

Hidden bullying by SNS at school

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Purpose

- Purpose: to consider whether SNS (Social Networking Service) changed the way and the features of bullying at school
- For these 10 years, SNS has become a major communication tool for Japanese, especially for young people. My basic question is the way in which information technology changes human relations.
- In this presentation, I would like to consider: if technology may change a form of violence into another one, the same can be said of bullying?
- Bullying is a form of violence, not of communication. How does a communication technology tool become a tool for violence.

- I would like to treat here the problem of bullying by Social Networking Service (SNS) such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and so on.
- A SNS is a web application that people use to build social relations with other people.
- Through considering the bullying by SNS at school, I want to clarify the relationship between violence and communication in information technology.

Outline

- Purpose
- Bullying at school as a social problem
- SNS for young Japanese
- Cyberbullying and Bullying by SNS
- The differences between classical bullying and SNS bullying
- Considerations

Bullying at school as a social problem

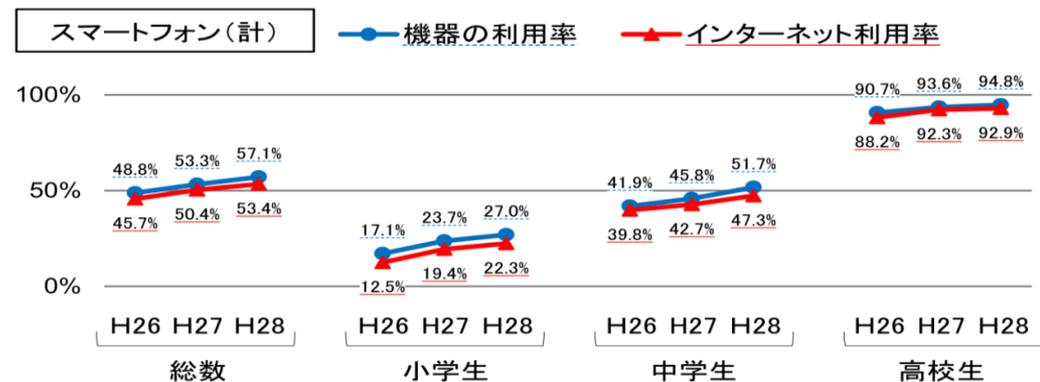
- In Japan, bullying has been considered as one of the most serious issues not only at school, but also for the society.
- The young student suicides caused by bullying at school have been attracting public attention for many years, so that the Japanese government enforced the *Bullying Prevention Promotion Act* in 2013 and the ministry of education has promoted moral education to students to prevent bullying in the classroom.
- From this school year, 2018, a new curriculum of moral education started. One of the aims of this reform is to focus on getting rid of, or at least putting a restraint on bullying at school.

SNS for young Japanese

- However, this new moral education for restraining bullying is faced with a new problem that the elder generations have not supposed before: cyberbullying.
- Cyberbullying is a form of bullying or harassment using electronic means. From the 2010s, cyberbullying or online bullying has become increasingly common, especially among teenagers in any developed countries.
- There are many different ways and tools for online communication. A webpage is a very different tool from email communication ; Email is, in turn, a very different tool from Twitter.

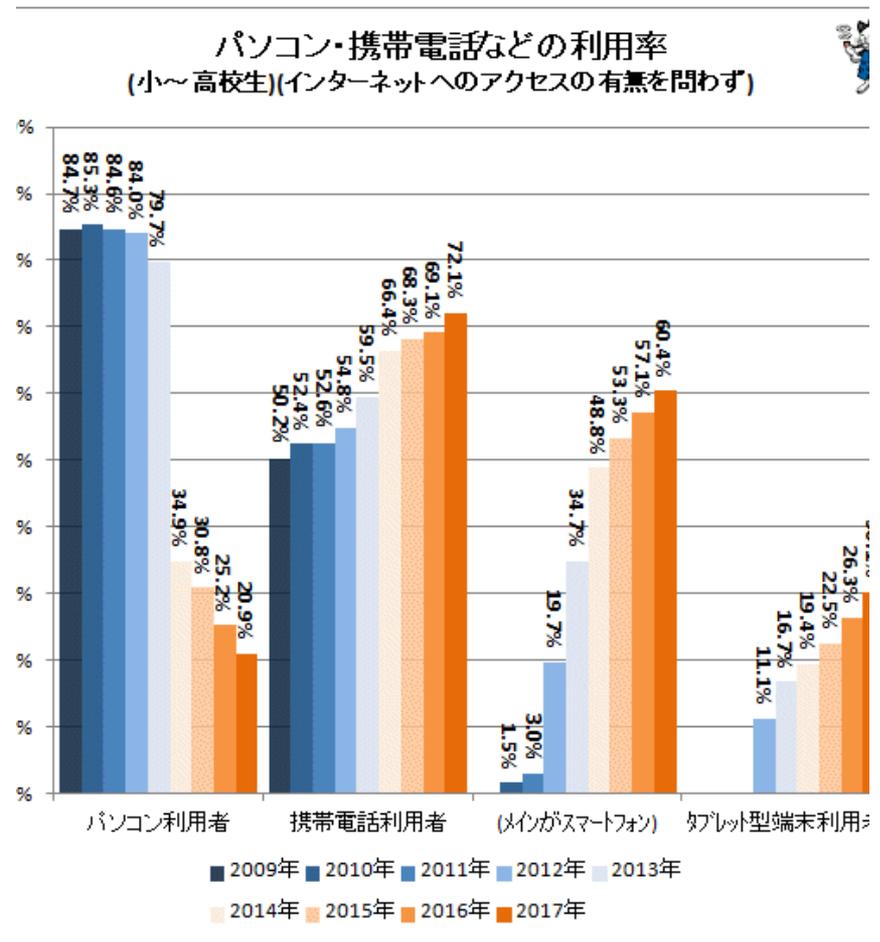
SNS for young Japanese

- Japanese pupils tend to use a smartphone rather than a PS or a tablet to communicate each other. 93% of high school students and 50% of Junior high students have a smartphone. (2017 Cabinet Office, JG)



Sumaho rather than PC

- According to a research by Cabinet Office JG in 2018, the use of PC is decreasing among primary and secondary students in Japan.
- The causes are not studied by CO, but I guess one reason is the personalization of IT device; they use IT device mainly for communication.
- The second factor that computer/ IT education at primary and middle schools falls behind in Japan. Young people don't use IT device for study.



Various SNSs

- However, we should not treat all SNSs as a same kind of media; each SNS has its own characteristics.
- The most popular SNS for Japanese students in primary and secondary is “LINE”.
- LINE is a free application for instant communications on electronic devices such as smartphones, tablet computers, and PC.



Japan	Public assess	content	Business / private	age
Facebook	△	Various use	Both	40>30>20>10s
Instagram	△	Photos	Both	20>30=40>10
Twitter	△	Short sentences	Both	20>40>30>10
LINE	×	Short sentences	private	40>30>20>10

Cyberbullying and Bullying by SNS

- People use a covert means in order to bully and mistreat someone. SNS, especially LINE has become a means for bullying at school. Naturally, cyberbullying can occur everywhere, mainly outside the school.
- The most difficult problem of cyberbullying is that it is very difficult for teachers and parents to find out about it.
- The survey by *Niko-Niko Doga* and *Asahi Journal Publisher* (2013) reports that 38% of primary school pupils and 11% of junior high students have the experience of suffering cyberbullying. Cyberbullying occupied about 17-20% of the whole bullying in primary schools. 10% in middle schools.

Transition of the Proportion of cyberbullying

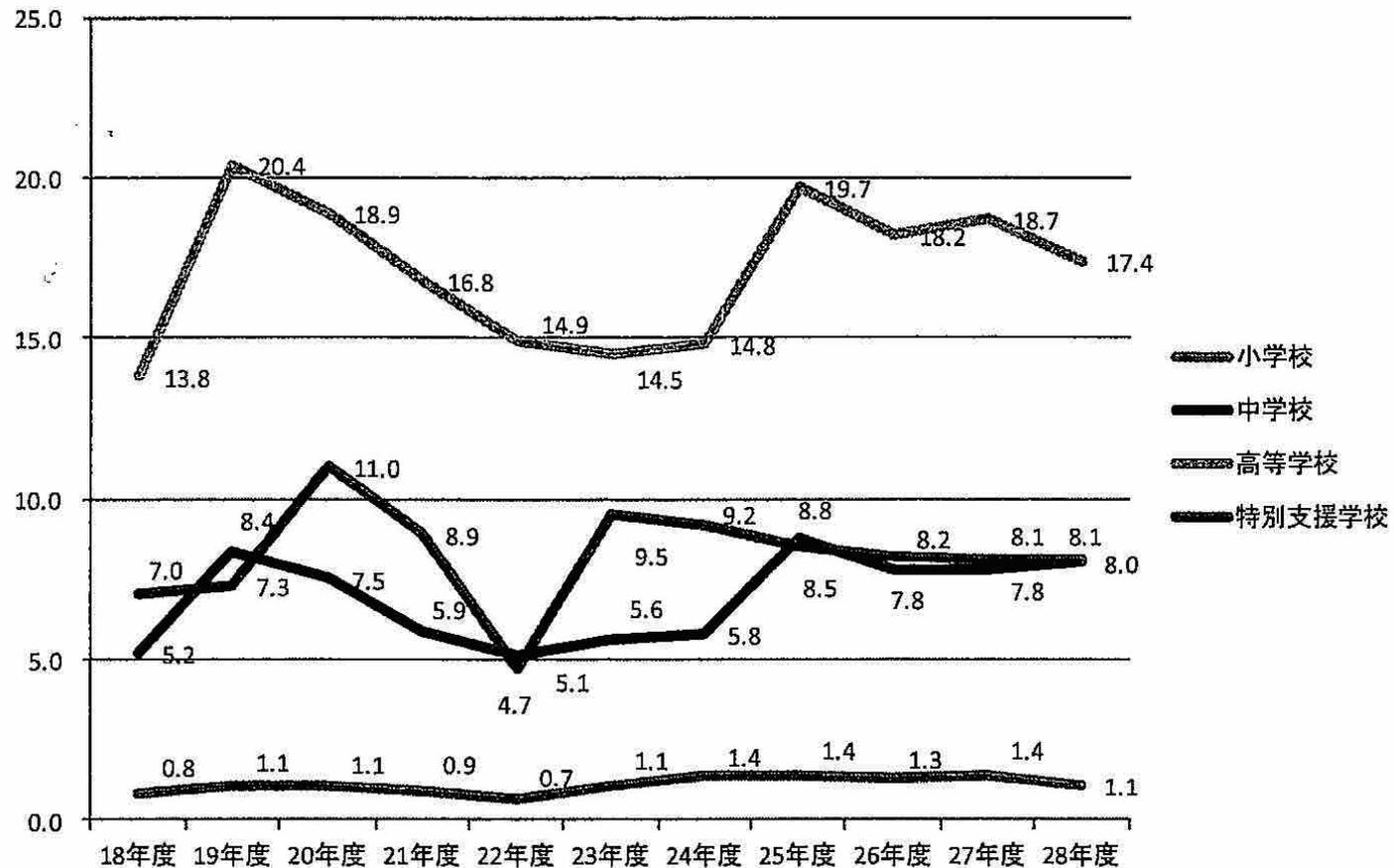
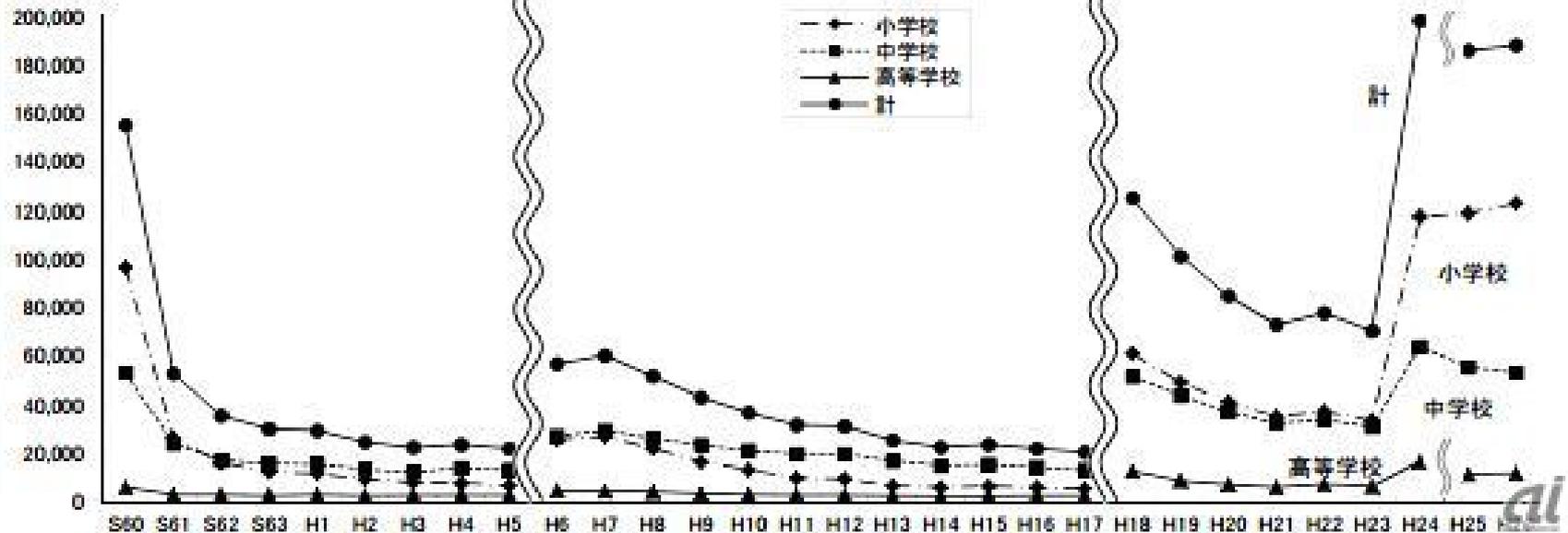


図2 いじめ認知件数中のネットいじめの比率の推移
 (文部科学省「児童生徒の問題行動・不登校等生徒指導上の諸課題に関する調査」より(単位%))

<参考1>いじめの認知(発生)件数の推移



The contents of cyberbullying

- The contents of bullying are:
- 1) the leakage of privacy and personal information (primary school)
- 2) abuse and slander (secondary school)
- 3) exclusion from the group, ignoring
- It is very difficult for the persons concerned to delete these contents from the web, rather the contents tend to spread quickly and widely.

Suicides

- The bullying by LINE sometime has serious consequences: suicide, attempt suicide, or/and mental disease. From 2013 to now, several students (the case of Kumamoto, Nara, Aomori, and so on) have committed suicide in anxiety about bullying on LINE.
- Students are always afraid of being excluded and left out from the LINE group.
- They are always very worried about if someone talks about them behind their back and if a new LINE group is made to abuse them without their knowing about it.

- The penetration of internet and IT can have the following negative effects to students while they are necessary tools to live as well as to study in the contemporary society :
- Addiction
- Crimes: Swindling, Blackmail, illegal deal, Prostitution
- Bullying:

The differences between classical bullying and SNS bullying

- One important question is whether there are the differences between classical bullying and cyberbullying.
- Fujikawa (2018) says: generally speaking, in Japan, cyberbullying is a mere means for bullying. Cyberbullying is a continuation of classical bullying.
- Kubiszewski et al. (2015): The type of assailants of classical bullying and cyberbullying overlaps.
- However, other researchers point out the essential differences between them.

Characteristics of cyberbullying

- Characteristics of cyberbullying are (Slomje, Smith and Frisen 2012, 2013; Urano et al. 2014; Tanaka 2016, Tomita 2016):
 - 1) **Accessibility**: Rapid and irreversible spread on the web
 - 2) **Anonymity** on the web: causes serious imbalance between assailants and victims.
- 1) and 2) cause an powerless feeling of a victim.

3) **Net-literacy**: the lack or insufficiency of Internet literacy makes cyberbullying critical for both assailants and victims.

4) **Onlookers** are numerous and powerless

- Generally speaking, bullying has a structure of assailants, victims, and onlookers (Morita 2010) . Onlookers play an important role in bullying, because a bullying can be regarded as a kind of theater.
- In cyberbullying, onlookers are more anonymous and masked. It is very difficult for an onlooker to mediate and interfere the bullying.

Considerations

- The over generalization is not adequate: some cases of bullying can be regarded as an extension of classical bullying; and other cases have new features.
- Cyber-communication tools (applications) can be changed into the tools of violence by menacing the boundary of self and group as well as private and public.
- The leakage of personal information clearly threatens one's privacy.
- The abuse and slander on the web, but hidden from victims, are uncontrollable to the very victims. This uncontrollability should make children have a feeling of powerless and a destruct of human relationship.
- The exclusion could give to children an identity crisis.

Bodily existence

- What internet communication lacks is corporeality. As phenomenology has affirmed, the living body provides us the primary self-boundary and the basis for the interactions with others.
- According to Husserl and Merleau-Ponty, our existence is based upon bodily ability to interact with the world, i.e. “Ich kann”.
- A cyber-self lacks this natural basis of one’s identity and communication with others. A cyber-self is made up with the discourse (rumor, report, quotation, and so on) which people on the web regard as valid or true. It is a very fragile self.

- Bullying by SNS could become the tools for menacing the boundary between the “real” self and the cyber constructed self, between one’s self and a role in a group and between private and public. This crisis occurs when people who are beside oneself with internet-using might have a weaker identity which is not based on bodily activities.
- Cyberbullying takes advantage of the weakness of one’s cyber-self which is constructed on the web. The true problem of cyberbullying resides in that fact that the cyberspace forms a new kind of human identity and unbalanced power relations based on cyber ability.

THANKS A LOT