

**Title:**

The Association with Social Skills and Self-Monitoring in Japan

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**Session Title:**

Evidence-Based Practice Poster Session 2

**Slot (superslotted):**

EBP PST 2: Saturday, 29 July 2017: 12:00 PM-1:30 PM

**Slot (superslotted):**

EBP PST 2: Saturday, 29 July 2017: 2:45 PM-3:30 PM

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**Keywords:**

Interpersonal interaction, Self-monitoring and Social skills

**References:**

Aikawa,A., Fujita,M.(2005). An attempt to construct a social skills self-rating scale for adults. The Bulletin of Tokyo Gakugei University,56,87-93.

Tsuchida,T., Fukushima,O. (2007). The development of the cognitive behavioral self-monitoring scale. Mejiro journal of Psychology,3,85-93.

Wakabayashi,A., Baron-Cohen,S., et al. (2007). Empathizing and systemizing in adults with and without autism spectrum condition: Cross-Cultural stability. Journal of Autism Development Disorder,37,1823-1832.

**Abstract Summary:**

Social skills are associated with self-monitoring in interpersonal interactive situations. People who have a high tendency towards practicing self-monitoring can understand the mental states of others well, and can, therefore, construct good relationships.

**Learning Activity:**

| LEARNING OBJECTIVES   | EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE  |
|---|---|
| The learner will be able to understand the characteristics of Japanese social skills.             | The learner will be able to discuss a characteristic of your country people's social skills by comparing Japanese culture and the culture of one's country. |
| The learner will be able to understand the association between social skills and self-monitoring. | The learner will be able to discuss social skills and self-monitoring are important factors to communicate with others.                                     |

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|---|--|
| The learner will be able to understand how self-control, which is a factor of self-monitoring, plays an important role in Japanese social skills. | The learner will be able to discuss that it is important to support people who have difficulty with interpersonal interaction. |
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## **Abstract Text:**

### **Background**

Japanese people have difficulty with certain interpersonal interactions such as expressing and explaining their opinions, expressing their feelings, and face to face communication. In order to communicate with others, it is necessary to develop one's social skills. Social skills are cognitive processes that enable an expression of interpersonal action and include both verbal and nonverbal actions that are used to react adequately and effectively in an interactive situation. In Japanese culture, social interactions are very strongly directed by the social context in which they occur. Furthermore, Japanese people tend not to give clear verbalization of their thoughts or feelings. Japanese people are, therefore, required to understand subtleties in one another's words and behavior in order to act appropriately and meet certain group or social expect actions. Thus, social skills are important to expand one's social life by helping individuals to adapt to various social situations such as in school or in the work place.

To meet social expectations, it is necessary to control one's behavior an ability that comes from a personality train known as self-monitoring. Self-monitoring involves being conscious of one's own behavior during interpersonal contexts in order to accommodate to that situation. People with a high self-monitoring tendency can easy modify their behavior, while people who have a law self-monitoring tendency act according to their own beliefs and volition. Self-monitoring, therefore, involves not only the ability to regard one's self objectively, but also to control and adjust one's behavior accordingly. So while social skills are generally competences relates to understanding and associating with others, self-monitoring is an introspective consciousness process that dictates one's behavior. Thus, self-monitoring is an important factor for effective social skills, particularly in a Japanese cultural context.

Concern over interpersonal relationships is a major factor that contributes to emotional suffering in the lives of Japanese people, while, social interaction with in communities is known to raise well-being in daily life. Therefore, it is important to investigate the causes of difficulties that arise in interpersonal relationships in Japan, and find ways to help construct and maintain such relationships.

### **Objective**

The purpose of this study is to show the association between social skills and self-monitoring in a Japanese population.

### **Methods**

#### **Participants**

A total of 203 participants were recruited for this study.

#### **Measurement Instrument**

##### **Social skills**

To gather data for this study, we used the Social Skills Self-Rating Scale for Adults (SSSA), which was developed in Japan by Aikawa et al (2005). The SSSA instrument, which includes 6 subscales and 35

items, is able to comprehensively assess communication and interaction skills. The 6 subscales are: 1) Construction of relationships (the skill to construct relationship with others); 2) Decoding (the skill to decode an expression and feelings of others); 3) Assertion (the skill to express one's opinion by an appropriate way); 4) Control of emotion (the skill to control one's emotional expression); 5) Maintenance of relationships (the skill to behave in consideration for others' emotion); and 6) Symbolization (the skill to express one's mental state with expression and non-verbal gesture). Participants gave each item a profile score, ranging from 1 (hardly suitable) to 4 (very suitable), and the range of score is from 35 to 140. A high profile score indicates high levels of social skills.

### **Self-monitoring**

To measure self-monitoring, we used the Cognitive Behavioral Self-Monitoring Scale (CBSMS) developed by Tsuchida et al (2007) in Japan. This instrument is an appropriate way to objectively measure self-monitoring. The CBSMS is self-rating scale that consists of 3 subscales with a total of 17 items. Each item is scored, from 1 (hardly suitable) to 5 (very suitable) and the maximum total score is 85. A high total score indicate that self-monitoring function is high. The 3 subscales are: 1) Behavior monitoring (indicate a tendency to control oneself along the situation); 2) Circumstance monitoring (indicate a tendency to monitor others and atmosphere, and catch them analytically); and 3) Monitoring cognition (indicate a tendency to recognize a state of the self, such as feelings, thought, and sense of values).

### **Analysis**

We used Spearman's correlation test to identify the relationship between the SSSA and CBSM scales, and age. The Mann-Whitney U test was used to detect variations between genders. For the analysis we used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21, at a 95% confidence level.

### **Ethical considerations**

This study was approved by the Ethics Committee of the University of Tsukuba, Faculty of Medicine. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants included in this study.

### **Results**

A total of 177 participants (70 men and 107 women) were included in the assessment, (mean age: 34.6 years [SD = 15.6]). Cronbach's alpha score for the SSSA and CBSMS were .90 and .81, respectively.

The mean overall score for SSSA was  $94.1 \pm 11.9$  (range: 52-133). The mean scores for each subscale, when divided by the number of the items, were: 'Construction of relationships' = 2.7; 'Decoding' = 2.8; 'Assertion' = 2.4; 'Control of emotion' = 2.5; 'Maintenance of relationships' = 3.1; and 'Symbolization' = 2.8. The CBSMS mean overall score was  $61.9 \pm 8.4$  (range: 17-85). The mean score for each subscale, when divides by the number of the items, were: 'Behavior monitoring' = 3.5; 'Circumstance monitoring' = 3.7; and 'Monitoring cognition' = 3.8.

The overall score for SSSA was significantly correlated with the overall score for CBSMS ( $r_s = .43$ ,  $P < .01$ ). The score for 'Behavior monitoring,' which is subscale of CBSMS, was correlated with: overall score for SSSA ( $r_s = .55$ ,  $P < .01$ ); 'Decoding' ( $r_s = .47$ ,  $P < .01$ ); and 'Maintenance of relationships' ( $r_s = .55$ ,  $P < .01$ ). SSSA and CBSMS had no significant correlation with age.

### **Discussion**

The results of the subscale scores pertaining to social skills perhaps indicate a typical characteristics of the Japanese. While Western cultures are said to be individualistic, Japanese culture is typically more group-oriented; Japanese are more likely to express a community-oriented and relationship-centered

opinion rather than an individual opinion. The score for 'Assertion' and 'Maintenance of relationships' reflect a tendency of the Japanese to not insist upon their own opinion and the importance they place on cooperation with others.

Our results suggest that a tendency towards self-monitoring in interactive situations is associated with an effective influence on social skills. In the CBSMS subscale 'Behavior monitoring' was correlated with 'Decoding' on the SSSA subscale. Items in the 'Behavior monitoring' subscale, indicate tendencies of the ability to adapt one's behavior according to a particular situation, and items in the 'Decoding' subscale indicate skills to interpret the mental states of others. Where there is a strong tendency to adapt one's behavior to a particular situation, there is an accompanying high level of skill to interpret the mental states of others (intentions, desires, expectations) and understand the social expectations.

The CBSMS subscale 'Behavior monitoring' was significantly correlated with the SSSA subscale 'Maintenance of relationships', for which the items are about adapting ones behavior to suit the social context that one is in. Our results demonstrated that a strong tendency to adapt behavior is associated with social skills that are thoughtful and considerate of others.

### **Implication**

Problems arising from interpersonal interactions are one of the major causes of stress and trouble in daily life. This problem is particularly acute in Japan because of its strongly group-oriented culture. In order to promote mental well-being and it is important to address such problems. Self-monitoring is an important character trait in an interactive situation as it serves to adjust a person's behavior appropriately to the situation. Thus, for people with difficulty in interpersonal relationships it is important that they have support available to help them develop self-monitoring and social skills.

### **Acknowledgement**

This study received Japan Academy of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing grant (2016). This abstracts got the English proofreading by Thomas D Mayers, Assistant Professor, University of Tsukuba Faculty of Medicine, Medical English Communications Center.