Figure 6: Coefficients among factors on victimizing others (boys) [Taki (2010)]

In figure 7 for girls, the values of GFI, AGFI, CFI and RMSEA also indicate that the model

activity should be designed for older children to get *Social self-efficacy* (Jiko-yu-yo-kan) and for younger ones to get adoration against older one's role.

Social self-efficacy empowers children to keep their dignity from various stressors. It means that children do not need to recover their broken dignity by aggrieving others like mean behaviour and negative attitude. JSPSP is programed for children to stop to be assilants.

Usually, Peer Support in the West means the activity that peer supporters selected from older children help younger children with troubles. The purpose is helping the weak and stopping them to be victims. The main goal is troubled younger one's safety. To the contrary, the main goal of JSPSP is whole children's healthy growth. So, in JSPSP, any peer supporter is not selected, but whole older ones should assume the role for taking care whole younger ones. The details can be read in Japanese book (Taki, M. (Ed.) 2009).

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