

Chapter 2

What Is Public Opinion? In the Age of Complexedly-Mediated Democracy and Scandal Politics

Kaoru Endo

Abstract In the complexedly-mediated society, the public opinion which is the foundation of democracy should be considered not as a static norm but as a dynamic recursive self-creation process. From this point of view, this paper will analyze the series of scandals relating to the Masuzoe, the former Tokyo Governor, problem, and clarify the dynamic characteristics of the public opinion in the complexedly-mediated society.

Keywords Social media · Intermediality · Democracy · Scandal politics
Public opinion · Social movement

2.1 Introduction

Democracy fundamentally operates on the basis of a consensus reached by the members of society. This “consensus of the members of society” is generally called “public opinion.” In that sense, public opinion might be said to be the most important concept when it comes to thinking about our society.

Still, there are no clear answers to the questions of where public opinion can be observed, or what requisites there are for an opinion to be deemed a public opinion. Public opinion can be analyzed as a normative or descriptive concept and varies from person to person.

Further, the formation of public opinion, insofar as it is a process of social communication, is influenced by the information environment of the times.

In this text, while taking into consideration prior modern research on public opinion, we take cases from the scandals and politics of 2016 into account to consider the dynamism and various problems of public opinion in this age of intermediality.

K. Endo (✉)

Department of Political Studies, Gakushuin University, Tokyo, Japan
e-mail: kaoru.endo@gakushuin.ac.jp

2.2 Public Opinion/Will of the People in Modern Times and Related Questions

2.2.1 What Is “public Opinion?”

“Yoron (世論)” in Japanese is the translation of “public opinion.” Public opinion stems from the people, who are the public, and their general (based on public interest) opinion. However, the consideration of who is “the public” and what is “the public interest” creates fresh conflicts.

In terms of the debate concerning public opinion, Endo (2004) details, in short, that what we consider to be public opinion is whatever opinions of public issues are seen to be commonly shared.

2.2.2 “Public Opinion” from “The Will of the People”/Moving Towards “Public Opinion”

In recent years, the phrase “will of the people” has come to be used more frequently than “public opinion.” For example, Maeda (2014) has pointed out that the frequency with which “will of the people (min-i/民意)” appears in the headlines of major newspapers has increased since 1990.

However, generally, the distinction in the usage of “public opinion” and “will of the people” is not clear, and both terms are used with a degree of ambiguity.

In Kayano and Mori (2008), Kayano states that “there is a difference in the sense of what is meant by ‘will of the people’ and ‘public opinion.’ Even though they are the same in terms of expressing an opinion, whereas ‘will of the people’ expresses the opinion of the people bearing some intention, ‘public opinion’ is more like the opinion of the people as it would be expressed in the results of a survey” (pp. 56–57).

In addition, Kinoshita (2008) argues that:

“Public opinion” comes from the sum total of disconnected individuals, is unorganized, and is statistical. “The will of the people” is an aggregate, is coordinated, and has a narrative. Tentatively, looking at the two in this way, the present is the era of “public opinion,” and “the will of the people” is absent. The phrase “will of the people” is chaotic, and often used without stipulations, rather revealing its lack of a true meaning (p. 98).

Conversely, Anno (2016) does not make a clear distinction between public opinion and will of the people.

Ultimately, public opinion and will of the people are not defined as different concepts. In contrast to public opinion having been conventionally analyzed as an objectively descriptive concept, the will of the people has been used in recent years to draw focus to and discuss emotion. Endo (2004) suggests that a problem has arisen in grasping public opinion as a static, normative concept or as a descriptive concept,

and that public opinion should be analyzed as the diverse consciousness (emotions) of members of society or as the chain of interlocking discourses that express such, along with the dynamism of those ideas. In this paper, we shall analyze public opinion pursuant to the above discussion.

2.2.3 Changes in the Backdrop—Structural Variations of the World

This analysis of public opinion as emotion or the chain of discourse and dynamism of ideas that express it, naturally, gains meaningful perspective from past eras. However, there are numerous social factors that influence it, particularly noticeably in recent years.

One reason for this is the end of the Cold War from the late 1980s to the 1990s as discussed by Endo (1998). For instance, allow me to point to Mouffe (2005: 2008), who along with many other thinkers at the time, thought that “‘the free world’ scored a victory over communism, and with the weakening of a collective identity, the possibility of a ‘world without conflict’ arose. Partisan confrontation would become part of the past, and now consensus through dialogue was a possibility. Thanks to globalization and the universalization of liberal democracy, peace, prosperity, and a guarantee of human rights could be expected to be expanded to a global scale as part of a cosmopolitan future” (pp. 11–12).

However, it cannot be said that this post-political vision has been realized. Rather, there are movements, such as extreme populism, the global-spread of terrorism, and tribalist nationalism, that are destabilizing the world order.

2.2.4 Changes in the Backdrop—Variations in the Media Environment

This kind of social fluctuation also resonates with fluctuations in the media environment in which we live.

That is to say that media until the 1980s was mostly national media confined to a single country. In other words, as Anderson (1983) points out, the emergence of national media made the modern nation state possible. However, the advent of satellite broadcasting in the late 1980s made it possible to transmit beyond national borders, and this is thought to have contributed to the end of the Cold War (Endo, 1998). Media globalization was more extensive, however, and the internet became wildly available in the 1990s under the Clinton administration in America.

This new media, which emerged and seems to overlap with the end of the Cold War, gave the ability to engage in real-time, two-way communication with anyone in contrast with traditional mass media that was one-way communication from special-

ists to the masses. There were expectations that “social media” functionality would lead to the regeneration of communities and serve as a medium for grassroots movements. Indeed, in the 2010s, beginning with the Jasmine Revolution at the end of 2010 continuing into the Arab Spring in 2011, the Occupy Wall Street movement (USA, September 2011), the Sunflower Student Movement (Taiwan, March 18, 2014), and the Umbrella Revolution (Hong Kong, September 26, 2014) are some of the many examples in which the use of social media can be said to have served as the basis for the rise of a grassroots social movement.

There are many cases in which social media has been used to promote extreme populism, spread of global terrorism, and tribalist nationalism through demagoguery, rumors, slander, inflammatory speech, hate speech, and other propaganda spread by extremist groups.

2.2.5 Public Opinion in the Environment of Intermediality

Many researchers have investigated the phenomena that occur in social media communication that often lead to extreme public opinion. For example, Sunstein (2001) warned that in communication mediated by social media, by providing individuals with an information space customized to their own interests, discussions become extreme among people with similar ideas, which is to say that social division and cyber-cascading (group polarization/phenomenon of blindly following the group) occur.

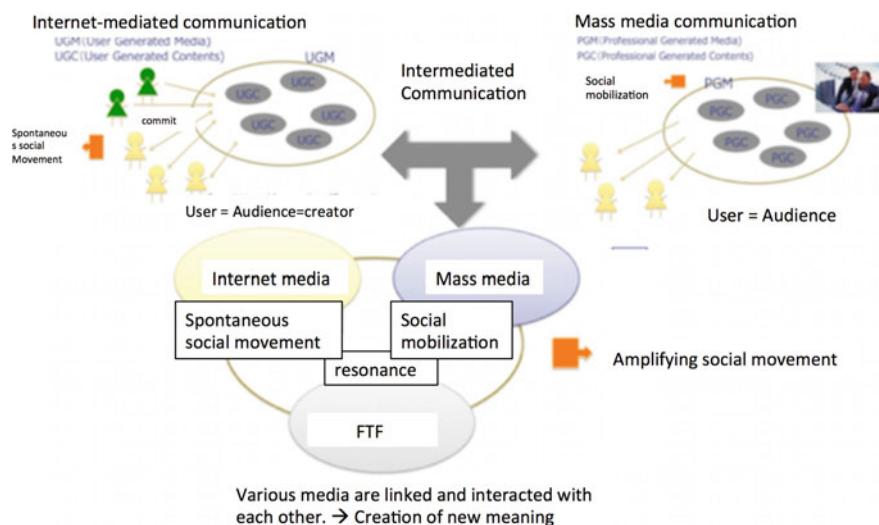


Fig. 2.1 Intermediated communication

Of course, it is important to pay heed to these warnings. However, it is also important to note that the current problems cannot be argued as embodied solely via the influence of social media. Of course, communications through traditional mass media and internet or social media have different characteristics. Today, even though many people use the internet daily, many also use mass media. The information content of mass media is transmitted through the internet, and information from the internet is transmitted through mass media resulting in a variety of new complexities. It would be difficult to discuss contemporary media without considering this point as anything but peculiar. These modern media spaces are referred to as “intermedia spaces (or intermediality)” (Fig. 2.1), and as for public opinion in these spaces, I shall make my arguments with reference to a certain case representative of the movements involved in a gubernatorial election in 2016.

2.3 Municipal Government and Public Opinion in the 2010s

2.3.1 *From Inose’s Resignation to Masuzoe’s Resignation*

On June 21, 2016, Tokyo governor Masuzoe resigned. Beginning in April of the same year, with a story leveling accusations at the governor printed in the *Shukan Bunshun* as a trigger, discussions increased in the multilayered intermedia space of mass media, net media, and word-of-mouth, driving Masuzoe to resign.

This process was, however, accompanied by a sense of repetition. Since 2012, three Tokyo governors had resigned in the middle of their terms of office. Ishihara Shintaro, who had been the 14th elected governor of Tokyo and had been re-elected for three additional terms, suddenly requested resignation mid-term and retired in October 2012.

After that, Naoki Inose, who served under Governor Ishihara as deputy governor, succeeded him, and in the gubernatorial election held on December 16, 2012, he received a large amount of voter support with 4,338,936 votes, electing him as the 18th governor. In September 2013, Inose oversaw Tokyo’s winning bid for the 2020 Summer Olympic Games. However, on November 22, 2013, in the *Asahi Shimbun*, it was reported that Inose received funds of fifty million yen in 2012 from the Tokushukai Group. Afterwards, because his attempts to explain were insufficient, fierce criticism on mass media continued, and eventually Inose was forced to resign at the end of 2013.

In the gubernatorial election following Inose’s resignation, in addition to the ruling party’s candidate Masuzoe, lawyer Utsunomiya Kenji, and the anti-nuclear power team of Hosokawa and Koizumi, who both were former prime ministers, entered the race; however, in the end, Masuzoe won. Nevertheless, Masuzoe later, similarly resigned as the result of a monetary scandal.

A review of Fig. 2.2 shows that the increases in interest on the internet (relative number of searches) were vastly different between the Inose scandal and the Masuzoe scandal. The first question must be why this difference occurred.

2.3.2 The Advancement of Intermediality

Compared to the Inose incident, the excitement over the Masuzoe scandal reflected in Google Trends was much greater, and although there was initially an expansion in the degree of interest, another reason that can be cited is the general expansion of internet use and the advancement of intermediality.

According to Fig. 2.3, from 2002 to 2014 the internet usage rate for all ages approached 100%. According to Fig. 2.4, the existence of the internet as a news source has been expanding greatly. Currently, many people daily interact with media in a multilayered way that involves a meshing of media types, such as face-to-face, mass media, and social media. This means that there seems to be some advancement in intermediality occurring.

2.3.3 Public Opinion and Scandals

With the continuing advancement and sophistication of intermediality, there is more than an increase in information traffic (circulation volume) occurring. Traffic in intermedia spaces tightens the interrelationship between different forms of media and increases it exponentially (see Fig. 2.5).

That is to say that events that at one time would not have become major social concerns now go through a process that did not exist previously and affect society to a degree equivalent to the extent of the process of becoming scandals. However it should be noted also that not all issues become scandalized. With regards to this point, separate analysis is necessary. In recent years, according to this feeling that the frequency of scandals has been increasing, we often see the following kinds of circumstances.

Major scandals from 2014 to 2015 included Obokata Haruko's claims about STAP cells, Mamoru Samuragochi's ghost writer, and Kenjiro Sano's Olympic emblem. The results of searching for these headlines on Google Trends are shown in Fig. 2.6. Each went through the same process, as detailed below.

- (1) The specialist rises to notoriety and receives praise for an achievement.
- (2) From one area, doubts about the achievements are raised.
- (3) The legitimacy of the person's performance is examined on the internet, etc., and mass media participates in criticizing the person (inter-media bashing).
- (4) Finally, it is socially judged that the performance was not legitimate. The person is denounced and expelled from their respected position.

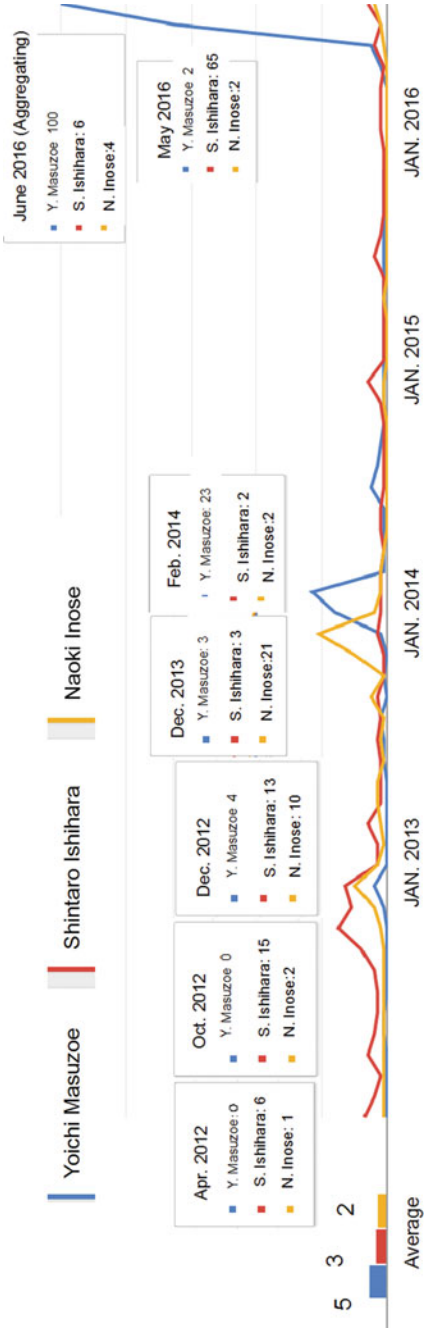


Fig. 2.2 Google Trends Jan. 2012–June 2016 (Key words: “Yoichi Masuzoe”, “Shintaro Ishihara” and “Naoki Inose”)

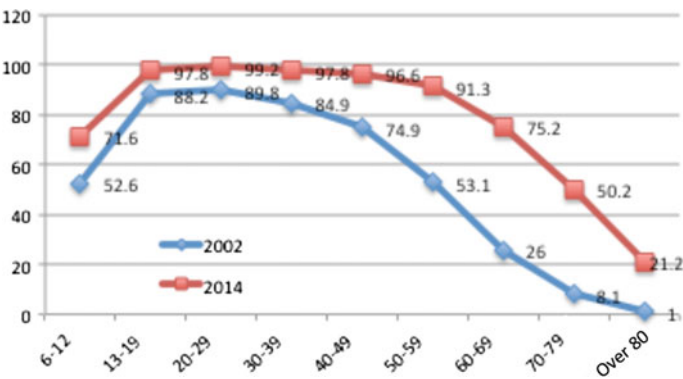
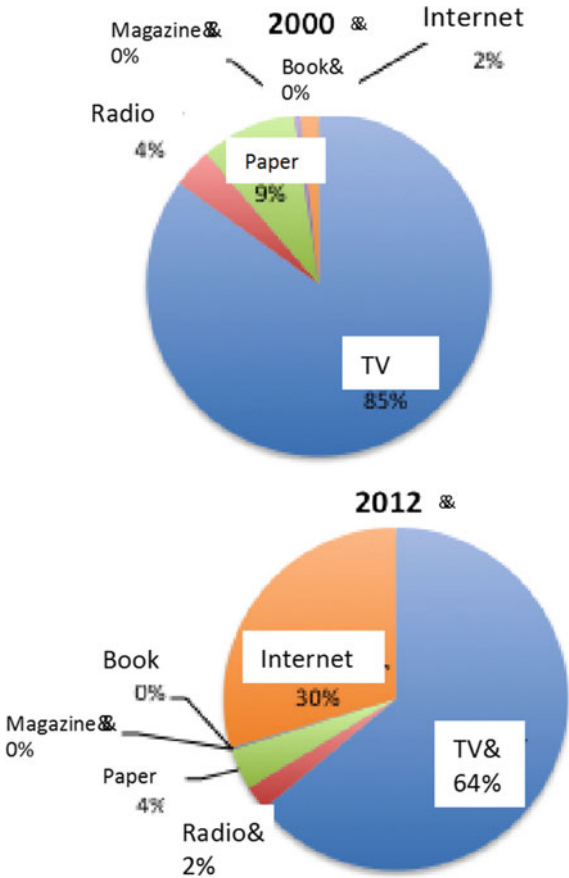


Fig. 2.3 Rise in the rate of utilization of Internet (%)

Fig. 2.4 Media most frequently used for news



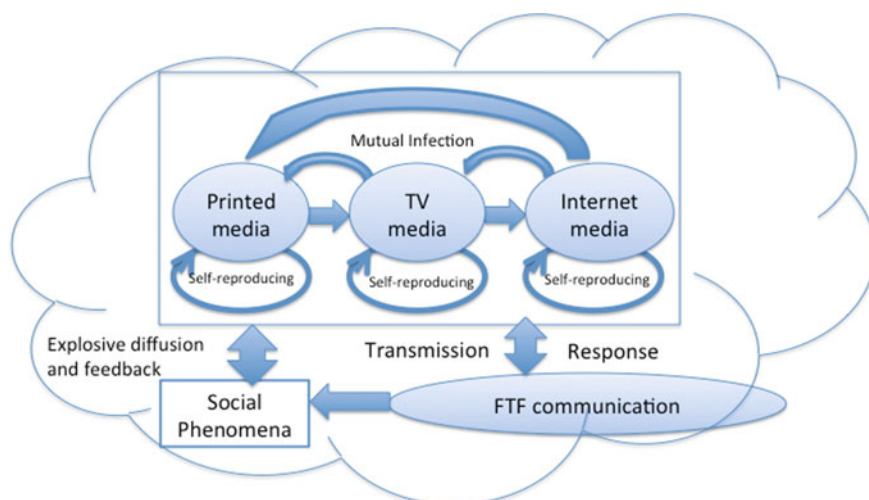


Fig. 2.5 Dynamics of intermediated scandals

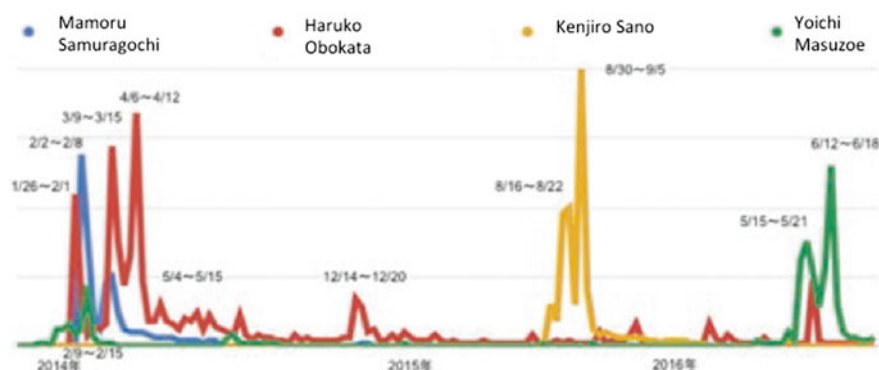


Fig. 2.6 Google Trends Jan. 2014–Aug. 2016 (Key words: “Mamoru Samuragochi”, “Haruko Obokata”, “Kenjiro Sano” and “Yoichi Masuzoe”)

However, before the current degree of intermediality, scandals progressed in a different way, according to the following pattern.

- (1) An unnamed/anonymous audience cast doubt on the justification for renown. When this occurred in the past, if there was approval from authorities in that area, there would be nothing to dispute.
- (2) An unnamed/anonymous audience verified the rightfulness of renown. (There is the possibility of people with deep expertise being among them, and using the internet, in general, there are cases of an effective avenue of verification being available.) Authorities tried to deny these kinds of verifications.

- (3) Mass media would start on the side of the authorities, but eventually would transition to be agree with the public opinion of their audience. As a result, public opinion showed extensive expansion in influence.

These characteristics, precisely, with this sequence of events result in the “scandal” (a scandal that besmirches one’s honor). Intermedia scandals are the “overturning of authority” by an obscure, unnamed/anonymous audience.

2.4 The “Hoikuen Ochita” Movement of 2016

2.4.1 2016 as a Year of Scandal

It is no exaggeration to say that 2016 began with a scandal.

One scandal followed another, with the Becky scandal (January, illicit affair, *Shukan Bunshun*), the SMAP scandal (January, dissolution of the group, *Shukan Bunshun*), the Kiyohara scandal (February, drug use, *Shukan Bunshun*), the Katsura Bunshi scandal (March, illicit affair, *Shukan Bunshun*), etc. The Becky scandal had an especially significant social reaction. In Fig. 2.7, scandals from 2015 are compared with the Becky scandal, and looking at the relative search count for the Masuzoe scandal and the Becky scandal, it becomes readily apparent how massive the social reaction to the Becky scandal was.

In politics there were numerous scandals as well, such as the Akira Amari scandal (January, bribery, *Shukan Bunshun*), the Miyazaki Kensuke scandal (February, illicit affair, *Shukan Bunshun*), the Ototake scandal (March, illicit affair, *Shukan Bunshun*), the “Hoikuen Ochita” scandal (February, child on waiting list for nursery school, anonymous blog), and the Masuzoe scandal (April, diversion of public funds, *Shukan Bunshun*).

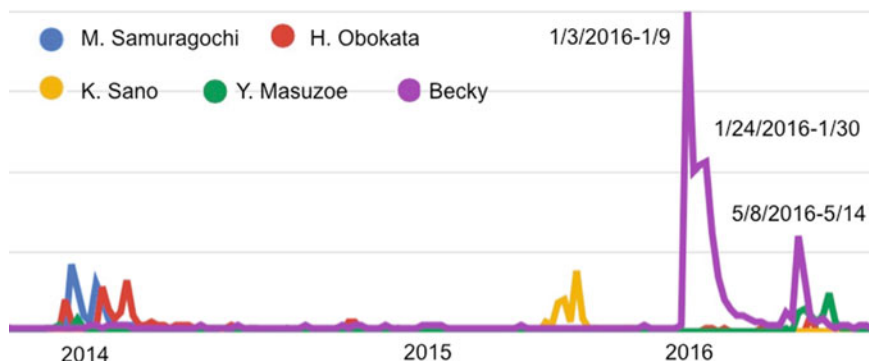


Fig. 2.7 Google Trends Jan. 2014–Aug. 2016 (Key words: “Mamoru Samuragochi”, “Haruko Obokata”, “Kenjiro Sano”, “Yoichi Masuzoe” and Becky)

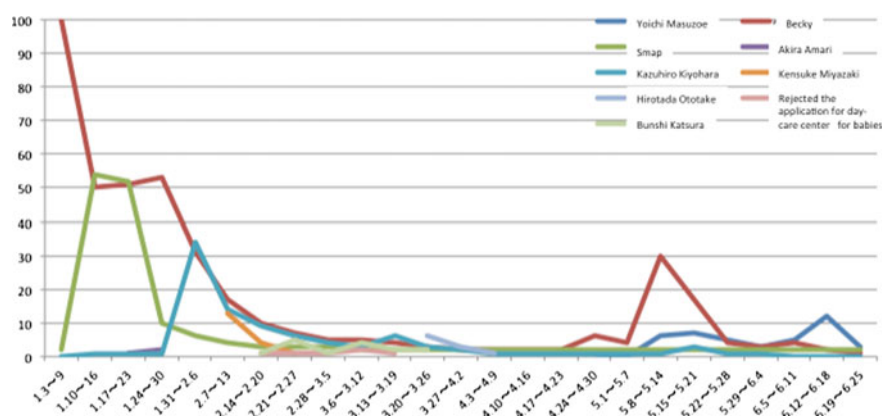


Fig. 2.8 Google Trends (Jan. 2014–June 2016)

The frequent occurrence (Fig. 2.8) of these kinds of scandals through phenomena of temporary collectives would be easy to dismiss as a societal disease stemming from populism. However, before reaching this conclusion, it is important to stop and think for a moment.

2.4.2 Development of the “Hoikuen Ochita” Movement

Among the topics that gained social attention during the first half of 2016, a sequence of events captured in the phrase “Hoikuen Ochita (referring to the failings of the Japanese nursery school/childcare system)” can be said to have constituted public opinion or a social movement.

Here is an overview of what Endo (2016) described regarding this movement.

On February 15, 2016, an article was posted on Hatena Anonymous Diary with the headline “Hoikuen Ochita Nihon Shine!!!” (Did not receive a slot in day care. Drop dead, Japan!!!). It was discovered later that it was written by a woman in her thirties. The article was about a woman whose child did not receive admittance into a nursery school setup by the local government and her complaints about the difficulties of raising children while working.

This article quickly drew a great number of reactions with more than 1,600 book-marks and 16,000 likes as of February 16, 2016. Netnews services one after another reported on this blog post. Also, in connection with this movement, others, such as assemblyman from Kita Ward Otokita Shun, president of NPO Florence Komazaki Hiroki, certain people with influence on the internet, and various entertainers, raised voices of support on their personal blogs and Twitter. This was also featured on informational programs, such as TBS’s February 25th episode of “Hakunetsu Live Bibbit” and Asahi Televisions’ February 26th episode of “Hatori Shin’ichi’s Morning Show.”

Because the movement became active in this way, on February 29, at a meeting of the Budget Committee of the House of Representatives, lawmaker Yamao Shiori of the Democratic Party of Japan questioned Prime Minister Abe about the “Hoikuen Ochita” blog post. At this time, jeers of “get to the point,” “who wrote it,” “bring out the actual person,” etc. were made, and Prime Minister Abe stated “I am not aware of the circumstances, but also because the writer is anonymous ... [content omitted] ... I also am unable to verify whether or not the story is actually true.”

When this was reported, many criticisms of the random interruptions and Prime Minister Abe’s responses aggregated on the internet. The person who wrote the blog post “Hoikuen Ochita” also (starting from February 18th) began tweeting under the name “Hoikuen Ochita Person.”

Additionally, from around March 2nd, a trending hashtag on Twitter was “#HoikuenOchitaNoWatashiDa” (The person whose child cannot get into daycare), and people who had tweeted using this hashtag gathered spontaneously to stand in front of the National Assembly. Further, on the petition creation website Change.org, where people can start a petition and collect signatures, on March 9th, more than 27,000 signatures were collected and presented to the Minister of Health, Labor, and Welfare, Shiozaki Yasuhisa.

From around March 8th, the responses from Prime Minister Abe began to change. Even within the party, complaints began to emerge with regards to the February 29th parliamentary correspondence that seemed to have been trying to silence the “Hoikuen Ochita” movement.

Still, lawmaker Hirasawa Katsuei, who had shouted over Yamao Shiori on February 29th, appeared on Asahi TV’s morning news program, the “Hatori Shin’ichi’s Morning Show,” on March 10th to apologize for his interruptions and behavior. However, despite the apology, he received further criticism because he added “Was this really something written by a woman?”

On March 10th, at the consultation meeting of the government and the ruling parties held at the official residence of the Prime Minister, policy was introduced to take measures as soon as possible.

Initially, the government tried to ignore this movement, but as a result, a large opposition arose and the movement grew. The government hurriedly announced policy changes to address the issue of children on waiting lists for nursery schools.

Figure 2.9 provides an outline of this movement that occurred over a period of about a month. The attention from different media outlets caused a cyclical synergistic effect, and it can be understood how the movement, which one would not have called organized, came to be visualized as a movement.

2.4.3 The “Hoikuen Ochita” Movement and Its Aftermath

In this way, the “Hoikuen Ochita” movement gained momentum, but looking at the relative number of searches on Google Trends (Fig. 2.10), after peaking on March 9th, they decreased drastically. This pattern of rapid increase and sharp decline has been

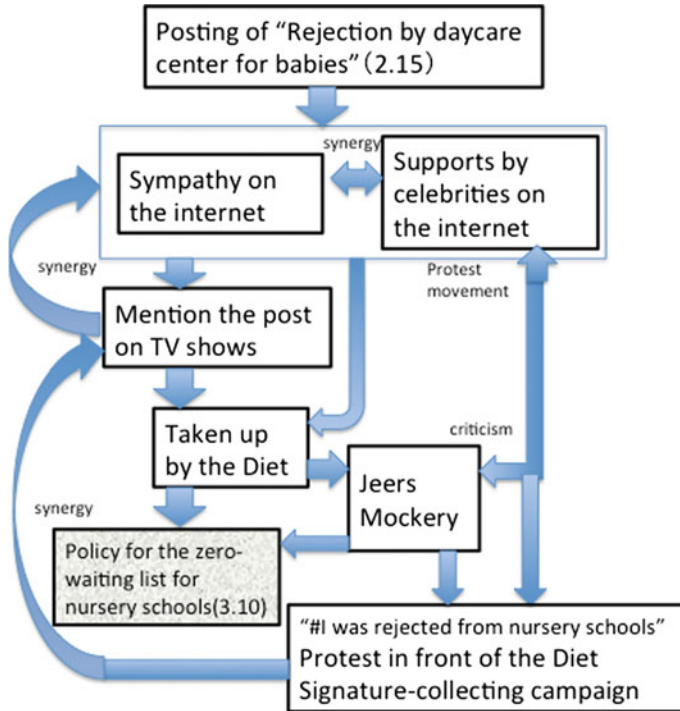


Fig. 2.9 Development of “Nursery School” movement

seen commonly with other scandals before, and this seems to suggest a temporary boiling-point phenomenon.

However, at least in the case of the “Hoikuen Ochita” movement, there are different trends related to the phenomenon of temporary gatherings of people. For further details, I would like to reference (Endo, 2016) and address the following points.

- (1) Although “Hoikuen Ochita” certainly appears to be a transient “public opinion,” it has seen instead a gradual increase in presence over the long term as a backdrop for feelings about children on waiting lists for daycare.
- (2) Discussions related to “Hoikuen Ochita,” of course, begin with children on waiting lists, but it aroused discussions on various related issues, expanding the scope of the conversation to things like the problem with nursery school teacher salaries, the shortage of nursery schools, and problems with nursing homes.
- (3) For example, on March 16th, interest in “Hoikuen Ochita” was still high, and it was reported that “Tokyo city accepted a request from the South Korean government, and a municipal high school site to be used as a South Korean school was being considered to be lent to South Korea for a fee.”⁽⁹⁾ In response to this announcement, criticism was submitted to the city via e-mail and phone,⁽¹⁰⁾ and many critical opinions were posted on the internet. The central focus of the

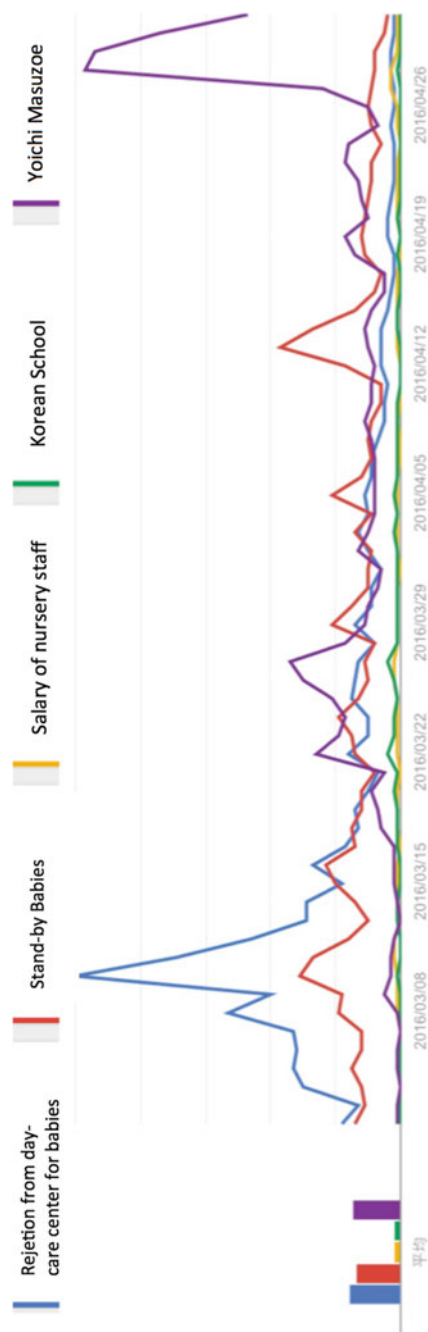


Fig. 2.10 Google Trends Mar. 2016–Apr. 2016 (Key words: “Rejection from day-care center for babies”, “Stand-by Babies”, “Salary of nursery staff”, “Korean school” and “Yoichi Masuzoe”)

criticism was that leasing the land for a South Korean school was decided without considering other uses and that priority was given to other countries. With the emerging problem of many children being on waiting lists for daycares, it was thought that a daycare should be established at the location. Because of this connection, together with the scandal of “Hoikuen Ochita,” mentions of the “South Korean school” scandal increased.

That is to say that the “Hoikuen Ochita” movement, although the “Hoikuen Ochita” blog post temporarily acted as the symbol and slogan, did more than bring a new, close look at the problems with children on waiting lists for daycare and empower that movement, it can also be said that it became linked to various related problems.

2.5 Masuzoe Scandal

2.5.1 *Origins of the Scandal*

The clear beginning of the Masuzoe scandal was an article appearing in the *Shukan Bunshun* on April 27, 2016. In an article with a title stating “Accusation Scoop: Governor Masuzoe Takes an Official Vehicle Every Weekend to Hot Spring Resort Villa,” accusations were leveled that as a “result of an investigation built on accusations from an insider,” that “for about a year since the previous April, for a total of 49 times, every weekend, using an official vehicle” Masuzoe was “visiting his vacation villa located in Yugawara, Kanagawa Prefecture, famous for its hot springs.”⁽¹²⁾ This article, which was also reprinted on Yahoo! News, was spread profusely by famous and anonymous netizens. Its degree of popularity on the internet is shown in Fig. 2.11.

However, the *Bunshun* article mentioned above opened with the sentence, “Round-trip flights are first class, accommodations are suites in luxury hotels, and the annual

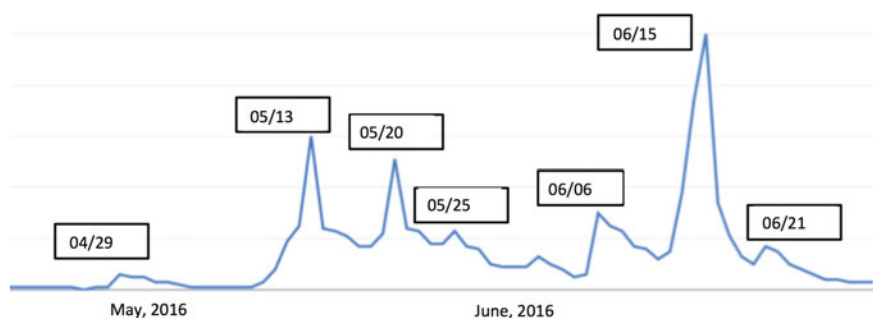


Fig. 2.11 Google Trends, key word: Masuzoe, in Japan

overseas business trip expenses come to 350 million yen ... booing of Tokyo Governor Masuzoe Yoichi's (67) 'extravagant overseas business trips' is increasing day after day," indicating that criticism of Masuzoe had been ongoing for some time. Further, in connection with the "Hoikuen Ochita" blog post mentioned in the previous section, critical voices had also come as a result of Masuzoe's policy to lease a school to South Korea.

This *Bunshun* article drove public opinion after being introduced, as visualized in Fig. 2.11 that shows trends on Google at the time. Thereafter, *Bunshun* repeatedly released accusatory articles (see Table 2.1). Peaks appear in the Google trends coinciding with their release (Fig. 2.11).

2.5.2 Governor Masuzoe and the Actions of the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly

In response to these reports, Masuzoe gave an explanation at the regular press conference for the governor. A timeline of Masuzoe's regular press conferences, beginning in March after the scandals surrounding his travel expenses and leasing a school to South Korea surfaced, and the Masuzoe scandals addressed at those conferences are provided in Table 2.2.

Until the *Bunshun* article was published, despite the questions at the press conference, the questions were resolved quickly. However, after April 28th, when the article came out, questions at the regular press conferences were all about the articles, and the length of the press conferences increased (Fig. 2.12). The number of reporters present asking questions also increased dramatically (Fig. 2.13). In particular, of those who came to ask questions, the number of television reporters began to dominate. As will be described later, the press conferences became "killer content" on informational programming, and this was particularly true of live broadcasts on lunchtime information programs.

2.5.3 The Evil of Underhandedness—Why Did the *Bunshun* Accusations Resound so Effectively?

In this way, the reports increased tensions, and criticism of Masuzoe became public opinion. Why did the *Bunshun* article cause such expansive public opinion? This paper argues that point by focusing on underhandedness.

Before the *Bunshun* article was released, the problem surrounding Masuzoe was the high cost of his overseas business trips, which he insisted were for diplomatic purposes, and the monetary amounts of tens of millions to hundreds of millions were not amounts normal people could readily understand. In response to this criticism, Masuzoe countered, "Can the elite stay in a second-class business hotel? It'd be

Table 2.1 The Development of the Masuzoe scandal and the *Bunshun* article

Media	Date	Headline
	15.10.19~20	Visit to Paris and London for referral of the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic games; cost ¥50,149,000 (20 people)
	15.10.27~11.2	Seoul, South Korea visit; cost ¥6,450,000 (11 people) Request for South Korean school from President Park
Metropolitan Assembly Budget Committee	16.3.7	Submission of data pertaining to overseas travel expenses
Tokyo City	16.3.16	Policy to use Ichigaya's municipal land for a South Korean school
Metropolitan Assembly General Affairs Committee	16.3.16	Request for disclosure of overseas business trip costs by metropolitan assemblyman Otokita
Sankei Shimbun	16.3.17	Leasing of school land to the South Korean government at President Park's request, city's response: "we will do whatever we can to help"
Tokyo City	16.3.22	Detailed disclosure of overseas travel expenses
Shukan Shincho	16.3.26	Governor of Tokyo Masuzoe Yoichi recorded as using? ¥240,000,000 on 5 overseas business trips
Tokyo Shimbun	16.4.8	Governor Masuzoe, travel expenses total over ¥200 million; 8 times in 2 years after inauguration
Mainichi Shimbun	16.4.23	Tokyo Governor's overseas travel expenses 3 metropolitan area prefectural governors criticize as "excessive"
Shukan Bunshun	16.4.27	Accusations scoop: Governor Masuzoe spent every weekend in "hot spring resort villa" traveling by "official vehicle"
Shukan Bunshun	16.5.11	Governor Masuzoe history of severe tax extortion
Shukan Bunshun	16.5.19	Masuzoe's "dirty gubernatorial election" suspicion of pocketing ¥4 million
Shukan Bunshun	16.5.26	4th solo-run story, Governor Masuzoe, money and women "bombshell testimony"
Shukan Bunshun	16.6.2	Governor Masuzoe "the big lie of intervening in mother's nursing care and the money-crazed struggle for family"
Shukan Bunshun	16.6.9	6th solo-run story, new suspicions concerning Governor Masuzoe!
Shukan Bunshun	16.6.16	The core of Masuzoe's "resignation", final extreme confessions of the mind of the female president—100 min, true nature of "publisher president"
Shukan Bunshun	16.6.23	What are the details of your artwork list? "Standing governor" leaves troubling path! Mr. Masuzoe, will you really sell the villa?

Table 2.2 Press conference by the Governor Masuzoe

Date		Q and A item
16.3.18	Regular interview	High cost of the governor’s visit to U.S.A.
3.29	Regular interview	Nursery school shortage
4.1	Regular interview	High cost of the governor’s visit to U.S.A.
4.8	Regular interview	Rules concerning cost of the governor’s overseas visit
4.22	Regular interview	High cost of the governor’s visit to U.S.A. Inauguration of the team examining cost of the governor’s overseas visits
4.28	Regular interview	High cost of the governor’s visit to U.S.A. Private usage of the official vehicle
5.13	Regular interview	About articles published in the weekly magazine About political funding
5.20	Regular interview	About political funding
5.27	Regular interview	About political funding
6.3	Regular interview	Briefing the problems
6.6	Regular interview	Presenting the report on political funding
6.10	Regular interview	About the intensive discussion
6.13	Committee of General Purpose	Intensive discussion

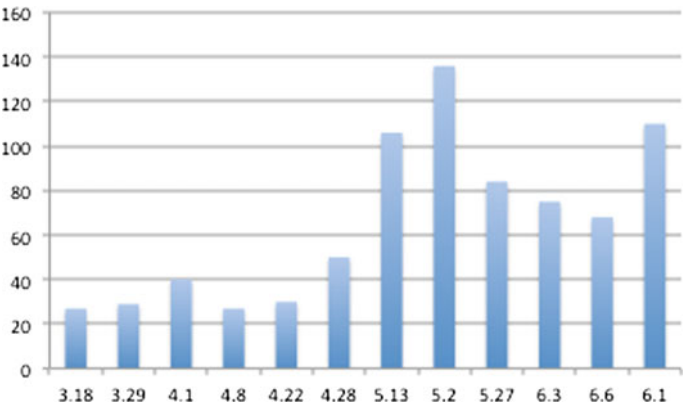


Fig. 2.12 Time of Governor’s regular interviews

embarrassing” (press conference on April 1). However, *Bunshun* exposed that he “uses official vehicles to go to his villa in Yugawara every weekend” making him seem very cheap, and that act would seem to be embarrassing even among common people. This is precisely why it was able to be judged that even for “common people” this was an action that should not be taken. Then, *Bunshun* continued to report on the scandal in each issue with the phrase, “unacceptable cheapskate among the elite.” In response, he tried to compete using legal theory, saying “it’s not illegal.” However,

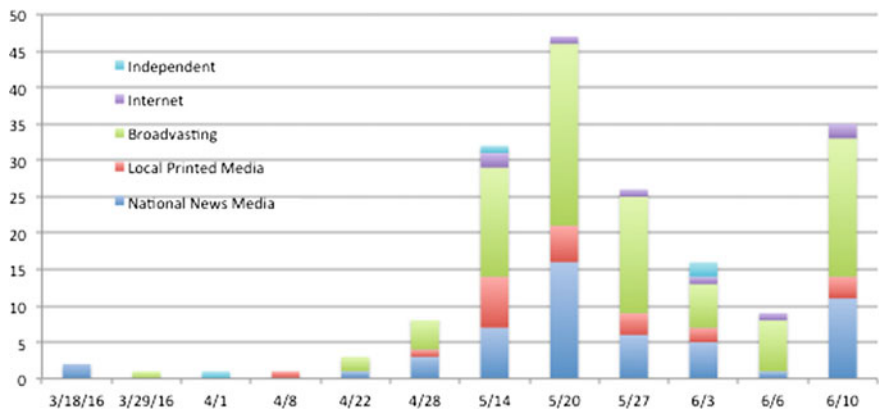


Fig. 2.13 Number of reporters at the Governor’s regular interviews

this only served to strengthen the image that he abandoned dignity as an elite, used legal loopholes in order to privately use public funds, and did not deserve to be among the elite being so cheap and petty. While Masuzoe based his own validity on legal action, the common people based validity for being elite on everyday ethics.

2.5.4 Daytime Programming and Ratings—“The King in Exile” on TV

In Masuzoe’s scandals becoming public opinion, the evaluation of them as petty, cheap, or underhanded plays a significant role, and this becomes more apparent by looking at the content of the ensuing TV coverage.

As previously mentioned, at the press conferences on Masuzoe’s scandals, not only was the number of reporters greater than usual, the proportion of reporters from TV news and informational programming was particularly high. This is because the time frame of the press conferences overlapped with the broadcast times of daytime programming., and in addition to picking up the questioning of Masuzoe in the programming, there was also a greater theatrical quality introduced by having a live broadcast. The Masuzoe scandals were essentially turned into a media event.

In Table 2.3, Masuzoe-related broadcast content is listed for the shows “Information Live Miyaneya” (Nippon TV) and “Direct Hit LIVE Goody!” (Fuji TV). What can be seen here is that these programs indeed focused on the “pettiness” and “cheapness” of Masuzoe, and how he (in some sense, over time) was cheap and petty, in regards to the fact that behavior condemnation continued as something that may or not rectify perception.

Table 2.3 Contents of the afternoon infotainment programs concerning the Governor Masuzoe

Date	Program	Contents
4.27	Miyane-ya	Governor Masuzoe of “Expensive business trip” goes to his vacation house in Yugawara every weekend.
4.28	Goody	Governor Masuzoe of “Expensive business trip” goes to his vacation house in Yugawara every weekend.
5.11	Goody	Governor Masuzoe paid “family trips and dinners with family” out of political fund
5.12	Goody	(1) Governor’s Masuzoe’s frequent restaurant (2) Masuzoe’s former wife says “he is underhanded”
5.13	Miyane-ya	Broadcasting Masuzoe’s press conference
5.13	Goody	High cost of the governor’s visit to U.S.A. Private usage of the official vehicle
5.16	Goody	Masuzoe bought a painting through an online auction, siphoning off his political fund
5.18	Goody	Suspicion of political funds
5.19	Miyane-ya	Another suspicion of political funds
5.19	Goody	Masuzoe pays \$4,000 months rent out of political funds
5.20	Miyane-ya	Broadcasting Masuzoe’s press conference.
5.20	Goody	Second press conference on governor’s private usage of the official vehicle
5.23	Goody	Suspicion of political funds
5.24	Goody	Tracing Masuzoe suspicion
5.25	Goody	Verification by a third party
5.26	Goody	Director of the art museum witnesses behavior of Masuzoe Masuzoe buys his various personal items by political money.
5.27	Miyane-ya	This week’s Masuzoe interview.
5.27	Goody	Masuzoe’s interview and verification by a third party
5.27	Goody	Angry tweets to Masuzoe
5.30	Goody	Director of the art museum denied his invitation
5.31	Miyane-ya	Metropolitan assembly will be held tomorrow.
5.31	Goody	What will Masuzoe talk about in his policy speech?
6.1	Miyane-ya	What will Masuzoe talk about in his policy speech?
6.1	Goody	Masuzoe said “I will not fly first class any more”.
6.2	Miyane-ya	New turn of events!
6.2	Goody	Voters are angry!
6.3	Miyane-ya	Broadcasting Masuzoe’s press conference
6.3	Goody	Broadcasting Masuzoe’s press conference
6.6	Goody	What will Masuzoe talk about in his press conference?
6.7	Miyane-ya	Masuzoe repeats “Not illegal but politically incorrect”
6.7	Goody	Though politically incorrect, Masuzoe will keep in office
6.8	Goody	Metropolitan assembly

(continued)

Table 2.3 (continued)

Date	Program	Contents
6.9	Miyane-ya	New turn! Intensive discussion
6.9	Goody	Intensive discussion
6.10	Miyane-ya	Masuzoe's press conference
6.10	Goody	Masuzoe's press conference Photos of Masuzoe's second house!
6.13	Goody	Broadcasting the intensive discussion Post your angry tweets!
6.14	Miyane-ya	Masuzoe versus Metropolitan assembly!
6.14	Goody	New suspicion!
6.15	Miyane-ya	Masuzoe's future?
6.15	Goody	Masuzoe will submit one's resignation at 10:00 A.M.
6.16	Miyane-ya	Masuzoe decided to go out of the office Who is the next?
6.16	Goody	Masuzoe's last speech Press conference is cancelled and the intensive discussion is washed out
6.17	Miyane-ya	Masuzoe refuses the press conference
6.17	Goody	Masuzoe's press conference was cancelled
6.20	Goody	Who is the post-Masuzoe?
6.21	Miyane-ya	Who is the post-Masuzoe?
6.21	Goody	Masuzoe will go out of the office today.
6.22	Miyane-ya	Visit of the metropolitan assembly members of the Rio Olympic Games cost expensive!
6.22	Goody	Visit of the metropolitan assembly members of the Rio Olympic Games cost too expensive!
6.23	Miyane-ya	Can Masuzoe run away? Allegations of former governor Masuzoe
6.23	Goody	Where is Mr. Masuzoe's art work?
6.24	Goody	Who is the next governor?
7.13	Miyane-ya	What is the situation of the governor election? Where is Mr. Masuzoe now and what is he doing?
8.5	Miyane-ya	Two months have passed since Masuzoe was sent off. A regular interview by Koike revives

A point worthy of note here is that this condemnation is not necessarily a dogmatic perspective of TV and magazines. In today's television, ratings are extremely important. The composition of programming is dependent upon what content gets the best ratings from audiences (Table 2.4). The condemnation of pettiness and cheapness in the Masuzoe scandals can be thought of as promoted by an interaction with audience ratings.

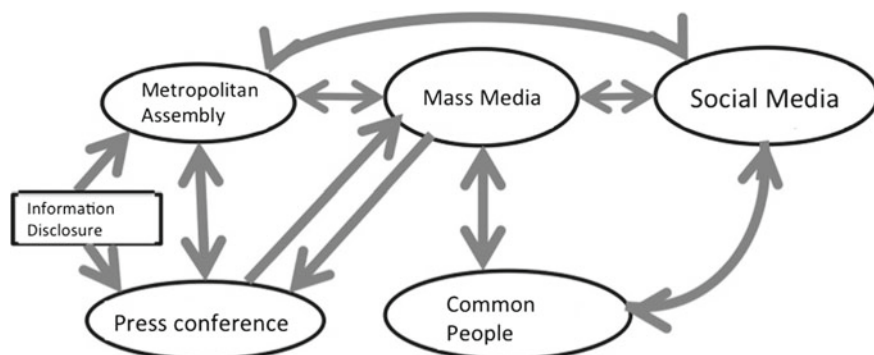


Fig. 2.14 Intermediated sphere of condemnation

Table 2.4 Timeline from Demission of Masuzoe to the Tokyo governor race

Date	Program	Audience rating (%)	Remarks
5/13	Miyane-ya	7.3	6.3% on the day before
	Goody	4.2	3.0% on the day before
	GOGO-Suma	2.4	1.8% on the day before
6/13	Miyane-ya	10.1	2 points up from the average of preceding 4 weeks
	Goody	5.6	The average of preceding 4 weeks is 3.1%
	GOGO-Suma	4.9	2 points up from the average of preceding 4 weeks

Further, as also shown in Table 2.3, today's informational programming asks on-air viewers' opinions on Twitter, etc. in real time. This tool allows for the will or opinions of viewers to play influence programming much more strongly than in the past.

Thus, in the live TV broadcasts of the press conferences, the media event took on a quality of audience participation, and an esteemed and exalted individual, who turned out to be cheap and petty based on the collective judgment that he was an onerous "fake king," played out all the more vividly on the TV screen.

In Fig. 2.14, the intermedia space of this condemnation of cheapness and pettiness is depicted.

2.6 2016 Tokyo Gubernatorial Election

2.6.1 Dynamics of the 2016 Tokyo Gubernatorial Election

Along with Masuzoe's resignation, preparations for the election of the next Tokyo governor began immediately.

With the last election having been just two years prior, there was confusion over who the candidates would be, and one name that arose early was Renho of the Democratic Party of Japan. Both her profile and popularity were high, and were she to become a candidate, it was thought that she would surely win. However, she announced on the day of Masuzoe's resignation that she had no intention of running.

Conversely, at an early stage, Yuriko Koike of the Liberal Democratic Party expressed her intent to run as a candidate. Although Koike was a member of the Liberal Democratic Party, she announced her candidacy before asking the LDP, and only afterwards turned to the LDP for assistance and advice. In response, the Liberal Democratic Party was furious, and although they would not nominate her, Koike gave her official announcement speech on July 6th.

On July 8th, actor Junichi Ishida expressed his intent to run as the candidate for the opposition party. Ishida's declaration became a significant topic of discussion in the media, but he received no official nomination. On July 11th, it was announced that he was abandoning pursuit of the candidacy.

The Liberal Democratic Party, on July 11th, nominated Hiroya Masuda as their candidate, and distributed documents to LDP parliamentarians and local representatives stating that candidates not nominated through support of the party would be eligible for expulsion from the party.

Lawyer Kenji Utsunomiya also announced he would be running for the office on July 11th. After former journalist Shuntaro Torigoe was announced as running as an opposition party candidate on July 12th, he withdrew from the running on July 13th.

Thus, the three main candidates who would be fighting to fill the governor's seat after Masuzoe were Koike, Masuda, and Torigoe (see Table 2.5 for the history of the gubernatorial election).

2.6.2 *Public Opinion of the Tokyo Gubernatorial Election*

How did public opinion shift in response to these occurrences? Figure 2.15 shows the trends on Google for the relative number of searches for each candidate.

According to this data, the most searches were for Junichi Ishida followed by Shuntaro Torigoe. More attention seems to have gone to those working in the entertainment industry.

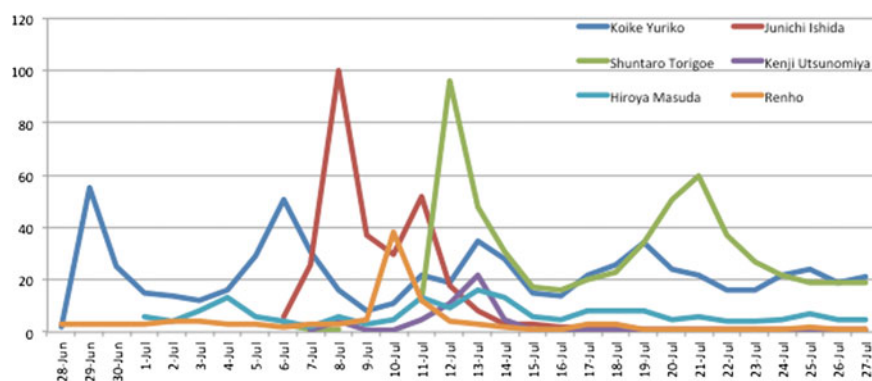
However, while having a few peaks early on, searches related to Koike generally maintained a stable rate over time. This is thought to be the result of Koike raising topics strategically, and as a result, it is thought to be what led to her election victory.

In contrast, there was another prominent peak when Torigoe announced his candidacy. Considering that alone, although this does not seem inferior to Koike, his peak in the latter half was the result of a scandal published by *Shukan Bunshun*, which certainly can be said to have been negative and a reason for his disastrous defeat.

As for Masuda, his search count remained low throughout the entire period, and the election campaign was understood as an organization-dependent model.

Table 2.5 Timeline from Demission of Masuzoe to the Tokyo Governor race

Date	Q and A item
6/21	Masuzoe resigns as the Tokyo Governor
6/21	Renho declares not to come up for the Tokyo Governor election
6/29	Yuriko Koike declares to come up for the Tokyo Governor election
7/8	Junichi Ishida, a famous actor, considers for the Governor election
7/10	Upper House election
7/11	Kenji Utsunomiya, a famous lawyer, declares to come up for the Tokyo Governor election
7/11	Junichi Ishida foregoes the Tokyo Governor election
7/11	Hiroya Masuda, the former governor of Iwate prefecture, declares to come up for the Tokyo Governor election
7/12	Shuntaro Torigoe, a famous journalist, declares to come up for the election
7/13	Utsunomiya bows out of the race
7/14	Declaration of the election
7/21	Weekly magazine “Bunshun” reports Torigoe’s scandal
7/24	Daily “Gendai” reports Koike’s finance scandal
7/26	Shintaro Ishihara, former governor of Tokyo, criticizes Koike
7/28	Weekly magazine “Shincho” reports Torigoe’s scandal
7/31	Election
8/2	Koike becomes the first female governor of Tokyo

**Fig. 2.15** Google trends 6/28/2016–7/25/2016 (Key words: Candidates of the election)

In the 2016 Tokyo gubernatorial election, as shown in Table 2.6, the same view-points were discovered in the surveys of the situation conducted by the media.

Table 2.6 Election Survey Predictions by News Media

	News Media	Headline
Early stage	Tokyo-Shinbun	Koike and Torigoe are competing each other, followed by Masuda. 40% of the voters are undecided
	Niconico-broadcasting	Koike is one-up, followed by Torigoe and Masuda
	Nikkei-Shinbun Mainichi-Shinbun Kyodo News	Koike and Torigoe are competing each other, followed by Masuda
	Sankei-Shinbun	Koike is one-up, followed by Torigoe and Masuda
Final stage	Yomiuri-Shinbun	Koike and Masuda are competing each other, followed by Torigoe
	Nikkei-Shinbun	Koike leads, but too-close-to-call election
	Sankei-Shinbun	Koike keeps the lead, followed by Masuda. Torigoe hits the wall
	Mainichi-Shinbun	Koike keeps the lead, followed by Masuda and Torigoe
	Niconico-broadcasting	Koike keeps the lead, followed by Masuda. Torigoe hits the wall

2.6.3 Results of the Tokyo Gubernatorial Election

On July 31, 2016, the vote for the Tokyo governor was held, and the ballots were tallied the same day. There was a voter turnout rate of 59.73% (58.19% for men and 61.22% for women), which greatly surpassed the 46.14% turnout (46.46% for men and 45.83% for women) for the election of Masuzoe in the previous gubernatorial election.⁽¹⁷⁾

The results were that Koike Yuriko won by a landslide with about 2.91 million votes; Hiroya Masuda came in second (~1.79 million votes); and Shuntaro Torigoe came in third (~1.34 million votes).

Since the election of the Tokyo governor was a local issue, it was only broadcast as breaking news on NHK, TV Tokyo, and TOKYO MX. However, the average viewer rating for NHK (20:00 to 20:50) was recorded at 20.0%. The audience rating of the popular drama, *Sanada Maru*, broadcast on the same day was 14.5%. Further, the average audience rating on TV Tokyo for Akira Ikegami's *Big Issues of Nippon: Tokyo Gubernatorial Election Special Part 2* (19:00 to 21:00) was 9.6%, reaching 10.7% at 20:00.⁽¹⁸⁾

Voter rates and audience ratings demonstrated a high degree of interest in the 2016 gubernatorial election.

At the first regular press conference held on August 5, 2016,⁽¹⁹⁾ Koike answered questions from reporters expressing plans for overhaul of business operations (such as travel expenses), solving problems related to children on daycare waiting lists, and complete withdrawal of the lease of land for South Korean schools. (Incidentally, on this day, the reporters present to ask questions at the regularly scheduled press conference included six newspaper reporters, nine television reporters, one internet news site reporter, and one freelancer.)

Koike's response was a clear answer to the problems in the undercurrents of the public opinion movements seen in this paper. Because of this, the results of public opinion polls conducted by each press outlet for the percentage of people welcoming Koike's governorship were high: 75% (NHK, 8.5-7), 78.8% (Sankei and FNN, 8.6-7), 76% (JNN, 8.6-7), 64% (Mainichi, 8.3-4).

This is a situation where, more than being the candidate for the opposition party or the candidate for the ruling party, the power of the reality that people feel (regardless its accuracy) is said to create a "present reality."

Thus, in the time leading up to the present (August 9, 2016), the series of scandals in 2016 seemed to have resulted in high support for Koike.

However, although it is also one of the claims of this paper, when trying to discuss public opinion dynamically, the process does not end after reaching a point of equilibrium. Public opinion at the present time creates itself reflexively and continues to change.

Already, whispers of a scandal involving Koike have emerged, and in the *Shukan Bunshun* published on July 28, 2016, scandals involving Liberal Democratic Party Secretary-General Uchida Shigeru, who opposed Koike, the opposition candidate Shuntaro Torigoe, and the Tokyo assemblyman Shun Otokita, who supported Koike, were discussed. Future developments will need to be given further attention.

2.7 Conclusion

In this paper, the dynamics of political scandals occurring primarily in the first half of 2016 have been investigated from the viewpoint of intermediality and the relationship that exists between scandals.

As a result, the following noteworthy findings were obtained:

- (1) In a society of intermedia, the explosive power of scandals is bigger than ever.
- (2) Scandals in an intermedia society are often the result of an unnamed/anonymous audience.
- (3) Scandals in an intermedia society become visualized in public opinion based on the extent to which they appeal to the reality of the unnamed/anonymous audience, rather than based on the size and extent of the scandal or problem.
- (4) Once a scandal in an intermedia society becomes public opinion, even if there is some kind of instigator apart from the unnamed/anonymous audience, it is not possible to exercise control over it.
- (5) Scandals in an intermedia society, even once they seem to have settled, show a chance of reignition due to some trigger and strengthening from a characteristic "groundwater flow." For that reason, a response of waiting it out or dismissing it is not effectual.

From these characteristics, in an intermedia society, the frequency of scandals increases, and it is expected this will be leveraged to move public opinion for political means. How do we evaluate this in terms of social fairness? Moreover, the difficulties

in regulating the public opinion of scandals present dangers in the disruption of social order, so how can disruption be avoided? So then, how can the dynamics of public opinion in an intermedia society connect to a healthy democratic society? The answers to these questions are the ultimate goals of this research in the long term.

However, for analysis that uses a framework like the one in this paper and for the data and methodology, there are still many issues that need to be further investigated.

First, in this paper, data showing activity on the internet was taken from Google trend data. However, this data was not published previously for research use, and its precision and stability are not guaranteed. As for the results, on this point, we need to put the matter on hold and look harder. Still, other large data sources have their own problems. Currently, although attention is focused on analysis using large datasets, there are many points that need to be considered.

Second, the complex model that is the framework of this paper is difficult to apply quantitatively because of the complexity of the interactions within it, and the underlying reasoning is a challenge to comprehend. How do we address these challenges? I would like to investigate the applicability of various methods for the future, such as simulation.

Note: This paper is the translation of the paper published in Japanese in 2016 written by K. Endo.

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