E-Democracy in East Asia?

How the Internet Affects Politics and Civil Society in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan

Workshop at the German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ)
Tokyo, 5 December 2003
Panel II: The Internet in Japanese and East Asian Politics

Internet Use by Different Political Actors in Japan

Summary of the Results of a Panel at AoIR (Association of Internet Researchers) Conference

Toronto, October 2003

Isa Ducke, Leslie Tkach Kawasaki
Internet use in Japan

- 44% of the Japanese population have access to the Internet (White Paper, Prime Minister’s Office, 2002); estimate 12/2003: 61 million
- Interest in the political Internet growing from 11% in 2000 to close to 20% as of November 2003 (Video Research, 2000, 2003)
- Over 50% of NGOs have their own website
Number of Internet Users
(As of July 31, 2003)

Source: http://www.soumu.go.jp/joho_tsusin/eng/Statistics/number_users030829_2.html
Citizens’ groups in Japan: Internet use and “success” (Isa Ducke)

- empirical data from about 150 citizens’ groups in Japan
- quantitative and qualitative analysis
- Data grouped in 8 issues
- Independent variables: Use of the Internet
- Dependent variables: Success factors
Citizens’ groups in Japan: Internet use

- almost all use e-mail
- 83% have a HP
- a majority does not answer e-mails
- Spending on HP is usually low, updates are often infrequent
- Interactive features, BBS, Chat, etc are rare
- Mobile phone HPs are rare (although many use e-mail via mobile phone)
Dependent variables: Success factors

- **Success of the group**
  - visibility

- **Success in the issue**
  - getting the issue on the agenda at all, promoting deeper discussion, opinion polls, procedural and substantive policy changes, and other forms of success

more

indep. var.
Selected Results III
Ease of Interface: Navigation bar

The Internet in Japanese and EA Politics
Selected Results I
Internet use and success
Selected Results II
Links, directories, and search engines

The Internet in Japanese and EA Politics
Selected Results IV
Generation of return visits

- **Online registration**
- (links lists)
- (calendars)

![Generation of return visits - scale](image_url)

Success (Effectiveness 2)

N= 0 1 2 3 4

The Internet in Japanese and EA Politics
Selected Results V
Dialogic loop

- (Google hits, others)
- **prompt response**
- other interactive features

![Diagram of dialogic loop with a graph showing success rates for different N values with a scale from none to high.](image)
Selected Results VI
Groups dealing with women’s issues use the Internet less

![Box plot showing the total use of the Internet for groups dealing with women's issues, with a lower use for those who deal with women's issues compared to those who do not.](image)
Summary

- Internet use is limited, mostly one-way communication
- Use and effectiveness of Internet depends on issues
- Digital divide does exist
- Potential of certain Internet features
Can the Internet propel the political and social role of Japanese NGOs?

A case study of anti-dam activism in Japan
(A content analysis of anti-dam activists‘ websites in Japan)

Presentation at the panel „Citizens‘ participation in East Asian politics – Revolution via Internet?“
AoIR 4.0 Conference, Toronto - 17.08.2003

Dr. Iris Wieczorek
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Summary

- Most (but not all) groups / NGOs / parties have their own HP
- Dialogic features are rare
- Considerable numbers of their users / audience don’t access the Internet, or only via mobile phone
- Access to political sites is low