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The #MeToo Legacy in Japan: Awareness

Prof.Dr.Robert O'Mochain
Ritsumeikan University, Japan

Abstract

In 2022, Itō Shiori, a journalist who is known as the “face of #MeToo in Japan, claimed that Japan has become a place where it is possible for survivors of sexual abuse to speak out. This paper considers this claim and explores the long-term effects of #MeToo and affiliated campaigns in Japan. It considers the role of social media and the entertainment industry and the extent to which they indicate a cultural shift that allows survivors of abuse to speak out and pursue justice. We report on interview data from two activists who attest to the rise of higher levels of transparency and accountability in many sectors of Japanese society. Legal developments and new policing policies are also considered. Positive developments in these areas as well as the increase in support for the #Flower Demo movement prompts the conclusion that #MeToo has had a significant long-term legacy because it has been adapted to particular social and cultural conditions in Japan.

Keywords: #metoo; justice; accountability; perpetrators; empathy