

'Ijime bullying': characteristic, causality and intervention

Mitsuru Taki

National Institute for Educational Policy Research

Abstract:

この論文では、三年間に及ぶ追跡調査のデータを用い、三つのことを示す。第一に、'Ijime Bullying'の特徴について明らかにする。'Ijime Bullying'は、同じグループ内の弱い立場の者を困らせようとか、貶めようとかいう明確な意図のもとになされる、いじわるな行動や否定的な態度、と定義づけられる。なぜそうした新たな言葉を用いるのか、またそれは欧米の bullying とはどのように異なるのかを論じる。

'Ijime Bullying'は、欧米の男子の bullying とは異なるが、女子の bullying とは似ているように思われる。第二に、「ストレス」が'Ijime Bullying'をひきおこすリスク要因であることを実証的に示す。'Ijime Bullying'は、どんな学校の、どんな学級の、誰にでも起こる。決して特殊な気質や性格や家庭背景を持つ特別な子どもによってなされているわけではない。私の仮説は、'Ijime Bullying'は主に「ストレス」によって、とりわけ人間関係からの「ストレス」によってもたらされる、というものである。さらに、ストレスの原因とその兆候との間の因果関係についても見ていく。最後に、「自己有用感」を育てて'Ijime Bullying'を防ぐ方策について示したい。「自己有用感」は、日本の子どもが好ましい人間関係をもつうえで、鍵になる要素である。

This paper presents three points using the data of longitudinal survey for three years. First, I clarify the characteristic of 'Ijime bullying'. I define it mean behaviour or a negative attitude that has clear intention to embarrass or humiliate others who occupy weaker positions in a same group. I will discuss why new word 'Ijime bullying' should be used and how different it is from the definition of bullying in the West. I believe that 'Ijime bullying' is not similar to boys' bullying but to girls' in the West. Second, I figure out 'stress' as a risk factor of 'Ijime bullying'. 'Ijime bullying' happens at any school, at any classroom and among any children in Japan. It is not carried out by extraordinary students with particular temperaments, personalities or social backgrounds. My hypothesis is that 'Ijime bullying' is caused mainly by 'stress', especially from interpersonal relationships. I also observe the relationship between sources and symptoms of stress. Lastly, I want to present an intervention of 'Ijime bullying' to develop 'self-affirmation'. 'Self-affirmation' is a key element for Japanese students to improve interpersonal relationship.

Many Japanese researchers simply translate the Japanese word 'Ijime' into 'bullying' or 'bullying in Japan'. Most of foreign researchers imagine that 'Ijime' is equivalent to bullying in the West because of the translation. Now the English word 'bullying' includes various kinds of behaviours. The definition is not necessarily clear and not able to

distinguish physical bullying from physical violence. Although many sub-categorizations of bullying, such as physical, verbal and psychological, are used in order to compensate for it, they are not always appropriate to analyse the nature of bullying because they are based on only its visible 'forms'. I had joined the international bullying surveys. After exchanging information with foreign researchers and checking the data from the comparable questionnaire, I found differences between 'Ijime' in Japan and bullying in the West more than similarities. I emphasize that 'Ijime' is not always equivalent to bullying in the West. My discussion requires you to avoid the confusion of 'Ijime' with the Western bullying image and to understand 'Ijime' accurately. This is the reason why I dare to use the word 'Ijime bullying' instead of bullying or 'Ijime'.

Differences of the definition between Japan and the West

Taki (2001) has emphasised that the definition of bullying is quite different between Western countries and Japan. The standard definition of bullying in Japan is as follows:

'A type of aggressive behaviour by (which) someone who holds a dominant position in a group-interaction process, by intentional or collective acts, causes mental and/or physical suffering to another inside a group.' (Morita, 1985)

Although Japanese definition appears to be similar in many respects to European ones, Taki (2001) still argues two significant differences.

First, this definition incorporates the idea of 'a dominant position' that is determined by 'in a group-interaction process'. It means neither 'physical power' nor 'asymmetric power relationship (Olweus, 1993)'. It suggests that the power derives from group situation but not personal characteristic. The quantities of power and the holders can change according to the occasional situation. It also suggests that the victim interacts with bullies in a same group, often in a classroom, and is coerced into an unequal power relation with the bullies. This social situation adds insult to injury. Victims suffer not only direct injuries but also mental harm in this situation. This indirect harm from group-interaction is often harder for victims than direct injuries. This is a noticeable characteristic of Japanese bullying. Second, this definition emphasises mental/emotional anguish over physical force that arises out of group processes and interactions. It implies that in any Japanese bullying the perpetrators usually intend to inflict harm on the victims mentally even when they use physical force.

These two points also indicate a clear difference between bullying (*Ijime*) and violence (*Bouryoku*) in Japan. The purpose of violence in Japan is to inflict physical harm and/or obtain some benefit from the victim(s). Violence can occur amongst those unknown with one another. On the contrary, the purpose of bullying in Japan is to inflict mental harm on victims who belong to the same group. Bullies and victims know each other well. Bullies often utilize group situation, because they know that victims can be ashamed and mentally harmed in a group setting. Bullies, for example, often prefer to harm victims in front of other members in a group (e.g. by picking on them) or in a situation where other

members in a group can easily notice the victimization (e.g. by excluding and spreading rumours).

I insist that Japanese style bullying is mainly mental suffering on peers. However, the word 'mental' does not imply that the form is only psychological or relational. Regardless of the forms of bullying, the 'purpose' of Japanese style bullying is mental suffering. The seriousness of bullying cannot be judged by only the direct outcome of overt behaviours but also the indirect effect in a group situation. The purpose of bullying is more important than the forms to analyse bullying in Japan.

My discussion mentioned above might impress you that Japanese bullying is much different from Western bullying. Taki (2001) also points out the similarities between Japanese bullying and Western girls' bullying. When we take our eyes off the extreme aggressive boys and more physical behaviours, that is, distinguish physical 'bullying' from physical 'violence' clearly, the difference of bullying between Japan and Western becomes smaller. I believe that any bullying should be defined as a typical 'indirect violence'.

Definition of 'Ijime bullying'

In this paper, I focus on bullying associated with mental suffering within a group setting as mentioned above. Although this kind of bullying can be found in other countries also, it is often overlooked or disregarded because it does not look serious. I name it 'Ijime bullying' in deference to the long history of Japanese bullying research and give it a new definition including its purpose. I also complement three necessary conditions differentiating it from other aggressive behaviours.

Many Western researches rely on the definition by Olweus. The important component of the definition is 'imbalance of strength' (Olweus, 1993). However, this well-known condition is not sufficient to identify bullying clearly. It succeeds in distinguishing bullying from fighting between students with equal power but not from violence. In any violence, the perpetrators attack when they believe the victim(s) is weaker than they are. It means that 'imbalance of strength' usually exists in any violence and fails to specify bullying from other violence.

I emphasise 'the power balance within a relationship inside a group' instead of 'imbalance of strength'. It is a critical element in the concept of 'Ijime bullying'. The power balance inside a group, such as a classroom and sport club, is not always either apparent or stable. The stability of the power balance inside such a group depends on the characteristics of its members and the situations. When the members are convinced that they are almost equal within their relationship, then even slight differences make the power balance unstable. When there is a power imbalance inside a group, 'Ijime bullying' can happen by any casual trigger. The more members are anxious for their power or status in their groups, the more a slight imbalance inside a group plays a significant role in a process of 'Ijime bullying'. However, it is not easy to notice and judge the power distribution inside a group from the outside. 'The power balance within a relationship inside a group' is not

only a condition to differentiate 'Ijime bullying' from violence but also a key element to imply how and why bullying happens.

I define 'Ijime bullying' as follows.¹

'Ijime bullying' is mean behaviour or a negative attitude that has clear intention to embarrass or humiliate others who occupy weaker positions in a same group. It is assumed to be a dynamic used to keep or recover one's dignity by aggrieving others. Consequently, its main purpose is to inflict mental suffering on others, regardless of the form such as physical, verbal, psychological and social.

In relation to this definition, when perpetrators harm others physically in order to keep or recover their dignity, the behaviour is regarded as bullying instead of violence.

The necessary conditions to specify serious 'Ijime bullying'

I continue to complement three conditions. It is a common process among bullying, harassment and discrimination to differentiate oneself from those who are 'weaker' or with less status in a group, though, I want to discuss the deference between bullying and harassment (or discrimination). Both harassment and discrimination happen in relatively larger units consisting of small groups based on such as nationality, ethnicity, race, religion and gender. The power imbalance among such small groups is usually apparent and stable. On the contrary, bullying happens inside a relatively smaller unit, in which the members perceive their status to be 'equal' in spite of some differences such as socio-economic status. In such a small group, a relationship of 'stronger' and 'weaker' is relative and neither persistent nor stable. Consequently, the first necessary condition of 'Ijime bullying' is group membership involving those who perceive themselves to be almost equal.

The second necessary condition of 'Ijime bullying' is use of the power imbalance inside a group. The group is relatively small and the member orient to equality. The roles of bully and victim are easily exchangeable according to the situation. The finding that bullies are also victimised, was reported by Japanese researchers in 1980s and reflected in the policy statement in Japan, as 'It is possible that serious bullying incidents may happen at any school, at any classroom and among any children'. (*Emergency Appeal by Minister of Education, in 1996.Jan.30*). The similar finding has also been reported by western researchers (e.g. Pellegrini & Bartini 2000). 'Ijime bullying' is conducted with the power of exchangeable status.

The third necessary condition of 'Ijime bullying' is frequency of victimization. 'Ijime bullying' becomes more harmful and serious in a cumulative way, if victim(s) cannot flee easily from victimization in a group setting and are exposed to mean behaviour or a negative attitude repeatedly in a long period. This frequency of victimization includes not

¹ The concept of 'Ijime bullying' has many common characteristics with the concept of 'Indirect bullying'. However, the name is mistakable because bullying is a kind of 'Indirect violence'. I am also wondering the binary category as direct-indirect, physical-relational, physical-social and so on. In my data, victims are bullied in both forms at the same time.

only repeated behaviour against same victim(s) by bully(s), but also collective attitude against specific victim(s) by many others.

Those three conditions can specify serious 'Ijime bullying' that should be intervened. People may develop a negative feeling towards others like jealousy. This is natural and not something to be blamed for. When the feeling is acted out as mean behaviour or appears as a negative attitude, utilizing the power imbalance within a relationship inside a group, it changes into 'Ijime bullying' in a group situation with equal group membership. If such mean behaviour or a negative attitude is accidental or transient, it is not so harmful. This might be a reason why some adults cannot consider kinds of bullying like 'Ijime bullying' as serious problem. 'Ijime bullying' can be more serious and dangerous if victim(s) are inflicted with mean behaviour or a negative attitude and victimized frequently (repeatedly or collectively).

Characteristics of 'Ijime bullying'

Many western researchers consider that bullying derives from bullies' personal characteristics such as temperament (e.g. O'Moore, 1989; Olweus, 1993). All such researches imply that bullies and/or victims are 'extraordinary' children. However, Taki (1992a), utilizing the data from Japanese longitudinal survey made every year from 1985 to 1987, has clearly identified that there is few children who always or continuously bully others or are victimised. These findings are also supported by Taki (2001), which is based on the data from Japanese longitudinal survey made twice a year from 1998 to 2000.

Figure 1 shows the rate of 'frequent bullies' (more than 'once a week') is staying at a similar level (ranging from 6-9%) at each survey point. Nevertheless, Figure 2 shows that there is not a single child who has been a 'frequent bully' throughout the entire survey

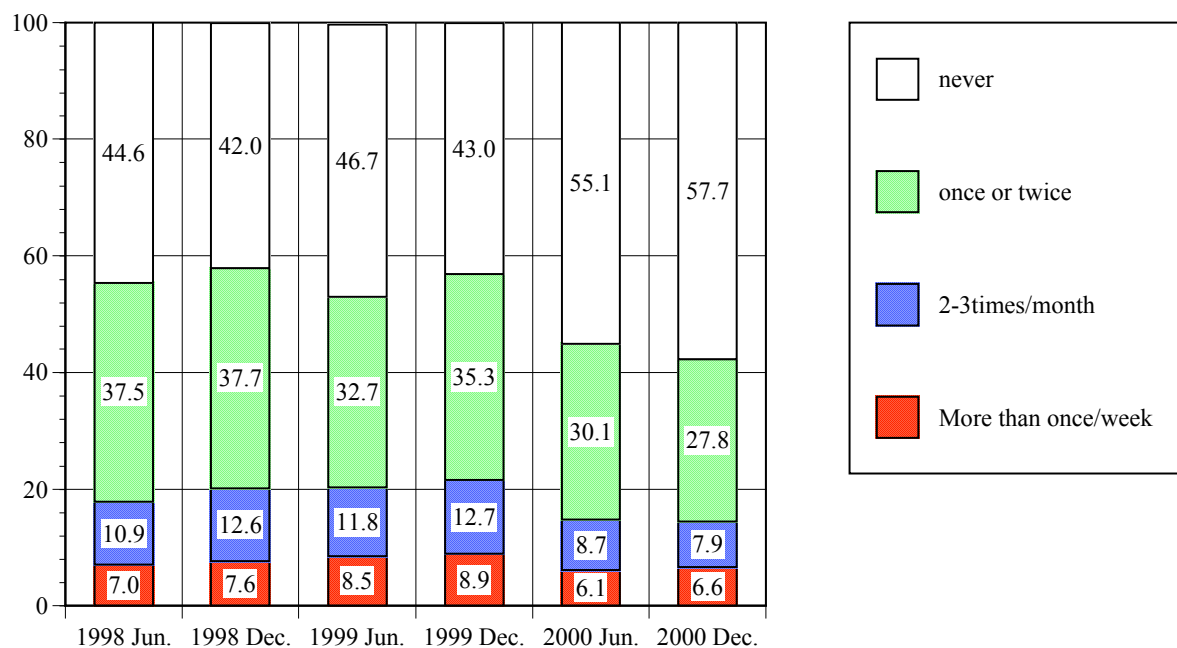


Figure 1. The experience rate of isolating, ignoring, calling names (The cohort of Junior high school grade 1 in 1998 are followed at 6 survey points for three years.)

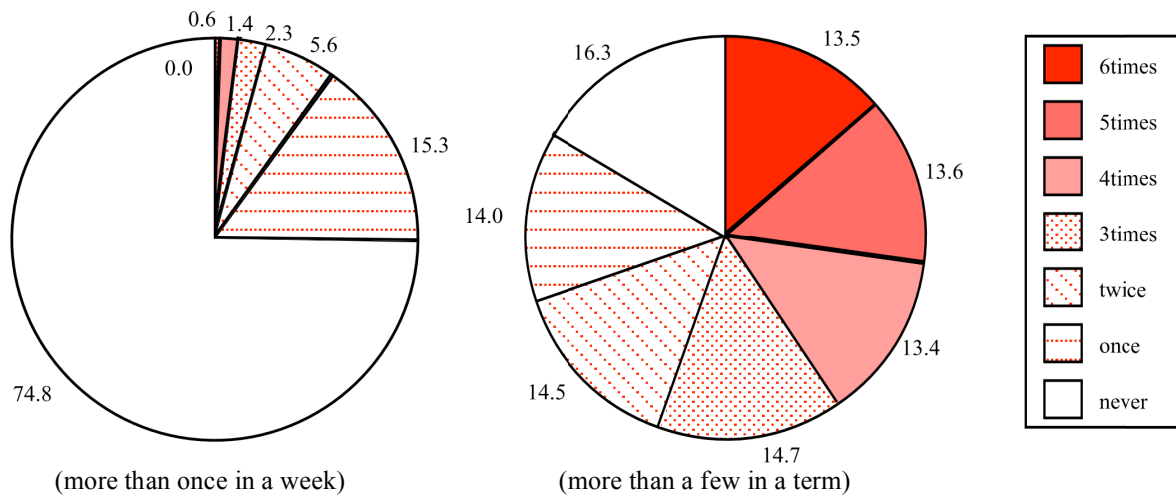


Figure 2. The repeated incidence of isolating, ignoring, spreading rumours (The cohort of Junior high school grade 1 in 1998 are followed at 6 survey points for three years.)

period. Only 0.6% of the surveyed children report bullying others five times at six survey result from longitudinal survey implies that there is few 'extraordinary children' among 'frequent bullies'. Furthermore, taking all experiences of bullying others (more than 'a few in a term') into account, only one seventh of children have never bullied others in three years and over half of children engage in bullying at the rate of once a year. The results for victims show almost same tendencies as bullies.

Taki (1992a; 2001) concludes from these results (1) most of bullying in Japanese schools is done by 'ordinary' children, (2) extraordinary personal characteristics of bullies and victims cannot be premised as a main cause of Japanese bullying and (3) we should consider situational explanations for bullying rather than calling upon intra-personal (e.g. temperament) or environmental (e.g. SES) factors.

Suicides caused by serious 'Ijime bullying' were reported in the 1980's and 1990's in Japan. Similar cases were reported in Canada in 2000's. These victims were not physically hurt but rather were mentally harmed over a long duration. They were not victimised by one extraordinary bully child but rather by their 'ordinary' peers in the classroom. 'Ijime bullying' should be identified as 'ordinary' children's dangerous games.

'Stress Hypothesis Model' for causality of 'Ijime bullying'

Taki (1992b) verify a range of hypotheses accounting for the causes of bullying in Japanese school and support the hypothesis of maladjustment to school life. Taki (1996) mentions that stress results in such maladjustment. Taki (1998) shows the relationships among stress, stressor and bullying. As a result of these prior researches, the 'Stress Hypothesis Model' is presented in this paper (see Figure 3). The concepts of symptoms of stress and sources of stress in this model are based on Cooper (1981) and defined here as follows.

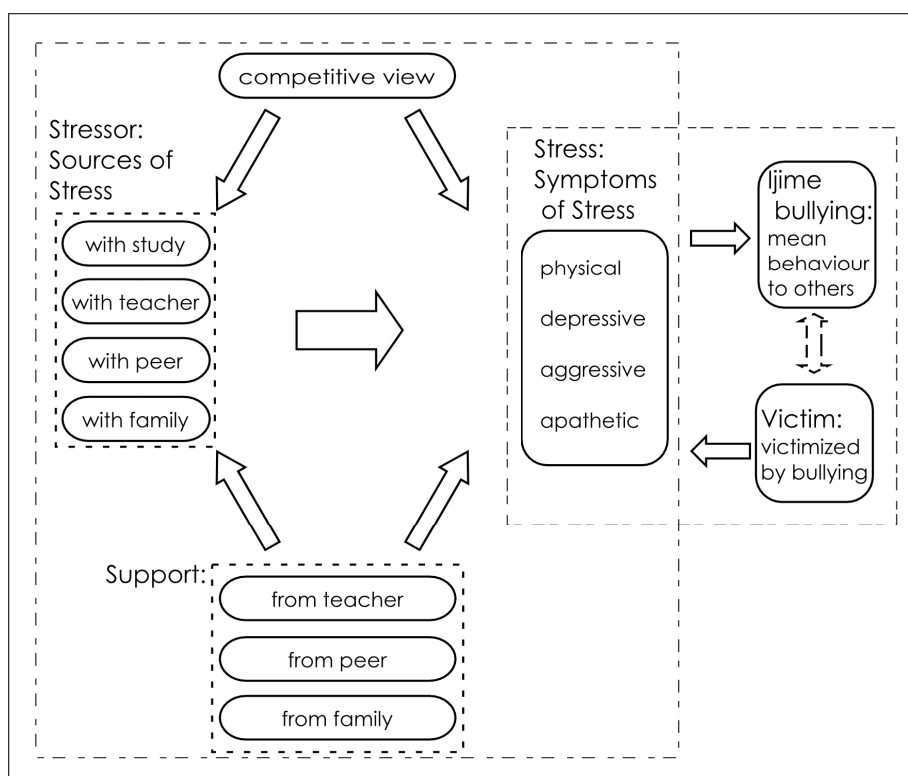


Figure 3. 'Stress Hypothesis Model' for 'Ijime bullying'

(1) *'Stress: symptoms of stress' here are negative feelings and physiological symptoms.*

Lazarus & Folkman (1984) identified them as immediate effects of stress. In North America, some researchers express them as depression, anxiety or aggression independently. 'Stress: symptoms of stress' are the mental or physiological phenomenon.

(2) *'Stressor: sources of stress' are daily hassles derived from school and family life.* The concept of daily hassles is based on research by Lazarus & Folkman (1984). In North America, some researchers express them as stress. Strictly speaking, 'stressor: sources of stress' here are the subjective perceptions of stressful experiences and not objective incidents. Consequently, they can be considered as the perceived sources of stress through cognitive appraisal (judgement).

The outline of the figure 3 is as follows. Some incidents in daily life can stressfully affect children as sources of stress and generate ill-effects such as aggression, depression and apathy, which are called as symptoms of stress. Such symptoms may work to promote mean behaviour or a negative attitude to aggrieve weaker others. If three necessary conditions are there, such behaviour or attitude become serious 'Ijime bullying'. I emphasize that the symptom of stress works as a risk factor for 'ordinary' children to join 'Ijime bullying' as bullies. In other words, it is an intermediary variable from the stressor to 'Ijime bullying'.

The Causal Process in 'Stress Hypothesis Model'

In this model, two causalities can be distinguished. The first causality has one step from symptoms of stress to 'Ijime bullying' and another from victimization to symptoms of

stress (right dotted square in the figure 3). The second causality has one step from sources of stress to symptoms of stress and the others (left dotted square).

(1) 'Ijime bullying', victimization and 'stress: symptoms of stress' are highly correlated. It looks like circular causality.

This means that a simple S-R (stimulus-response) model cannot be used to explain their correlation. Repeated or convergent mean behaviour or a negative attitude against victims is a kind of daily hassle for victims. It injures a victims' dignity and stresses them. Symptoms of stress can be understood as an outcome of victimization by 'Ijime bullying'. On the other hand, symptoms of stress can promote 'Ijime bullying'. High levels of stress tends to embody in aggressive behaviour and sometimes appear as mean behaviour or a negative attitude. For recovering some dignity injured by stress, the easiest way is to embarrass others. A high level of stress tends to result in loss of control of mean behaviour or a negative attitudes to others. However, incidents of 'Ijime bullying' cannot fully be explained by symptoms of stress, because it depends on situational factors. For example, if children cannot use 'power imbalance with a relationship inside a group', that is one of necessary conditions for 'Ijime bullying', they will not bully others in spite of their high symptoms of stress. That is the reason why symptoms of stress are discussed as a risk factor.

(2) 'Stress: symptoms of stress' is derived from not only victimisation but also other cumulative stressful experiences (sources of stress) in daily life.

Children are confronted with many experiences in their daily life in school and family. Some of the experiences injure their dignity and increase their symptoms of stress as daily hassles. This process also depends on children's cognitive appraisal of the experiences. Social supports and some other kinds of views affect their appraisal process. As an example, if children have a good support from teachers and trust them, children's appraisal of uncomfortable experiences with teachers is lessened. Social supports and some other kinds of views also affect symptoms of stress directly. For example, if children have a good support from peers, they can cope with stressful feelings by talking with peers. Supports and views work as buffers in this process.

(3) As showing in Figure 3, 'stress: symptoms of stress' plays important roles as both a predictor of 'Ijime bullying' and an indicator of victimization of 'Ijime bullying'.

This model does not include any environmental factors such as poverty or SES. Because 'Ijime bullying' is understood as being carried out by 'ordinary' children in a school setting, especially in Japan. This is not to imply that ordinary children do not have any problems in terms of their social background, but such problems do not result directly in bullying others seriously.

Method verifying the hypothesis

Utilizing the longitudinal data shown above, I will verify this hypothesis. At first, I describe the method.

Participants

The survey was part of a longitudinal study, which involved surveying twice a year from 1998 until 2003 by NIER (National Institute for Educational Policy Research of Japan). The respondents are approximately 5,500 children from 4th to 6th grade in 12 primary schools and from 1st to 3rd grade in 6 lower secondary schools in one prefecture in the area of capital Tokyo at each year. In this paper, only lower secondary school data in June 2000 will be discussed.

Items for Scales

(i) 'Ijime bullying' scale

The 'Ijime bullying' scale is constructed from two items as shown in Table 1. One of them, 'isolating, ignoring, or spreading rumours', is usually labelled indirect, relational or psychological or verbal. Another one, 'picking on others', is labelled direct and sometimes physical. Two 'different' items are used to make one scale because they are highly correlated and it is argued that the concept of 'Ijime bullying' bears little relationship to western categorization based on bullying form.

As I mentioned above, the 'Ijime bullying' is defined as mean behaviour or a negative attitude specified by the conditions: (1) group membership involving those who perceive themselves to be 'equal in power and status', (2) utilizing the power imbalance within a relationships, (3) frequency of victimization. The two items comprising the 'Ijime bullying' scale are typical mean behaviour or a negative attitude utilizing the power imbalance within a relationships. Each question asks about only the experience inside a school. Prior research in Japan shows that most of bullying in school happens within the same grades and the same classrooms and Morita (2001) shows more than 80% of bullying happens within the same class in Japan. The two items can measure 'Ijime bullying' specified by the condition of equal membership.² Each question asking frequency of bullying others can be considered as the substitute for the condition of frequency of victimization.

Table 1. Scales for 'Ijime bullying'

Ijime bullying: mean behaviour to others

(4=Never 3=Once or twice 2=2-3 times/month 1=More than once/week)

This term how often have YOU bullied someone at school by ...

isolating, ignoring, or spreading rumours?

picking on others?

(ii) Victim scale

The equivalent items with 'Ijime bullying' scale are used for Victims as shown in Table 2.

² If 'Ijime bullying' is measured in other countries, for example, Norway or China, where older children often bully younger ones (Morita, 2001; Slee et al., 2003), we need an additional question on the condition that children belong to same groups definitely.

Table 2. Scales for victims of 'Ijime bullying'

Victims: victimization by Ijime

(4=Never 3=Once or twice 2=2-3 times/month 1=More than once/week)

This term how often have you BEEN bullied at school by being ...
isolated, ignored, spread rumours?
picked on by others?

(iii) Symptoms of stress scale

Scales for Symptoms of stress are constructed from each three items in four sub-groups: physical, depressive, aggressive and apathetic, as shown in Table 3. I use them separately for analysing the relationships with 'Ijime bullying', and at the same time, I combined the four sub-group scales into one stress scale to investigate the relationship with sources of stress. These scales are revised versions from Okayasu (1997).

Although similar items are sometimes used for measuring temperament or personality in other surveys, the possibility that those scales mismeasure other things is low. I emphasise the items to ask about 'feelings' in the questionnaire. The items of four sub-group scales are chosen to have high correlations each other for constructing them to one scale. Each sub-group scale has low correlation with the same scale in other survey points. If the scales measure temperament or personality instead of symptom of stress, the correlation among each sub-group in other survey points should be high. Those evidences prove the scales do not measure temperament or personality but temporary 'feeling'.

Table 3. Scales for Symptoms of Stress

Stress: Symptom of Stress

(4=Not at all like me 3=Not much like me 2=A little like me 1=A lot like me)

Physical stress	I feel sick and tired
	I get sick a lot
	I get headaches
Depressive stress	I get depressed
	I worry about things
	I feel very lonely
Aggressive stress	I get irritated easily
	I get angry easily
	I feel like shouting at others
Apathetic stress	I don' t have much energy
	I don' t feel interested in things
	I can' t concentrate on studying

(iv) Sources of stress scale

Scales for sources of stress are divided to four main areas of children's daily life: with teacher, peer, study and family. Three of them are constructed from each three items and one from two items as shown in Table 4. These scales are revised versions from Okayasu (1997). Although we ask children their 'stressful experiences' in the questionnaire, the answer does not mean objective incident but subjective perception of experience, as we mentioned above.

Table 4. Scales for Sources of Stress

Stressor: Source of Stress
(4=Not at all like me 3=Not much like me 2=A little like me 1=A lot like me)

Stressor by teacher	Teachers tell me off without listening to me Teachers don't treat me fairly
Stressor by peer	Classmates put me down because of the way I look Classmates put me down because of my school Classmates call me names
Stressor by study	I can't understand my lessons I get low test results Teachers ask me questions I can't answer
Stressor by family	I get nagged in my family In my family too much importance is put on doing well at school My family expects too much of me

(v) Social Supports scale

Scales for social supports are prepared for three main agents: teacher, peer and family. They are constructed from each three items as shown in Table 5. Good relationship can reduce children's stress feeling and make children so tolerant. It also weakens children's bad appraisal against experiences with main agents.

Table 5. Scales for Social Support

Support: Social supports
(4=Strongly disagree 3=Disagree a little 2= Agree a little 1= Strongly agree)

Support by teacher	If I feel left out I am encouraged by ... If I express my troubles/problems I am listened to by ... These people usually try to understand my feeling
Support by peer	I feel left out I am encouraged by ... If I express my troubles/problems I am listened to by ... These people usually try to understand my feeling
Support by family	If I feel left out I am encouraged by ... If I express my troubles/problems I am listened to by ... These people usually try to understand my feeling

(vi) Views scale

One scale regarding the concept of competition has also been developed. It is constructed from three items as shown in Table 6. The scale shows how worried children are about to be a winner or a loser, and it promotes children's stress feeling and stressful perception against experiences with main agents.

Table 6. Scales for Views

Views: Competitive
(4=Strongly disagree 3=Disagree a little 2= Agree a little 1= Strongly agree)

	I feel unhappy if I don't do better than my classmates in my school-work I feel unhappy if I don't look better than my classmates I feel unhappy if I'm not better than my classmates at something such as a sport or hobby (not schoolwork)
--	--

Results of verifying the hypothesis

I present the results by sex. Basic descriptive statistics are shown in Table7.

Stress, 'Ijime bullying' and victimization

The relationships between Stress, 'Ijime bullying' and victimization are shown in Figure 4. The correlation between 'Ijime bullying' and victimization is high in both boys and girls. Bullies are often victims and victims are often bullies. The correlation between stress and 'Ijime bullying' is also high and almost the same between boys and girls. The correlation between victimization and stress has also same tendency. There are circular relationships and simple S-R model is not adequate. The results show that stress is important as both a predictor of 'Ijime bullying' and as an indicator of victimization.

Table 7. Means and standard deviations of each item

		Boy (1369)		Girl (1342)	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
View:	competitive	7.7	2.66	7.84	2.54
Support:	from Teacher	6.09	2.85	5.66	2.59
	from Peer	8.34	2.32	7.91	2.24
	from Family	6.41	2.56	5.1	2.19
Source of Stress:	with Study	6.52	1.76	6.35	1.75
	with Teacher	9.76	2.24	10.18	1.93
	with Peer	8.34	2.32	7.91	2.24
	with Family	8.87	2.55	9.15	2.43
Symptoms of Stress		37.16	8.1	35.19	8.46
Ijime-bullying		7.00	1.35	7.02	1.07
Victim		7.09	1.38	7.14	1.18

In relation to each symptom, the effects of four stress symptoms associated with 'Ijime bullying' are different from one another. However, not only aggressive symptoms but also others have significant effects. Although the effects of victimization against four stress symptoms are different, not only depression but also others are affected significantly. The

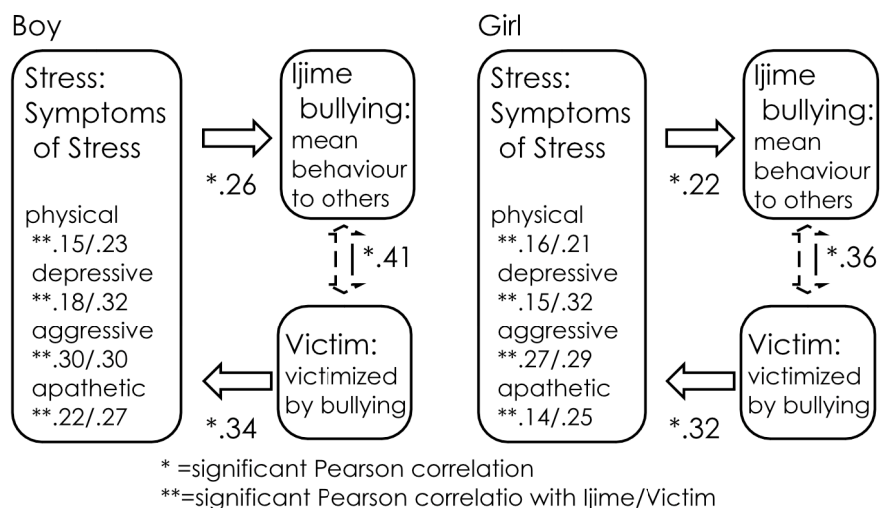


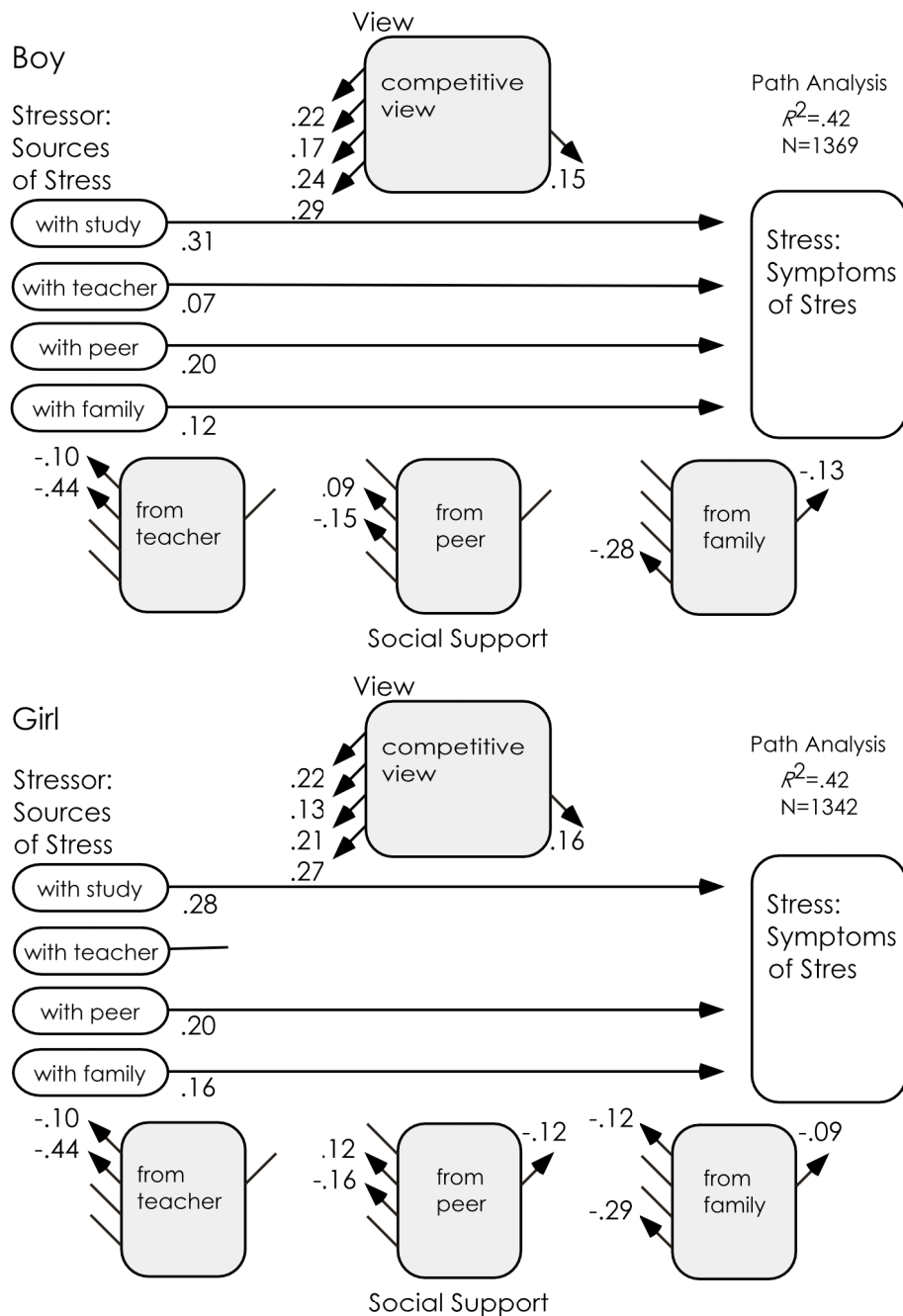
Figure 4. Correlation Coefficient among Ijime, Victim and Stress by sex

various symptoms appear to converge to form one 'stress'.

Determinants of stress and its process

I make a path analysis incorporating symptoms of stress, sources of stress and buffers. The results are shown in Figure 5 and details in Appendix 1. The effect of victimization was eliminated because of its circular relation with symptoms of stress. I can point to five findings from this comparative research.

- (1) Stressor with study has highest direct effect to stress in both boys and girls.
- (2) Stressor with peers also effects to stress in both boys and girls.
- (3) Although competitive views have only a moderate effect to stress directly, its total



* The order of each arrow from Views and Social Support accord with the order of Stressor and the direction with Stressor and Stress.

**No arrow and figure means no significance ($p > .01$)

Figure 5. Path Analysis for Stress, Stressor and Buffer by sex

effect including the effect through perception of stressor is as high as stress associated with study.

(4) Support from peers has negative effects on stress (as in reducing stress) directly in girls and also indirectly, through perception of stressor, in both boys and girls. Support from peers has a positive effect on the cognition of stressor with teachers (as increasing stressor) in both boys and girls.

(5) Support from family has negative effects on stress (as in reducing stress) in both boys and girls.

The results in Figure 4 and 5 shows that 'Stress Hypothesis Model' can explain the causality of 'Ijime bullying' so well. As I mentioned above, the incidents of 'Ijime bullying' cannot be ascribed to personal 'extraordinary' factor as temperament, personality or social background and cannot be explained by S-R model. 'Stress Hypothesis Model' does not depend on such personal factors but are comprised from plural situational factors. It shows that many factors converge to stress and the stress promotes 'Ijime bullying'. Stress as a risk factor deserves to consider in bullying research in the West.

Intervention against 'Ijime bullying'

The findings presented here suggest that the challenge we Japanese face is how we can support every child to develop in order to cope with high competitive situations in school and society. We should also support every child to have good relationships with others. Precedent interventions against bullying in the world tend to focus on only extraordinary children and to be reactive after bullying happens. Such intervention is important but not sufficient. Because 'Ijime bullying' is done by ordinary children who have trouble with relationship and less social support. The intervention should focus on whole children's relationship and be proactive. School-based or community-based approach is essential to it.

I suggest 'Japanese peer support program' as the intervention in Japan (Taki, 2002). It works in many Japanese schools. The differences compared with other peer support activities are as follows.

(1) It premises the whole school involvement and focus on whole children. It is not the activity by particular and excellent children but by whole children who belongs to final grade regardless of their ability.

(2) It aims not to intervene bullying directly but improve school atmosphere and children's relationships for reducing bullying.

(3) The key element of reducing problems in Japanese school as bullying is that children can develop their social responsibilities by acquiring 'self affirmation'.

(4) Children can acquire 'self affirmation' through activities to help others. This system is fundamental in 'Japanese peer support program'. 'Self affirmation' is not really the same as self esteem or self-applause but applause from others.

(5) It is based on the Japanese philosophy that adults should support children to develop for themselves in a peer group and should not develop or transform children.

Conclusion

In this paper, I argue that the concept of 'Ijime bullying' is surely useful to understand 'Ijime' in Japan and to identify the nature of bullying. When you look at girls' bullying in the West, the concept is recognized to be efficient to analyse it. 'Stress Hypothesis Model' is also useful to explain the complex and synergistic causality of anti-social or asocial behaviour. The intervention program based on the Japanese tradition will be suggestive to the Western intervention.

REFERENCES

Cooper, C. L. (1981) *The stress check: coping with the stresses of life and work*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall

Lazarus, R.S. & Folkman, S. (1984) *Stress, Appraisal, and Coping*, New York: Springer Publishing Company

Morita, Y. (eds.) (1985) *Sociological Study on the structure of Ijime Group* (in Japanese), Osaka: Osaka City College Sociology Study

Morita, Y. (eds.) (2001) *The Comparative Study on Bullying in four countries* (in Japanese), Tokyo: Kaneko Shobo

Okayasu, T. (1997) Mental Health Check List (simple version) (in Japanese), *A Study of the Development for Practical Interventions against Problematic Behaviours in School*, Miyazaki: Department of Sociology of Education of Miyazaki University

Olweus D. (1993) *Bullying at school: what we know and what we can do*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers,

O'Moore, M. (1989) Bullying in Britain and Ireland: an overview, in Roland, E. and Munthe, E. (eds.) *Bullying, an international perspective*, pp.3-21, London: David Fulton Publishers

Pellegrini, A.D.& Bartini, B. (2000) A longitudinal study of bullying, victimization and peer affiliation during transition from primary school to middle school. *American Educational Research Journal*. 37. 699-725.

Slee, P. *et al.* (2003) Bullying in Schools, in Keeves, J. and Watanabe, R. (eds.) *The Handbook on Educational Research in the Asia Pacific Region*

Taki, M. (1992a) Empirical Study of 'Ijime' Behaviour (in Japanese), *The Journal of Education*, vol.59, No.1, pp.113-123, Tokyo: The Japan Society of Education

Taki, M. (1992b) The Empirical Study of the Occurrence of 'Ijime' Behaviour (in Japanese), *The Journal of Educational Sociology*, vol.50, pp.366-388, Tokyo: The Japan Society of Educational Sociology

Taki, M. (1996) *Bullying and Classroom Management* (in Japanese), Tokyo: Meiji Tosho

Taki, M. (1998) Child Stress and the Factors (in Japanese), *Research Report*, No.36, pp.1-11, Tokyo: The National Institute for Educational Research of Japan

Taki, M. (2001) Relation among Bullying, Stress and Stressor: A Follow-up Survey Using Panel Data and a Comparative Survey between Japan and Australia, *Japanese Society*, Volume 5, pp.25-40, Tokyo: The Japanese Society Research Institute

Taki, M. (eds.) (2002) *Peer Support de Hajimeru Gakkoudukuri - Jissen Dounyu hen (in Japanese), Change School by Japanese Peer Support - practical method*, Kaneko Shobo

Appendix 1. Path coefficient

	Boy			Girl		
	Direct	Total	Indirect	Direct	Total	Indirect
Stressor: with Study	$R^2=.08$			$R^2=.10$		
View: Competitive	.22	.22	-	.22	.22	-
Support: Teacher	-.10	-.10	-	-.10	-.10	-
Support: Peer	-	-	-	-	-	-
Support: Family	-	-	-	-.12	-.12	-
Stressor: with teacher	$R^2=.19$			$R^2=.20$		
View: Competitive	.17	.17	-	.13	.13	-
Support: Teacher	-.44	-.44	-	-.44	-.44	-
Support: Peer	.09	.09	-	.12	.12	-
Support: Family	-	-	-	-	-	-
Stressor: with Peer	$R^2=.09$			$R^2=.10$		
View: Competitive	.24	.24	-	.21	.21	-
Support: Teacher	-	-	-	-	-	-
Support: Peer	-.15	-.15	-	-.16	-.16	-
Support: Family	-	-	-	-	-	-
Stressor: with Family	$R^2=.15$			$R^2=.17$		
View: Competitive	.29	.29	-	.27	.27	-
Support: Teacher	-	-	-	-	-	-
Support: Peer	-	-	-	-	-	-
Support: Family	-.28	-.28	-	-.29	-.29	-
Stress:	$R^2=.42$			$R^2=.42$		
View: Competitive	.15	.31	.16	.16	.31	.15
Support: Teacher	-	-.06	-.06	-	-.03	-.03
Support: Peer	-	-.02	-.02	-.12	-.15	-.03
Support: Family	-.13	-.16	-.03	-.09	-.17	-.08
Stressor: Study	.31	.31	-	.28	.28	-
Stressor: Teacher	.07	.07	-	-	-	-
Stressor: Peer	.20	.20	-	.20	.20	-
Stressor: Family	.12	.12	-	.16	.16	-