

The Misogyny Culture in Japan: A Study of Sex Scandal of Shiori Ito and Its Media Representation

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ABSTRACT

Japan is the most developed and safest Asian country. As one of the most westernized country in Asia, one still doubts why the country has popular culture showing prevalent examples of such a strong patriarchal society. This research focuses on Japanese female journalist Shiori Ito who might be the first woman who dared to publicly alleged how she was sexually assaulted. Although the prime minister of Japan - Shinzo Abe had propose a theory of womenomics in the past few years, the status of females in Japan remained less recognized as much as males. I want to know why and how this society stayed silent after Shiori Ito reveled her suffering. Why was that seen as a personal stigma? How did the media play a role in misleading the truth in favor of male privileged judgment and social values?

This research reviews different forms of media that represented the case of Shiori Ito. I mainly followed a documentary produced by BBC Two and my analysis also looked into data collected from underground network forums in Japan. I sought to draw on textual analysis in exploring a gender issue, namely misogyny culture. This research might know more about Japan's public perceptions of female victims as a result of misogyny culture.

Keywords: Misogyny, Shiori Ito, Sexism, Japan

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INTRODUCTION

Background

Japanese law has clearly stipulated that only strong resistance and cry loudly for help can be considered as rape.¹ When the Japanese female journalist Shiori Ito's rape issue was exposed in 2017, Japan's public media did not blame the rapist who was a nation-renowned writer and media worker. Instead, they were condemning her and using an exciting statement to discuss female victims. They were creating a hostile society filled with inequitable speech against women. That was, the misogyny culture was unpacked as a result of this case.

The developed countries like Japan might show a tradition of the patriarchal system that frequently suggests nothing but unequal power relationships between males and females. However, people were astonished by such a rape issue happened in Japan that involved contested interpretations of sexism. Japan is a country ruled by law, but mainstream media tend to silence such sexual assault issues. I am puzzled by the reason why they were reluctant of speaking out for the female victims. I am wondering how the Japanese public consider a sexual assault.² Thus, I found that there was a lack of empirical research on sexual violence in Japanese society.

My research tried to know why Japanese remains a society without critical awareness of gender inequality. Mostly, sexual knowledge for Japanese come from varied forms of texts, such as films, television programs, or the Internet.³ In Japan, a plenty of mediated sources are mostly pornographic texts with biased perspectives towards women. On the contrary, I also wonder whether other forms of texts like

¹ 法務省, "性犯罪の罰則に関する検討会," ed. 省議・審議会 (Japan2015).

² Jake Adelstein, "Japan's Secret Shame," BBC News, <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt9466960/>.

³ 上野千鶴子, *女ぎらい: ニッポンのミンジニー* [厭女: 日本的女性嫌悪] (2010).

documentary and forums online show the same perspective. Without good reports via media and sufficient education on equality of sexual relationships, people blame female victims when they found the incidents occurred after a female dress in sexy costumes or agrees to grab a drink with a male. People seem to accept that these suggest a signal of YES for further relationships of sex, namely female were pretended when they disagreed to have a consensual sex.⁴

Rape can be seen as being forced to have sex, usually by violence or threats of violence and also a criminal behavior.⁵ Myth can be referring as a well-known story which was made up in the past to explain religious beliefs or social customs. Many people believe in it, but it is actually untrue.⁶ The most common characteristic of rape myths is deemed as male are usually driven by female's appearance, behavior or moral debauchery which will increase male's desire and to become a rape perpetrator.⁷ Due to the ingrained patriarchal democracy, the sexual violence can be prevailing in the Japanese society nowadays. The rape culture became a norm to strengthen male domination over women.

Accordingly, people would blame the victims concerning rape, but forgive or ignore the perpetrators. In so doing, most cases concerning rape make female feel shameful when they face the rape issues. For this kind of social culture in society we called rape myths or rape culture.⁸

⁴ Antonia Abbey and Richard J Harnish, "Perception of Sexual Intent: The Role of Gender, Alcohol Consumption, and Rape Supportive Attitudes," *Sex roles* 32, no. 5-6 (1995).

⁵ Collins English Dictionary, "Definition of 'Rape'," Collins English Dictionary, <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/rape>.

⁶ "Definition of 'Myth'," Collins English Dictionary, <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/myth>.

⁷ Kimberly A Lonsway and Louise F Fitzgerald, "Rape Myths: In Review," *Psychology of women quarterly* 18, no. 2 (1994).

⁸ Marshall University, "Rape Culture," Marshall University, <https://www.marshall.edu/wcenter/sexual-assault/rape-culture/>.

The Japanese public media are a platform to reveal these features concerning rape myths. The representations might intensify violence of perpetrators and add stigmas to victims in order to reach the sales volume of the newspaper and the TV ratings. Namely, it will cause the society to rationalize the perceptions and interpretations among rape myths when Japanese public media reporting with bias. This not only showed the distasteful representations of modern social media, but also showed how media maintain the competitiveness by a sensational titles.

The mainstream media in Japan have established a biased system on sexual assaults for a long time. For instance, the shunga in Edo period were very popular and even become an educational manual for people to learn.⁹ This caused the bias for Japanese public when they encountered sexual assaults. They will use male gaze to support rape cases, victim blaming to cut down the rational discussion about sexual assault.¹⁰ However, the rape myths have changed along with the international culture situation nowadays. Therefore, this research will focus on how the underground forums show perceptions of sexual assaults in Japan.

Motivation

Sexual assaults were existed and keep happening around us. We have to take it seriously and pay attention to it. Due to sexual assault keep happening, for example, famous novelist in Taiwan, Lin Yi-Han who committed suicide due to being assault by others; the famous producer in United State, Harvey Weinstein who harassed the actresses and arouse the #METOO movement; the well-known actor in South Korean,

⁹ 上野千鶴子, *女ぎらい: ニッポンのミソジニー*.

¹⁰ Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," in *Visual and Other Pleasures* (Springer, 1989).

Jung Joon-young whose sexual scandal had been exposure and also had sexual assault at least 10 women at the same time. These recent coverages of newest incidents drove me to begin this research on what happened to a counterpart in Japan.

Japan is the first westernized country in Asia with a relatively safe and secure living environment. But why does sexual assault become a taboo in Japan? Japanese seems to be very conservative toward sexual issues of all sorts. Hence, I will draw on textual analysis to understand the phenomenon for public to talk sexual assault under the table in Japanese society.

Research Purpose

Through this case study, I will investigate the ingrained patriarchy system which under the social norm of male standard and how it brings misogyny culture into society. In order to understand how rape myths affect Japanese society, this research seeks to unpack the untalkable taboo in Japan via textual analysis.

Research Questions

1. What are public opinions about sexual assault towards females in Japanese society?
2. How did the Japanese society incriminate female for sexual assault?
3. How does the misogyny culture influence the Japanese society?

Contribution

Japanese society's bias of gender relationship undermine efforts made by the government to reform the status of female since Meiji Restoration. There is gender inequality and sexism so that the cognitive bias and rape myths are manifested in the mainstream and non-mainstream media.¹¹ Therefore, I wish to understand the social reaction and social condemnation of subculture in young generation toward sexual assault and how the social influence affected in Japan

Limit

Owing to contradictory viewpoints between public and private sphere in Japan. Therefore, it would be a challenge for me to collect the public discussion data of private sphere in mainstream media. I will focus on different texts of media to find the public discussion of sexual assault in private sphere.

Delimit

Although there are many countries in Asian holding the patriarchy social structure in their society. However, there is a huge contrast when it comes to sexual issues in Japan. Therefore, I would only focus on the female who as being the victims of sexual assault and social oppression in Japan.

¹¹ YURIKO NAGANO, "In Demographically Impaired Japan, Women Still Face Gender Bias," Los Angeles Times, <https://www.latimes.com/world/asia/la-fg-japan-women-politics-20141104-story.html>.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The mainstream media shows gender stereotype and does not question commonly sexual violence towards female. According to the report on sexual violence, there are 91% of the victims are female, 9% are male.¹² Therefore, in literature review I will only focus on the female victims and only use the word “sexual assault”. Then I divided literature review into three parts: (1) Counterattack of The Sexual Assault in Rape Myths; (2) The Role Under Each Institution; and (3) The Female in Mainstream Media. According to the definition of law, sexual assault ranges widely, and rape is a narrow part of it. In order to avoid second injury, this research will use the term sexual assault instead of rape.

2.1 Counterattack of The Sexual Assault in Rape Myths:

The rape myths are referring to the victims who would easily get second injury by the people who have bias on sexual harassment or sexual assault. The terms of rape culture appear in a book called *Rape: The First Sourcebook for Women* in 1974¹³ and then published the document called *Rape Culture* in 1975. It reflected how a majority of the society tends to forsake rape behavior. As a matter of fact, the sexual assault seriously violated human nature through the statements of perpetrators, victims and social workers.¹⁴

In fact, the basic concept of the sexual harassment is referring to sexual behaviors without others’ consent, including having physical sexual contact which contain the involuntary touching, kissing and hugging.

¹² The National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC), "Sexual Assault in the United States."

¹³ Noreen Connell and Cassandra Wilson, *Rape: The First Sourcebook for Women* (Plume, 1974).

¹⁴ Cambridge Documentary Films, "Rape Culture," <http://www.cambridgedocumentaryfilms.org/filmsPages/rapeculture.html>.

From a legal perspective, rape is referring to the perpetrator penetrating any part of the body with their genitals or using any other parts of body, other utensil to enter someone's genitals or anus.¹⁵

Therefore, sexual assault not only causes physical injures but also hurts personal emotion and will. Moreover, the deep-seated patriarchy system create an atmosphere of self-condemnation silencing victims when they face sexual assault.¹⁶ The public media also using the extensive media coverage to subside the rational discussion leading the comment on the internet to condemn the victims instead of perpetrator. This situation not only reflects how dominant voices in the society deprive female victims of their human right but also shows how often the society is caught up with rape myths to shield males conducting the sexual assault from further investigations.

Feature 1: Sexual Hint

There has been a stereotype of the rape victim — females who are commonly seen as troublemakers to invite males to participate rape scenarios. It is believed that rape is caused by the sexual desire or sexual impulses by male. Therefore, the female who is raped is usually considered to be attractive than others. Dressing in a revealing clothing or running home at night will be considered as behaving provocatively with debauchery behavior. The statement above is always account as a " sexual hint " and increases chances of being sexually assaulted.

Sexual assault can happen in anytime, to any people and around anywhere as long as there involve a symbol of cowardliness instead of revealing clothes or to

¹⁵ Emilie Hunter Iliia Utmelidze, Olympia Bekou, "Crimes against Humanity," CMN (Case Matrix Network), <https://www.casematrixnetwork.org/cmn-knowledge-hub/proof-digest/art-7/7-1-g-1/5/>.

¹⁶ Martha R Burt, "Cultural Myths and Supports for Rape," *Journal of personality and social psychology* 38, no. 2 (1980).

running home at night.¹⁷ According to the sexual assault statistics, there're 15.1% of the victims and perpetrator were strangers, 51.1% were in a relationship and 40.8% were acquaintances. Moreover, there are 14% to 17% were happened outdoor, 25% were happened in perpetrator's home, 35% were happened in the victim's workplace and 60% were happened indoor.¹⁸ That is to say, the perpetrators are premeditated to commit a crime as a result of their violent conducts, which is not aroused by the clothes of victims. Moreover, the perpetrator will be affected by the personal characteristics and the body language of the victims.¹⁹ In other words, the perpetrator will discriminate whether the victims who would be an easy prey according to codes of dressing, eyes contact and behavior. Namely, victims won't be targeted if they disobey, behave confidently and have direct eye contact.

Feature 2: Sexual Gaze

The rape myths are visually-oriented. Males are navigators who gaze at females as sexual objects. Pornographic images often show that when a female is subjected to a sexual assault, she might experience the pleasure. Therefore, males do not doubt about the truth of pornographic image due to the large number of this messages presenting in popular culture and cultural products.

The overflow of online pornography will garble the authentic cognition toward females. According to the research, there're one in four girls and one in six boys will be sexually abused before they turn 18 years old.²⁰ People are misled by the various external environmental factors to dominant females only by male's cogitation, trying

¹⁷ Street Smart Women, "Easy Prey? What Do Violent Men Look for in the Women They Target?," <https://streetsmartwomen.com/what-makes-women-easy-victims-violence/>.

¹⁸ (NSVRC), "Sexual Assault in the United States".

¹⁹ Betty Grayson Morris I. Stein, "Attracting Assault: Victims' nonverbal Cues," 31 (1981).

²⁰ (NSVRC), "Sexual Assault in the United States".

to create a version of females are passive and shy in sexuality. As for the effects of pornography on individuals, marriage, family and community, the pornography destroys the family and normal sexuality of a male indeed.²¹ Based on this research, James V.P. Check and Neil M. Malamuth show that the pornography has the function of demonstration effect.²² They believed the pornography not only presented sexual behavior as an example but also eliminate the inhibit among male sexuality. It rationalizes the reaction of sexual intercourse toward female. Strictly speaking, pornography become the main resources for males to learn the sexual behavior pattern which have ambiguous concepts believe females are spontaneous to have sexual behavior and mislead the healthy sexual relationship to consider rape isn't severity.²³ However, there is a self-defense mechanism when encounter dangers to cut down the damage at body. Therefore, when the female's body performs non-subjective way as male's cogitation, is actually the opposite meaning in subjective consciousness. If the female said no then it should be seen as serious instead of tolerant sexual assault becoming socialization.²⁴

Feature 3: Sexual Illusion

Envisage the place of pheromone in rape case—The rape fantasy. No means yes, and yes is still yes. Female are seen to prefer the behavior of forced sex. Therefore, they were pretending when they said no but in fact, they desire to have sex.

²¹ Patrick F Fagan, "The Effects of Pornography on Individuals, Marriage, Family and Community," *Marriage and Religion Research Institute* (2009).

²² James V.P. Check, Malamuth, Neil M., "Pornography and Sexual Aggression: A Social Learning Theory Analysis," *Annals of the International Communication Association* 9 (1986).

²³ Dolf Zillmann and Jennings Bryant, "Effects of Prolonged Consumption of Pornography on Family Values," *Journal of Family Issues* 9, no. 4 (1988).

²⁴ K. D. Suschinsky, Lalumiere, M. L., "Prepared for Anything?: An Investigation of Female Genital Arousal in Response to Rape Cues," *Psychological Science* 22 (2010).

According to the research of criminal psychology, the motivation for perpetrator to commit a crime is because they can deprive victims of their dignity making them feel like a powerful person rather than to satisfy the erotism only.²⁵ There is some part of male believe that to compel female through sex oppression is an effective tool since the female are eager to be dominated in the sexual stereotype.²⁶

Victim blaming appears when female crossing the norm which under the patriarchy system.²⁷ However, the sexual assault is irrelevant to sexual desire. Males will harass females by authority to show their power in order to controlment and dominate. According to Heider Do and Harp Dustin's research show that the pornographic always depict female as the beau of willing to obey and submissive by male.²⁸ In other words, sex becomes a powerful symbol under the framework of society to female. Mass media rationalize any sexual assault toward female. Causing the perpetrator to use the advantage to pressure victims into authority. Yet, Helen Deutsch and Sigmund Freud consider females desired to be dominated and are willing to be involved in sexual assault.²⁹ Because they believed that to illusion sexual assault is to satisfy the desire of subconscious and the inner center of the female. Regarding to the sexual assault psychological literature neither to deny the authenticity of sexual assault nor to mislead sexual assault is the outcome of female's imagination under the situation of socialization.

²⁵ 上野千鶴子, *女ぎらい: ニッポンのミンジニー*.

²⁶ Harold Leitenberg and Kris Henning, "Sexual Fantasy," *Psychological bulletin* 117, no. 3 (1995).

²⁷ JESSICA EATON, "Victim Blaming: Is It a Woman's Responsibility to Stay Safe?," Copyright © 2019 BBC., <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-45809169>.

²⁸ Don Heider, Harp, Dustin, "New Hope or Old Power: Democracy, Pornography and the Internet," *Howard Journal of Communications* 13 (2002).

²⁹ Colleen A Ward, *Attitudes toward Rape: Feminist and Social Psychological Perspectives*, vol. 8 (Sage, 1995).

2.2 The Role Under Each Institution

Japanese government started to formulate certain laws to improve gender equality with the rise of female self-awareness.³⁰ Gender stereotype refers to use subjective ideology to make value judgment. To developing gender equality consciousness and female self-awareness not only changes the role of traditional female but also think outside of the box to have great achievement in every field.

The History of Feminist Movement

Despite empowered events such as International Women's Day, many countries did not admit the violation against female as crime³¹ The ideology gradually replaces military confrontation and to have a simple pattern of subjective consciousness toward female over the past two centuries. Female started to be considered as equivalent as male and no longer a property dominated by males when the British feminist claimed the female should have more rights and the educational level should as same as their social status in 18th centuries.³²

Feminism movement can be divided into four parts dated back in late 18th century. The First Wave was happened in 1830s to early 1900s. Women started to fight for equal contracts and property rights to protect self-interests. The Second Wave began from 1960s to 1980s. Women attempted to broaden the debates over the related rights for female. The Third Wave from 1990s to early 2000s concerned the micro-politics whereby women wanted to liberate the sexuality to criticize the patriarchy system. And the Fourth Wave went on from 2012 that women argued for the equality

³⁰ Reality Check team BBC News, "Reality Check: Has Shinzo Abe's 'Womonomics' Worked in Japan?," BBC News, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-42993519>.

³¹ Judith L Herman, *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence--from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror* (Hachette UK, 2015).

³² Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, with Strictures on Political and Moral Subject* (T. Fisher, 1891).

of female by fighting against the sexual assault and sexual violence through online media.³³ Furthermore, Japan also has the feminist movement which affected by Western culture and classified into three periods. The first period was around 1860s during the Meiji Restoration where women emphasized the importance of the rights to education. The second period began in 1946 after the WWII that women called for the suffrage and political equality. The third period in 1970s after the Anti-Vietnam war movement in which they asserted to respect the human rights for everyone in the society.³⁴ Therefore, the importance of the feminism essentially upgraded and changed the status of females in modern societies instead of redressing the mental and physical difference between male and female.

The Role of The Female in Japan

Japan still has serious gender inequality according to the Global Gender Gap Report published by The World Economic Forum (WEF) in 2018. Japan's women rights were ranked at 110 out of 149 countries.³⁵ The Japanese feminism can be traced back to the history of Japanese feminist ideology and the movement in late 19th century. It gave a new code of gender to re-explain gender and its rights by challenged the basic society structure and the mainstream culture. The feminism developed so that people can have the female perspective challenging male dominated society. Therefore, the initial purpose of Japanese feminism movement was to oppose civil rights exclusively for males within patriarchy system.³⁶ The

³³ Martha Rampton, "Four Waves of Feminism," Pacific magazine, <https://www.pacificu.edu/about/media/four-waves-feminism>.

³⁴ Sharon L Sievers, *Flowers in Salt: The Beginnings of Feminist Consciousness in Modern Japan* (Stanford University Press, 1983).

³⁵ World Economic Forum, "Global Gender Gap Report 2018," <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2018/data-explorer/#economy=JPN>.

³⁶ Vera Mackie, *Feminism in Modern Japan: Citizenship, Embodiment and Sexuality* (Cambridge University Press, 2003).

traditional females were expected to dedicate themselves to maintain family development. However, along with the movement, the public started to concern and re-examine the female relationship between public and private sphere. For example, Abe Shinzo, the prime minister of Japan had proposed the Womenomics to improve the status of female in Japanese society. The power of the feminism has been regarded as indispensable in industrialization and social reform in Japan.³⁷

The Phenomenon of Misogyny

Misogyny culture can represent that the male is losing their superiority when they can't find the solution of the problems.³⁸ "Mis" means hatreds and "Gyny" refers to the word Misogyny. Combined phrases refer specifically to a hatred of female and closely related to the word sexism.³⁹ Under the long-term patriarchy education, the society came up with the discrimination against female. This action can be traced back to the witch-hunt in the middle ages of Europe. The European government wanted to resolve the social turbulences. Therefore, they deem that the females who have knowledge or education are the source of the social chaos.⁴⁰ This targeted behavior not only imply the persecution to socially vulnerable groups under patriarchy system but also indicated the prevalent of misogyny around that time. Under the influence of misogyny ideology, the society exacerbated hatreds among female for the reasons that the public won't judge or question the patriarchy orientation society.

³⁷ Ueno Chizuko and Jordan Sand, "The Politics of Memory: Nation, Individual and Self," *History and Memory* 11, no. 2 (1999).

³⁸ 上野千鶴子, *女ぎらい: ニッポンのミソジニー*.

³⁹ Merriam-Webster, "Misogyny," Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/misogyny#h1>.

⁴⁰ Anne Llewellyn Barstow, *Witchcraze: A New History of the European Witch Hunts* (Pandora San Francisco, 1994).3

Confucianism stressed the preeminence of men over women, stating: “A woman is to obey her father as daughter, her husband as wife, and her son as aged mother.”⁴¹ This statement reflect the traditional society especially in Edo period in Japan. It’s necessary to oppress female in order to keep the status of male supremacy. However, when Japanese feminist raised the idea of liberating female from family and changed the traditional ethics system, male would consider themselves as socially vulnerable groups in order to have an explanation and rationalize the misogynism.

2.3 Media Representations: The Study of Mainstream Media

Media is considered as the elongation sensory of public reaction, the bridge to communicate with society and the only source of public information.⁴² The media exists in our daily life, therefore, the public will imitate the social values, stereotypes or any behavioral pattern comes from the media and become an invisible mainstream consciousness.⁴³ In another words, the media should be the one who spread the authenticity information instead of having a subjective opinion to influence the society. However, due to the convenience and the fast information transfer, more and more traditional media change into electronic media. The electronic media not only provide the cost-effective but also let people having an online discussion. It will easily create fake news, and lead the society filled with mindless mass media-consuming who cannot distinguish between fantasy and reality.⁴⁴ Namely, fake news always conveys the ideological or influential messages as a quota to persuade public accept the bias or the misunderstand concept.

⁴¹ Anne Walthall, "Peripheries. Rural Culture in Tokugawa Japan," *Monumenta Nipponica* (1984).

⁴² Barrie Gunter, *Television and Gender Representation* (John Libbey and Co. Ltd., 1995).

⁴³ Albert Bandura and Richard H Walters, *Social Learning Theory*, vol. 1 (Prentice-hall Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1977).

⁴⁴ Mark Dice, *The True Story of Fake News: How Mainstream Media Manipulates Millions* (The Resistance Manifesto, 2017).

Mainstream Media's Representation

Gender is difference in physiological, but social gender is the performance of culture difference. Simone de Beauvoir once said that, "Women are not born to be a woman, but to acquired cultivation."⁴⁵ That is to say, social gender difference isn't a natural occurrence but to form by the constantly changing social history and culture. The way of information present by the media is an easy and representative symbol in order to emphasize the visibility of incidents.⁴⁶ That is why the impression of gender ideology and gender stereotypes are getting higher and higher in public media. The media constantly using gender inequality and reinforce the negative stereotypes to materialize women's position in the incidents, try to continue the false world created by the social dominant group.

Nowadays, the media still uses the exciting arguments or the view of power inequality to analysis and portrays how obedience the women are, making the society impute to women. During the film and tv culture in Japan can easily find all kinds of female image culture consumed with male gaze, which reflecting the existing gender violence in contemporary Japanese society. Male gaze is actually a form of gender-based view and the manifestation of power.⁴⁷ In order to correspond with mainstream culture, male will use the power of gender-based view to control female, makes them believe they were born to be seen.

⁴⁵ Simone De Beauvoir and Howard Madison Parshley, *The Second Sex* (Vintage books New York, 1953).

⁴⁶ Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion* (Routledge, 2017).

⁴⁷ John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (Penguin uK, 2008).

Namely, Japanese mass media materialize the female when reporting, causing the society gradually believed women are the main source of male's interest and become the standard desire.⁴⁸ Therefore, gender violence in mass media has become a product of rationalization in male consumption and entertainment.

The Silence in Mainstream Media

The mainstream media play an important role in the modern society. It's not only clever at making social conflict but also excellence in using dramatic statements to hide the authenticity of news and influence the basic value of society.⁴⁹ Namely, it's a media which have a two-edged sword. The purpose of the mainstream media isn't just to reflect the authenticity of the news but to highlight the importance of the public issues. Therefore, the audio news and the online opinions had become the first-hand information during the era of internet rapidly rising. The victims will easily get bad reputation, owing to the public keep accept wrong information of different quality of news.⁵⁰ Consequently causing the false accusations of the issues also distorted the social value of the public. That is to say, when sexism issues are reported by the Japanese media, there will be a filter to emphasize that the woman are obedient to accept the order. Making the Japanese society believe that the value of the woman is from the affirmation given by male and female are always the victims of the incidents.⁵¹ Thus, when #METOO happening in Japan where be consider as playing to the gallery and deem that the sexual violence was the action of some parts of male didn't need to hype.

⁴⁸ Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema."

⁴⁹ Douglas Kellner, *Media Spectacle* (Routledge, 2003).

⁵⁰ Frank Leishman and Paul Mason, *Policing and the Media* (Willan, 2012).

⁵¹ 上野千鶴子, *女ぎらい: ニッポンのミンジニー*.

The Bulletin Board System (BBS) in Social Media

In the past few years, the traditional media is the only way for public to receive the information. However, with the time goes by, the world began to enter the era of networked media. From one by one of exchange information in the past to information can be exchanged on online nowadays. Under the popularity of information and rapid development, the internet has become the main medium of communication media today. It not only allows the information to quickly circulate and distribute via different media to communicate with each other, but also enhances the exposure of public issues. The virtual community in the bulletin board system (BBS) is an open discussion field under a sufficient number of people. In this communication system, users can publicly express their opinions or respond to other users on topics of interest to form a socially connected field.⁵² In other words, the existence of the virtual community reflects the interpersonal relationship controlled by the media in the real society.⁵³

Online Opinion Criticism Among Internet Forum

Information is the source of power. In an era of message inflation, opinions are rapidly shared between public media and citizens, making everyone are a symbol of power. In the study of journalism, mass communication, interpersonal communication and opinion cognition are considered to be the basic conditions for generating public opinion.⁵⁴ That is to say, the mass media has the openness and extensiveness of

⁵² Howard Rheingold, *Virtuelle Gemeinschaft: Soziale Beziehungen Im Zeitalter Des Computers* (Addison-Wesley, 1994).

⁵³ John B Thompson, *The Media and Modernity: A Social Theory of the Media* (Stanford University Press, 1995).

⁵⁴ Patricia Moy, "Public Opinion," Oxford Bibliographies, <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199756841/obo-9780199756841-0083.xml>.

information, it has been regarded as an opinion cognition consistent with the majority of public opinion and to form a mainstream opinion. The opinion cognition of the majority in the ethnic groups will lead to minority groups to have the opposite opinions. When the majority of opinions become mainstream opinions will make the voices of minority groups become silent. Therefore, the both sides of opinion have begun to present spiral views and to have a “spiral of silence” which is common in the media.⁵⁵

The online social media also invisibly supports and deepens the differentiation of the spiral of silence. By using a common point of view as an indicator, forcing the minorities who are afraid of being isolated so selectively leave the appropriate opinion in the web forum which could influence the possibility of various diverse opinions. As suggested by the spiral of silence theory, respondents were found to be more willing to express their opinions publicly when they perceived a trend which support their viewpoint, or when there was a greater perceived likelihood of achieving success for their issue position.⁵⁶

Therefore, in modern society, the mass media will deliberately propose a controversial remark also based on the psychological factors of people are afraid of being isolated, they will choose to ignore the minority's opinions and partiality for majority. According to the research, users of online forums will choose to watch and express their opinions in accordance with their personal preferences and interests.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, "The Spiral of Silence a Theory of Public Opinion," *Journal of communication* 24, no. 2 (1974).

⁵⁶ Diana C Mutz, "The Influence of Perceptions of Media Influence: Third Person Effects and the Public Expression of Opinions," *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 1, no. 1 (1989).

⁵⁷ Cass R Sunstein, *Republic. Com* (Princeton university press, 2002).

Also, each media outlet will address a specific segment of the population defined on the basis of different dimensions. For example, liberal people look for liberal media, conservative people look for conservative media, etc.⁵⁸

That is to say, the user will make an illusion rational choice in a comfort zone because the user will only hear the homogenization point of view, which makes it difficult for society to form a consensus on a single issue.

⁵⁸ Paolo Mancini, "Digital News Report2013,"
<http://www.digitalnewsreport.org/essays/2013/partiality-and-polarisation-of-news/>.

METHODOLOGY

This research adopts textual analysis as a method to examine the case of sexual assault in Japanese society: the female journalist Shiori Ito. The purpose of this research is to reveal how the misogyny culture influences Japanese society. Texts included the online anonymous forum and the documentary and other reference regarding Shiori Ito's incident.

There were three research questions: (1) What are the varied opinions about sexual assault towards females in Japanese society? (2) How did the Japanese society incriminate female for sexual assault? (3) How did the misogyny culture influence the Japanese society?

Source of Data

In Japan, incidents of sexual assault is usually undermined in mass media. But they are present around anonymous forums. Based on the research by Nielsen Digital, there are more and more young people using online anonymous forums to share information.⁵⁹

Therefore, I would collect the needed data from two sources. One was the ガールズちゃんねる (Girls Channel or GC), formed by the J Squared Co., Ltd. media, who gives top priority to females as a new anonymous media. The J Squared Co., Ltd. aims to create new forms of media and communication online.⁶⁰ The GC has the largest number of accesses in Japan as a female media.

⁵⁹ Kenji Kawada, "More Than 66 Million Yahoo! Japan and Google Users [Nielsen Survey]," Nielsen Digital, <https://webtan.impress.co.jp/n/2018/08/01/30068>.

⁶⁰ Mitsuaki Omiya, "ガールズちゃんねる girls Channel," J Squared Co., Ltd., <https://jsquared.co.jp>.

The other was 5ちゃんねる(5channel or 5ch), which was the biggest online anonymous forum in Japan, with over than 1.17 million members in the website⁶¹and 2.5 million posts in each day.⁶² The feature of the online anonymous forums was that netizens could freely leave their comments without applying for an account. However, it could also breed the irresponsible posts and maliciously spread rumors. Therefore, I will base on the anonymous commentaries form the website as mentioned previously to answer the research questions.

This research will use QDA Miner Lit to code and sort the needed commentaries. QDA Miner is a software for coding, annotating, retrieving and analyzing the collections of the documents. It allows researchers to intuitive coding using codes organized in a tree structure.⁶³ Thus, I would use the translate website, for example Baidu translate, Google translate, XYZ translate, Tradukka translated and requested to a friend who understood the Japanese to cross-validation the meaning of the commentaries.

Moreover, I would also analyze how the case of Shiori Ito is represented via JAPAN'S SCERET SHAME, a documentary filmed by BBC Two. This documentary tried to reveal the taboo based on a true story.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Nielsen Online Announces Monthly Internet Usage Trend Survey Results for November 2008, "The Q & a Site and "Wikipedia" Are Also Used in the Workplace, and the Unexpectedly High "2 Channel" Is Used in the Workplace.," Net Ratings Co., Ltd, https://www.netratings.co.jp/news_release/2008/12/Newsrelease20081224.html.

⁶² Lisa. Katayama, " 2-Channel Gives Japan's Famously Quiet People a Mighty Voice," Wired, <https://www.wired.com/2007/04/2-channel-gives-japans-famously-quiet-people-a-mighty-voice/>.

⁶³ Kovach Computing Services (KCS), "Qda Miner: The Mixed Method Solution for Qualitative Analysis," <https://www.kovcomp.co.uk/QDAMiner/qdambroc.html>.

⁶⁴ John Grierson and Forsyth Hardy, *Grierson on Documentary* (Univ of California Press, 1971).

Data Collection

This research would use QDA Miner Lit to code the commentaries from GC and 5ch. The online anonymous forums enable people to participate the public sphere⁶⁵. The processes keyword to search any data is “Shiori Ito”.

The limitation of each post in 5ch is up to 1,000 commentaries at maximum. They would start a new discussion string when the post reach to the maximum and delete the old one. Therefore, the earliest commentaries about Shiori Ito in 5ch is in 2017/10/14. Therefore, the valid time for GC which I could get was in 2017/05/29 and the earliest data I could get form the 5ch is in 2017/10/14 due to the website technology issue, they would delete the old discussion to start a new one.

There are 4,004 pieces of commentaries in 5ch and 9,710 pieces of commentaries in GC by the key word of Shiori Ito. The total amount of the data were 13,714 pieces of commentaries. Owing to the numerous commentaries, I would collect 100 commentaries in each website to have the effective analyze. The collecting range of the commentaries was from the prior, middle and last period after Shiori Ito had a publicly allegation. After collecting the needed commentaries from the online anonymous forums, I would start to code and edited the data. Later on, I would gather information through observed the documentary. Basically, I would draw the documentary into three parts, which were the beginning, the middle and the end of the documentary. To find the corresponds relationship between documentary and underground social network.

⁶⁵ 林維國, *新媒體與民意：理論與實證* (台灣五南圖書出版股份有限公司, 2013).

Way of Data Analysis

Through the data analysis I will use the strategy of textual analysis to explain the documentary and the online anonymous commentaries.

Firstly, I follow the pattern of rhetorical triangle to analysis the documentary. The rhetorical triangle is composed by ethos - credibility, logos - logic and pathos – emotions.⁶⁶ Roughly, I break the documentary into three parts, which are the hypothesis of current condition in Japanese society, the aspect of Japan’s law and also the victims who have the same experience to verify the hypothesis mentioned in documentary and commentaries.

Second, after completing the code through QDA Miner Lit, I will divide the commentaries data into three different meaning groups as shown in table 1 and draw the relevant commentaries into the section I have divided. To represent they share the same ideology, for instance, the commentaries of “this woman is very beautiful so she must be devious.” will be classify as stereotype which under the social condemnation shown in table 1.

Table 1 Sorting Data

Code	Social Reaction	Social Condemnation	Social Influence
Variable	• Convention	• Sextortion	• Value of Women
	• Exchange	• Male Dominated	• Unspoken Rule
	• Benefited	• Stereotype	• Judicial system
		• Questioning	• Effectiveness
		• Political Use	

Source: edited by the author

⁶⁶ Miami University, "Rhetorical Analysis," <https://miamioh.edu/hcwe/handouts/rhetorical-analyses/index.html>.

Thirdly, I will connect the relationship between current condition mentioned in the documentary and the commentaries. For example, after analysis the documentary, I found an expert suppose a statement about the current condition in Japan in the beginning of the documentary. In this case, I will focus on the keywords of the expert's description "common" and via QDA Miner coding to find the relevant commentaries to verify the hypothesis of current condition in Japanese society.

Namely, according to the hypothesis form documentary, I could use the commentaries to verify and explain different fields in Japanese society.

DATA ANALYSIS

In this section the result of the data searching is include the documentary and public opinion in internet anonymous forum. Textual analysis is to explain the extensive of social phenomenon. There were different points of view concerning Japan's sexism. I would combine the text of documentary and online anonymous forum to explain the underlying structure in Japan. In order to answer my research questions, this section divided into three parts which are social reaction, social condemnation and social influenced toward Japanese sexism.

Definition of Documentary and Online Anonymous Forum

Documentary is been defined as a creative treatment of reality⁶⁷, which refers to a film or television which gives facts and information about the subject. It uses the certain viewpoint to examine the society. Therefore, the function of the documentary is to reconceptualize the society instead of focusing on the dramatic effect. An online anonymous forum is a website that allows anonymous visitors to communicate with each other without using real name. It could exclude the spiral of silence theory to reveal the public opinion by its nameless.

Documentary's Representation

The documentary - Japan's Secret Shame was produced by foreign news media (BBC News) that consider Japan as a sexual society which can buy any kind of sexual services⁶⁸. The background of the story began at a female journalist Shiori Ito who accused Noriyuki Yamaguchi for being raped. Noriyuki Yamaguchi was the executive

⁶⁷ Grierson and Hardy, *Grierson on Documentary*.

⁶⁸ Adelstein, "Japan's Secret Shame".

of TBS television who also belong to the journalist in government pay for the prime minister of Shinzo Abe. Hence, Shiori Ito received multiple critical slam because the relationship between Noriyuki Yamaguchi and Shinzo Abe. This documentary told the sex crimes happened in a country that rarely discussed sex, try to build up the awareness of sexual assault and the proper system.

The storyline of this video followed the viewpoint of first perspective. Through Shiori Ito's personal experience guided the audience to review Japanese social sexism. In brief, I broke the documentary into the three parts, which are the prior period, the middle period and the last period of the documentary. First, it showed the perspective of how the world viewed Japanese sex. Second, it verified how the society incriminated female by social sexism. Third, it elaborated the current condition of sexual assault in the aspect of law in Japan.

This video presented the specific details of what would happen after breaking Japanese social taboo. Which not only recounted the critical points, but also exposed the gender and traditional attitudes in Japanese society.

Table 2 Documentary Introduction

Japan's Secret Shame	
Year	2018
Director	Erica Jenkin
Celebrity	Shiori Ito, Jake Adelstein, Hiroko Goto, Mio Sugita
Genres	Documentary
Issue	Sex crimes in Japan
Publisher	BBC Two

Source: edited by the author

4.1 Japanese Social Reaction

The minority would be assimilated when the opinion different from the majority. In this chapter, social reaction would be referred as the common norm accepted by the Japanese society.

Social Convention in Documentary

In the beginning of documentary, some academic professionals were invited to elaborate the current situation of public opinion in Japan.

Jake Adelstein is a crime journalist who believed that one of the reasons for #METOO movement wasn't taken off in Japan. From the perspective of the government member in parliament of Liberal Democratic Party, Sugita Mio mentioned that "being sexual assault is a very normal things happening in Japan since that everyone will occur once in your lifetime as a woman in the Japanese society". Later on, when Shiori Ito was invited to have a speech in the university, one of the female students said that they always been groped by wear the sailor-style uniform in high school times. They always told themselves "It's nothing. It's not that serious. We are high school students, it happens." The statements above had intimated showed the ideology of Japanese society.

Sexual assault is common for people who lived in a country with patriarchal system. The majority of male considered that the sexual assault is not worth to discuss caused the minority of female gradually believed that being groped by others is one thing that will and must happen in their lifetime in Japan.

This concept comes from the people who shared the same value toward female and took female for granted. They accept the normalization of the world. Cased Japanese pay little attention on sexual assault and even regarded it as a daily routine

from the perspective of the foreign journalist and the testimony of two Japanese which mentioned above. Namely, if sexual assault happened in a Japanese child, the adults would told the children “this is a misunderstanding, they are playing with you.” To comply with the social structure in Japan and the rules of being polite. Japanese society have a serious stereotype against female.

In this case, Shiori Ito had been labeled as a prostitute due to her outstanding appearance and excellent ability of working. Under this circumstance, sexual assault had become one of the common issues in Japan. Turn the public gradually believed the unspoken rule of having the jobs by her body was not as rare as normally.

Social Convention in Online Anonymous Forum

According to the information from the underground network forums, there were some corresponding features with the unspoken rule in documentary. One of the anonymous users X left the comment by saying, “Tokyo is always a city of drugs so just give up the allegation. “and so did the other user K say, “the specialty of Tokyo is Rohypnol (FM2).”

The two commentaries could be seen that the Tokyo was a city to have drug abuse and plenty sexual assaults that even the police cannot charged them. The public were not surprised by what happened to Shiori Ito which also be regarded as a common issue.

Moreover, some statements tried to implicate the unspoken rule of exchanged of interests in Japan. User B left the message on the internet anonymous forum by saying “it’s an approval for both of you to have sex as long as you want the privilege on work.”,

user J said, “it was more like Noriyuki Yamaguchi been raped by Shiori Ito. She wants riding on the coattails of Noriyuki Yamaguchi and get the reciprocity.” and user L said, “so you’ve failed to get a job by temptation the old man.”

From the statements mentioned above, the unspoken rule existed in Japanese society and is been widely used. Japanese refused to discuss what reason to cause sexual assault on public. The majority of people were worried to collapse the patriarchal system for hundreds of years.

In Japan, male is always be the symbol of power and the female would have consideration relationship with interests to improve their social status. Therefore, based on the result mentioned above, people were easily create a scenario for victims, thereby cause the public to incriminate victims by their own ideology.

4.2 Japanese Social Condemnation

Social reaction is different from social condemnation. Social reaction shows that the public considers sexual assault as a normal issue. Social condemnation is to emphasize on the public who uses certain keywords to describe and regard female as guilty. Media and public condemnation not only cause second injury but also invade the private sphere of the victims.

Sextortion

In the middle of documentary, the hypothesis of the current situation in Japan mentioned previously had been confirmed as one of their ingrained culture.

The government member of parliament and political commentators had publicly questioning Shiori Ito on a television show. They made fun of her and draw a picture to metaphor Shiori Ito as a prostitute who failed to get a job by

sleeping. At the same time, Japanese media flooded to tell the public need to be careful of the beautiful woman like Shiori Ito because she might use her beauty as a weapon to reach the goal.

Moreover, mass media like to use belittle words and pictures to describe female victims. Driven the orientation for Japanese public tends to guilt the victims as being responsible, which can be regarded as rape myth.

The phenomenon of sextortion can also be found online unidentified forum. User C left the message by saying “you can’t remember the agreement if you’re drunk, right? So if this is real, I think there must have another story behind this. Besides, I don’t regard it’s an easy thing to carry a person who is drunk, and not to mentioned that person even lost her memory. So I can only think it as a sextortion.” and user N said “Are you regret of being casting couch? Because you didn’t get your money and your job that you deserve?” For this kind of description can be considered as misogyny.

Japanese Social Value

Misogyny can be referred as the symbol of women under the male fetishism that cause rape myth. However, male isn’t the only one who will have misogyny but so is the female. Misogyny is regarded as using male-dominated value as the only standard to discriminate female, instead the hatreds toward female. This causes a female symbolization culture in Japanese society.

The government member of parliament of Liberal Democratic Party Sugita Mio had said “With this case, there were clear errors on her part as a woman by drinking that much alcohol in front of a man and losing her memory. As being a woman in society, being able to properly turn down those advances is one of your

skills.” From her statement can verify the female will easily put other female into a difficult situation due to the envious and jealous.

Due to the Japanese female was born to be the vulnerable group in the traditional Japanese social value, therefore, people believed that female won't be able to get promoted by themselves. In this case, Shiori Ito is a woman who have an ability at work and outstanding appearance at the same time which made her easily become the target for both genders.

Thus, the public won't question the accuracy of social value under the patriarchal society. The commentary from the internet anonymous forum had also correspond to the Japanese social value. The user Y left the comment by saying “although I am the woman, I hated this kind of women the most.” user B said, “this woman is very beautiful so she must be devious.” user G said “I always feel that I can't believe what she said. She is a bit too deliberate in the media.” and user L said, “Do the rape criminals always respond email with the victims?”

From the commentaries can notice that the Japanese public were using male-identified to define what female ought to be in Japanese society. They note Shiori Ito as guilty to ease the female's jealous of not as perfect as her and so do males despise toward female. Consequently causing the society to question female victims instead of male offenders. Namely, the victim-blaming culture is still existing in Japanese society nowadays.

Japanese Social Stereotype

In the middle of the documentary, Noriyuki Yamaguchi were be invited to a political TV show in order to defend for himself after Shiori Ito had a publicly allegation to him.

Noriyuki Yamaguchi had said “Shiori Ito lost her memory because she drunk too much alcohol which means she let herself drunk. She did ask to be dropped at station but she was too drunk and unable to get home alone. But would it be alright? To drop a drunken person at the station? So I have no choice, no choice at all but to take her to my hotel to rest for a while.” Two male host chimed in with saying Noriyuki Yamaguchi was a thoughtful person and took a really good care of Shiori Ito.

From the statement of what Noriyuki Yamaguchi said, he had use male-centered to highlight his action as a hero and had implied the features that Shiori Ito won't be accepted by the Japanese public. The first feature is a woman drinking alcohol alone with a man in the night. The second feature is the drunken woman in front of a man. These two features can be deemed as an unspoken rule of having a consensual sex in Japan. Noriyuki Yamaguchi use the Japanese stereotype as an unspoken rule to create a victim-blaming discussion and spin control on this issue.

Therefore, there are also some messages in the internet anonymous forum matching with what Noriyuki Yamaguchi mentioned on the television show. User G left the comment by saying “people are not that stupid to believe what this woman had said, especially with a man who don't familiar with and not to mention the possibility of drunk rape.” user D said, “I can't support a woman who went drinking alone at night with a man.” and user Z said “it's totally nonsense! You said that you've been raped by others but everyone knows drinking alone at night with a man is considered as to have a consensual sex. Besides, if a woman who know how to respect herself won't drinking alone with a man at night.” The ideology of labelization and objectification towards female had been thorough into Japan's history and become one of Japanese culture.

Questioning

The society restrict female by different kinds of social habits. Even an unfamiliar Japanese male youtuber were filming a video to question Shiori Ito by saying “there is a self-proclaimed “journalist” called Shiori Ito, gave a shocking press conference, saying “I was raped!” This is really fishy. It’s completely unheard of someone would show their face on television if they were a sexual crime victim. A Japanese person wouldn’t talk about it in public.”

The Japanese society use ethics as the code of conduct to have different regulation toward gender. For this controversial gender identity, the public started to inquest Shiori Ito by having the unusual action as being a Japanese female.

Some of the messages were asking Shiori Ito not to exploit the real victims and need to apologize to them. User Y left the message on internet anonymous forum by saying “so it’s real to have such person in this word. I won’t believe what you’ve said, you need to apologize to the real victims in the world.” and the user X said, “the actual victims would be treated as unrespectable only because of the exist of Shiori Ito.” Those two commentaries use an inconspicuous way to reveal that Japanese won’t believe the real victims will stands out to voice their right.

Hence, there are more and more commentaries which are similar to show their social value against female without being a normal woman in Japanese society. User F said, “a normal person won’t consider showing their face and give out their name when they have a publicly allegation....so is this the stage name when you’re working?” the other user V said “I don't think there is a need to show up with your face. If the sexual assault is true, then it should be avoided to interview as possible. Isn't this the normal psychology of being a woman?”

and the user T said “you press the conference to reveal your wounds so easily after you been raped?” The society using their social stereotype to characterize what is normal criterion and bring on the social oppression to female.

Being Political Use

On the other hand, the Tokyo Bureau chief of New York Times Motoko Rich had put forward her perception of “Shiori Ito will and must be question by public because of the relationship of Mr. Yamaguchi and Prime Minister Abe.”

Under the circumstances of different culture, Motoko Rich concludes what will happen after Shiori Ito have a public allegation. She also discovers the profound impact of cultural concept. From her perspective of being a foreign journalist who lived in Japan and observed Japan very carefully, knowing that Japanese only accept the male-dominated social structure and use it as the only standard to value the whole society. Which can be called as gender stereotype or gender oppression.

Unsurprisingly, most of the public started to have similar scenario by implied she as an undercover agent of opposition party in the internet anonymous forum. User K said “are you going to use this issue to attack Mr. Abe? “, user T said “wasn’t it a conspiracy of the opposition party?” and user G said “what benefit you can have of overthrowing Mr. Abe?”

The society expect Shiori Ito to be a silence victim instead of exposing herself in the public. This can also perceive how the Japanese mass media were accused of sensationalism in its coverage of sexual assault.

The public tend to use the symbol of male to create a patriarchal hegemony and leading the society to have victim-blaming and rape myth. Consequently, Shiori Ito provoked a public outcry when she stands out for her right and takes over control from male dominated society.

4.3 Japanese Social Influence

Rape myth can be viewed as the accumulation of misogyny culture in Japan. From the previous viewpoint one can know the misogyny is the reason causing society being silent and stigmatized the female victim. Therefore, I will investigate how misogyny effecting Japanese society in an obvious aspect.

The Value of Women

Despite being one of the most modern nations in the world, Japan's rape laws can date back to 1907s and didn't change until Shiori Ito stands out for her right.

Hiroko Goto is a law professor in Chiba university who had justified this description by saying "since 1907 Japan's rape law didn't change. The reason it took so long is because in Japan, there's a history of not considering violence against women as a very serious social problem." The documentary also said that "there is no mention of consent in Japan's old rape laws. In this country, there are different definitions towards what rape is. People didn't consider rape as a criminal behavior, unless it's a stranger attacking you, you fight back and you get hurt."

Either sexual assault or rape is a common issue for Japanese as the pervious mentioned. The overflow fake news and the bias headline towards female can be regard as the main reason to influence public perception. It also can trace back to 1946s, when the Japanese government abolished the legal prostitution in formal.

However, it does not mean to prohibit the illegal prostitution. With the history and culture goes on, people gradually believed that wanting sexual transaction is the reflection of female in reality. They even believed being sexual assault or raped is to display how value the woman is.

According to internet anonymous forum can found some similar statement to Japanese sexism. User R said “it seems to me that Mr. Yamaguchi had be fascinated by Shiori Ito’s beauty.”, user D said “this is the hope of all casting couch across the nation.” and the user V said “you have a good appearance, can you go shoot pornography? It would selling like hotcakes.”

The society are having different cognition against the value of female. People consider giving the recognition to female is a social approval to them. Therefore, when the society call Shiori Ito as a prostitute is equivalent to, she is qualified enough to be raped by the person who is in authority, like Noriyuki Yamaguchi. They consider this kind of opinion as a compliment.

Social Structure

Moreover, the misogyny culture had become the underlying culture to influence the Japanese society structure. The punishment of the rape crime is even lower than a theft crime in Japan.

According to Hiroko Goto she said “if you want to dim the rape crime, the victims must show the necessary evidence of the use of force or intimidation and judge will also expect to have the evidence of fight back which means if you didn’t cry out for help, they were assumed you consented. However the victims always freeze when they are facing the rape.” This situation not only happen in the aspect of Japan’s law but also in public opinion.

User Q from the internet anonymous forum said “you lost your consciousness was in the sushi restaurant at 9pm and found yourself been raped at 5am? So what did you do between 9pm to 5am? Have you been raped all the night?”, user T said “you woke up at 5am by pain and found Noriyuki Yamaguchi was above you? So you’re saying that Noriyuki Yamaguchi can control his body weight letting you wakes up at 5am?” and the user Y said “you said that you get alcohol blackout, but you should remember a little bit if you really been raped.”

Most of the people conclude that there is no alcohol blackout, you will still remember some memories even you got drunk. However, alcohol would interferes the long-term memories, especially when consuming the alcohol rapidly. It would cause the fragmentary or complete memories lost.⁶⁹ From the verify statements in the internet anonymous forum mentioned above can organize the lack public knowledge towards sexual assault in Japan, will easily causing the second injury in both public and private sphere.

Judicial system

People always use the perspective of third party as a double standard index to judge the incident. Not to mention that Japan is a constitutional state, they won’t question the judiciary of the country. They also view women should obey the rules of male hegemony as being a female in Japanese society.

The government member of parliament of Liberal Democratic Party Sugita Mio had said “the Japanese police are the best in the world. Therefore, if the court ruled Mr. Yamaguchi not in the wrong then there was no crime for him at all. It was an

⁶⁹ Aaron M White, "What Happened? Alcohol, Memory Blackouts, and the Brain," *Alcohol Research & Health* 27, no. 2 (2003).

insult for people who doubt the fairness of Japanese judiciary.” She also shows her sympathy for Noriyuki Yamaguchi and indicate Shiori Ito was making the false accuse.

User J from the internet anonymous forum had also said that “judgement from the court had been pronounce as non-prosecutorial disposition. Shiori Ito should stop lying.” user G said “The judicial system is based on laws and evidence so the police and prosecutors won’t be so stupid to believe in yours claim.” and the other user W said “Shiori Ito is an idiot. She tries to deny the judgement even it has announced this isn't a raped case and still saying that she is the representation of the rape victim.”

Basically, the Japan society won’t challenge the judgement of court. They greatly assured that the perpetrator isn’t guilty if the victim did not fight back. Due to the victim have the ability of resistance. According to that, the judge in Japan must have the evidences of fighting back before the accusation.

Japanese Society

In the end of the documentary, it mentioned that although the #METOO movements did not raise high attention in Japan, still encourage some women to stand out in privately. Along with this case had officially been forced to suspend the investigation there were more and more people stand out with Shiori Ito by sent plenty supporting letters from public and internet anonymous forum.

User A said “would it be a suspended investigation again to every woman who been raped in the future?”, user T said “The police suspended the investigation only because the order of superiors?”

and user M said “it seems that many things are been controlled by the superiors.”

With the publicly allegation there were many people worry the suspend investigation would influence the authoritative of Japan in the future.

The documentary also concludes that although the Japan’s government had amend the rape law into forcible sexual intercourse and also allow men to allege the sexual assault, UK had spent 40 times money when facing rape issues which only have the half population compares to Japan.

Japanese public consciousness can be viewed as the accumulation of culture and history. The misogyny had influence Japan not only in the dominated structure but also in obedient structure. The dominated people would oppress the obedient people without doubt. However, the only way for obedient to protect themselves from being humiliate by others is to oppress the person also in obedient party. Which can be seen as the minority will stand with the majority in order to get social identity.

Moreover, due to the gendered division of labor in Japanese history, causing the Japanese society had formulated a standard for female to comply. They take the conventional standard presenting by the world for granted to labelization the female. Namely, Japanese society believe sexuality is the demonstration of their culture value and not to mentioned it have a deep relationship along with the history context.

The commentaries relate to misogyny can be view as the public share the same social value of the world and take female for granted. Gender stereotype and gender oppression can also be view as the outcome of male dominated social structure and refer as the objectification toward female. The labelization of female is existing under the male dominated society. The social structural easily labeled women as a female and men as a male to decide what is normal as being a Japanese woman.

CONCLUSION

This research not only unpack taboo in Japanese society but also re-exam the Japanese social sexism via textual analysis. According to varied forms of texts such as the documentary and public opinions in internet anonymous forum, this research could be reviewed in three folds. First, the social convention oppressed toward female. Second, mass media reported Shiori Ito by the bias statement when she revealed the Japanese social taboo. Third, the Japanese society started to get sense of sexual assault. I would outline my finding here to explain what I learned in this research and also conclude some key points.

From the previous chapters, we could tell that the sexual taboo in Japan where the ethical code is reduced sexuality to the institutionalization culture. This established the social norm to restrain the existence of sexuality. The sexual taboo created a patriarchy ideology of male dominate thought, which served as social value to accept the normalization of the world. Under long-term patriarchy education, misogyny culture has become one of the social structures in male-dominated society in Japan. Moreover, the deep-seated patriarchy system has created an atmosphere of self-condemnation in silencing victims after they suffered from sexual assaults. This seriously violated human rights. It is well-know that Japan was a sexual freedom country.

The society would have different extents of endurance toward sexuality, especially the cognition between male and female. Besides, the Japanese caricature against female causing the public to accept the striking title or the inequitable speech presented by the mainstream media.

Therefore, when the mainstream media is biased towards female, this would mislead Japanese public to understand the brutality of sexual assaults so that it might constantly lead to rape culture. Namely, it generally makes females vulnerable in Japanese society.

Briefly speaking, Japan used male-dominated values to drive the orientation of restricting society. Male-dominated would form the basis for the society to use male-identified and male-centered to establish the standards oppressed female. Further to cause gender equality still an incomprehensible issue in Japan. Therefore, I would conclude my finding into three parts to have a thorough explanation.

First of all, Japan is constructed by a male-dominated society as I found in my research. This Japanese society has privileged male-centered norms and values to establish the standards in limiting autonomy of females. For example, my case study of Shiori Ito showed that there was an inquiry into Japanese social standard in terms of dress code. Dressing black V-neck sweater was seen as impolite and sexual when she held a press conference. Normally, the victims would be asked to wear a white cloth to represent the clean and honest.

In this case, when Shiori Ito challenged the patriarchy, so she encountered process of the stigmatization, labelization and objectification from the public. But she overcame the obstacles by putted her foot down. Moreover, gender equality did not imply that man and woman should behave with their biological sex, but to behave like a human. Shiori Ito broke the social frame as an example to tell people that they don't need to feel embarrassed of what happened to them in life, because no one should live with others expectation or to correspond with the traditional standardization.

Secondly, mass media were filled with statements to blame Shiori Ito after she stood out to have a public allegation. They showed male dominated values of the society that Shiori Ito as abnormal. In brief, they did nothing but showing social stereotype such as rape myths to incriminate Shiori Ito. This revealed ingrained misogyny culture in Japan with bias and misunderstanding against females. However, Shiori Ito still pursued what she believed as there is no certain standard for value judgement. Therefore, I suggest that one has to stop stigmatization in order to argue for the gender equality. In doing so, my research highlighted women have to empower themselves by eradicating the labels attached on them.

In conclusion, there were plenty of gender inequality happened in the world. Females have become vulnerable in the incidents. Males and females have different social expectations. Therefore, I focus on the social status and the civil rights by gender also argue for protection of humanity and challenge the patriarchy society. The females in Japan still give the priority of their life and career planning to family, so the jobs they did or working places are relatively undermined as less important. With gender inequality in Japan, my case study of what happened to Shiori Ito and how her incident was represented at least offered a hope that many efforts were made to review the rape laws.

Perhaps, Japanese society was forced to make some changes towards sexual assault. Sexuality remained a taboo in Japan, the society must be more aware of all forces in silencing sexual assaults. People need to find ways in erasing the labelization against female victims in Japan after I reviewed the public opinions in internet anonymous forum.

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