The relationship between situational change and selectiveness in friendships for adjustment to the university

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This study examined how social self-efficacy and the way friendships are maintained influenced adaptation to university life and friendship satisfaction. A questionnaire was administered to 119 female university students during July 2011 in Japan. In the first procedure, the correlation between situational change and selectiveness in friendships, social self-efficacy, university adjustment and friendship satisfaction was examined. In the second procedure, the cluster analysis was conducted to integrate situational change and selectiveness in friendships and social self-efficacy. The results showed that students who changed their attitudes based on their friends and those who selected friends based on situational change did not trust their friends, nor did they feel that they were trusted by friends. However, according to the results of the cluster analysis, students who had both characteristics of selectiveness and high social skills did not feel uncomfortable in university life.

Keywords: social self-efficacy; friendship selectiveness; university adjustment; friendship satisfaction; female university students

During adolescence, making friends becomes a core activity for personal development (Marsh, Allen, Ho, Porter, & McFarland, 2006). Traditionally, disclosing personal and intimate information about oneself has been considered important in friendship formation (Atwater, 1992; Young, 1982). However, in the last 30 years an impressive number of studies have investigated superficial interpersonal relations especially among young people, and have found that young people tend to avoid disclosing what they really think; they do not want their friends interfering in their own privacy, nor do they want to interfere in their friends’ privacy (Ohira, 1995). Some researchers have expressed concern that friendship among adolescents is so sensitive that young people cannot build a close, reliable relationship, and they cannot disclose themselves frankly (Matsui, 1990).

However, the data and evidence described above concerning the negative characteristics of adolescent friendships are not definitive. There is evidence from a number of Japanese surveys that shows a more positive view of adolescent friendships (Fukushige, 2006). In the light of this evidence to the contrary, why do so many people still believe interpersonal relations among adolescents to be superficial?

Some researchers have suggested another type of friendship among young people: situational change and selectiveness in friendships. According to this approach, when maintaining friendships people change their attitudes depending on each situation and choose their friends to suit their own purposes and feelings. Matsuda (2000) suggested that this tendency was one of the reasons why social network communication through the Internet and mobile phones is so widespread among adolescents. Asano (2006) pointed out

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that today young people have a greater variety in the types of friends than in the past, not only real-life friends but also friends known only through the Internet and mobile devices. For instance, some people may only talk about personal things to friends on the Internet and about superficial topics with face-to-face friends at the university. Therefore, it is assumed that it has become very natural for young people to select their friends and change their attitudes depending on the situation under which they build and maintain their relationship. Several studies have investigated these types of relationships (Matsuda, 2000; Otani, 2007), but there has been little agreement on the characteristics and the details of situational change and selectiveness in friendships. For instance, Okada (2007) found that young people who switch to different faces depending on the situation had high social skills. On the other hand, Otani (2007) revealed that there was a weak relationship between the situational change in friendships and psychological stress response. In addition, Saitoh & Nonaka (2011) found that situational change of friendships was positively correlated with distrust of friends. This current study aims to examine the details of these friendships described above in adolescents.

Many studies have already shown that good friendships affect people’s adaptation and mental health. Quality friendship promotes positive development by enhancing emotional well-being, adaptive social information processing patterns and peer acceptance (Brendgen, Bowen, Rondeau, & Vitaro, 1999). Intimate friendships during adolescence play an important role in a young person’s overall psychological development, particularly for identity and sexuality (Hartup, 1993). Recent research by Okada (2008) developed a motivational model that showed the process of friendship formation and maintenance. This model demonstrated that friendship was mediated by the interpersonal relationship between friendship motivation and adjustment to the environment. Although Okada (2008) developed this motivational model of the process by which individuals form and maintain close friendships, relatively few studies have examined how friendship motivation affects the adaptation to university life and friendship satisfaction.

In this study, social self-efficacy was selected as a variable of friendship motivation, and situational change and selectiveness in friendships were selected as the variables of forming and maintaining friendships. Matsushima and Shiomi (2003) focused on self-efficacy in personal relationships for adolescents. Matsuo & Arai (1998) recognised that not only social skill but also self-efficacy in friendship affects friendship for children. According to the correlation between the three subscales of social self-efficacy and personality scale, Matsushima and Shiomi (2003) concluded that students with high social self-efficacy are cheerful and optimistic.

The purpose of this study was to examine how social self-efficacy and methods through which participants maintain friendships affect the extent to which they adapt to university life and their level of satisfaction with friendships among female university students. In the first procedure, the correlation between situational change and selectiveness in friendships, social self-efficacy, university adjustment and friendship satisfaction was examined. It was hypothesised that situational change and selectiveness in friendships would relate to low social self-efficacy, university adjustment and friendship satisfaction. In the second procedure, a cluster analysis was conducted to integrate situational change and selectiveness in friendships and social self-efficacy. The cluster analysis would provide a comprehensive profile of female students with distinct variation in university adjustment and friendship satisfaction. It was hypothesised that students who were categorised with low situational change and selectiveness in friendship with high social self-efficacy would have the highest score in university adjustment and friendship satisfaction.
Many researches have found that gender differences exist in the level of trust in male and female friendships. According to Reisman (1990), females are more intimate or self-disclosing in their same-sex friendships than are males. Caldwell & Peplau (1982) also showed that men and women did not differ in quantitative aspects of friendship, such as number of friends or amount of time spent with friends, nor in the value placed on intimate friendships. However, clear differences were found between the sexes in the nature of interactions with friends. Caldwell & Peplau (1982) noted that women showed an emphasis on emotional sharing and talking, while men emphasised activities and doing things together. As this study focuses on friendships related to emotional sharing with friends, only female students were asked to participate.

Method
Participants
The study was conducted with a total of 119 female university students ($M_{age} = 20.36$ year; $SD = 1.68$) enrolled in psychology course in the Kansai Region of Japan. Originally, 122 students took part in the study, of which 3 were dropped because of missing data. The participants responded to three scales designed to measure situational change and selectiveness in university students’ friendships, social self-efficacy and subjective adjustment to university. In addition to these three scales, the participants also responded to another scale designed to measure their satisfaction level with their friendships at the university.

Measures
Situational change and selectiveness in university students’ friendships scale
Out of the 14 items, 10 were adopted from Otani (2007); a slight modification was made to these items because of colloquial items included in the scale. Participants were asked how they usually related to their friends. Five items concerned situational change and five items concerned selectiveness in friendships. The internal consistency of this scale has been previously assessed (Otani, 2007). A five-point response scale was used for the ratings, with anchors ranging from not at all (1) to very strongly (5).

Social self-efficacy scale
A total of 40 items were adopted from Matsushima & Shiomi (2003). This scale was divided into the following three scales: self-confidence in personal relationship, trust in friends and trust by friends. Participants were asked to think about themselves as they are. The high internal consistency of this scale has been confirmed, and the construct validity via its correlation with scores on the SPI (Shimoda-shiki Personality Inventory; Shiomi, Yoshioka, & Tanaka, 1987) has also been assessed (Matsushima & Shiomi, 2003). A five-point response scale was used for ratings, with anchors ranging from not at all (1) to very strongly (5).

Subjective adjustment to school for adolescents scale
The items were adopted from Okubo & Aoyagi (2003). Participants were asked to imagine their university life. This scale was divided into the following four subscales: sense of comfort, absence of feelings of inferiority, feelings of acceptance and existence of task and
purpose. Construct validity and criterion-related validity via its correlation with scores on the depression scale and another university adjustment scale and high internal consistency of this scale have been previously assessed (Okubo & Aoyagi, 2003). A five-point response scale was used for ratings, with anchors ranging from not at all (1) to very strongly (5).

Friendship satisfaction
Participants were asked how much they were satisfied with their friendships in their university life. A four-point response scale was used for the ratings, with anchors ranging from not at all (1) to very strongly (4).

Procedure
Data were collected in July 2011 from 119 female Japanese university students from two universities in the Kansai Region of Japan. Confidentiality procedures and anonymity were carefully explained verbally and also mentioned in the written consent form as well. The SPSS software (version 20) was used to analyse the data.

Results
Factor analysis of the situational change and selectiveness in friendships scale
In this study, 10 out of 14 items were adopted from situational change and selectiveness in friendships scale (Otani, 2007). A slight modification was made to these items because of colloquial items included in the scale. Therefore, to confirm the factor structure of the situational change and selectiveness in friendships scale, an unweighted least-squares procedure was conducted on the 10 items. After promax rotation, three items with a factor loading of less than 0.40 were excluded from subsequent analyses. The remaining seven items were examined using an unweighted least-squares procedure with promax rotation. After promax rotation, items with factor loadings greater than 0.40 were considered (see Table 1). Two factors accounted for 49.70% of the total variance.

Table 1. Factor analysis of situational change and selectiveness in friendships.

| Item                                                                 | Factor I  | Factor II |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| 7. I choose different friends depending on where and what I want to do. | 0.862     | −0.153    |
| 5. I choose different friends depending on how I want to spend my leisure time. | 0.612     | 0.179    |
| 1. I choose different friends depending on what I want to consult about. | 0.596     | 0.045    |
| 3. I choose different friends depending on my mood.                  | 0.506     | 0.057    |
| 6. I change my attitude depending on my friends.                     | −0.139    | 0.875    |
| 4. I behave differently depending on the situation.                  | 0.077     | 0.718    |
| 8. I take on opposite personalities depending on the situation.      | 0.212     | 0.510    |
| Factor correlation II                                                | 0.506     |           |
The first factor was named selectiveness in friendship as it comprised items related to relationships such as ‘I choose different friends depending on where and what I want to do’ and ‘I choose different friends depending on how I want to spend my leisure time’. The second factor was named situational change as it comprised items related to relationships such as ‘I change my attitude depending on my friends’ and ‘I behave differently depending on the situation’. To examine the internal consistency of each factor, Cronbach’s \( \alpha \) reliability coefficients were calculated to be 0.725 and 0.751, respectively, for the two factors.

**Factor analysis of the social self-efficacy scale**

Matsushima & Shiomi (2003) confirmed the high internal consistency of this scale and also its construct validity. However, this scale was originally constructed for young adolescents. Therefore, to examine the factor structure of the social self-efficacy scale, an unweighted least-squares procedure was conducted on 40 items. After promax rotation, 14 items with a factor loading of less than 0.40 and items that loaded on more than one factor were excluded from subsequent analyses. The remaining 26 items were examined using an unweighted least-squares procedure with promax rotation. After promax rotation, items with factor loadings greater than 0.40 were considered (see Table 2). Three factors accounted for 48.03% of the variance. As was the case when this scale was previously developed (Matsushima & Shiomi, 2003), three factor analyses were conducted in almost the same way in this study.

The first factor was named trust in friends, as it comprised items related to trust and stable feelings towards friends, such as ‘I think my friends understand me whatever I say’ and ‘I believe my friends understand me regardless of what I say’. The second factor was named self-confidence in personal relationships as it comprised items related to self-confidence in one’s basic social skill, such as ‘I can introduce myself well to strangers at the first meeting’ and ‘I can talk with anybody easily’. The third factor was named belief in the power of friendship as it comprised items related to belief towards friends, such as ‘I think it is important for us to accomplish something with our companions’ and ‘We can do anything if we cooperate’. To examine the internal consistency of each factor, Cronbach’s \( \alpha \) reliability coefficients were calculated to be 0.903, 0.881 and 0.826, respectively, for the three factors.

**Factor analysis of the subjective adjustment to school for adolescents scale**

Validity and high internal consistency of this scale have been previously assessed (Okubo & Aoyagi, 2003). However, this scale was originally constructed for both male and female university students. In this study, we administered a questionnaire only to female students. Therefore, to examine the factor structure of subjective adjustment to school for adolescents scale, an unweighted least-squares procedure was conducted on 29 items. After promax rotation, six items with a factor loading of less than 0.40 and items that loaded on more than one factor were excluded from the subsequent analyses. The remaining 23 items were examined using an unweighted least-squares procedure with promax rotation. After promax rotation, items with factor loadings greater than 0.40 were considered (see Table 3). Four factors accounted for 54.25% of the variance. Four factor analyses were conducted in this study just as was done when the scale was developed by Okubo & Aoyagi (2003).

The first factor was named sense of comfort as it comprised items related to the reliance on the environment, such as ‘I can feel empathy with people’ and ‘I have a good time with people’. The second factor was named absence of feelings of inferiority as it comprised items related to the negative feelings about the environment, such as ‘I feel
people are cold to me’ and ‘I feel I don’t fit in this environment’. The third factor was named feelings of acceptance and trust as it comprised items related to trust in the environment, such as ‘I have my role in this environment’ and ‘I can feel I was trusted by people’. The fourth factor was named existence of task and purpose as it comprised items related to expressing positive feelings, such as ‘I have something that I am really into’ and ‘I have a purpose that I have to do here’. To examine the internal consistency of each factor, Cronbach’s $\alpha$ reliability coefficients were calculated to be 0.900, 0.815, 0.861 and 0.731, respectively, for the four factors.

**Correlations among subscales factors**

Table 4 shows the means and SDs for all scales. The correlation of these factors is shown in Table 5. Selectiveness in friendship negatively correlated with trust in friends ($r = -0.265, p < 0.01$), belief in the power of friendship ($r = -0.268, p < 0.01$), sense of
comfort ($r = -0.180$, $p < 0.05$) and friendship satisfaction ($r = -0.260$, $p < 0.01$). Situational change negatively correlated with trust in friends ($r = -0.342$, $p < 0.01$), belief in the power of friendship ($r = -0.199$, $p < 0.05$), sense of comfort ($r = -0.266$, $p < 0.01$), absence of feelings of inferiority ($r = -0.289$, $p < 0.01$) and satisfaction of friends ($r = -0.271$, $p < 0.01$).

**Cluster analysis**

In order to classify participants into groups based on the characteristics of situational change, selectiveness in personal relationship and social self-efficacy, a hierarchical cluster analysis using the Ward method was conducted. As a result of this analysis, four clusters were produced. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine which classifying variables were significantly different among the clusters. There was a significant difference between subjects’ effect of cluster on each of the five variables of situational change and selectiveness in friendship and social self-efficacy. Tukey’s honestly significant difference (HSD) procedure was conducted to determine where the differences lie. The results of the one-way ANOVA and post hoc tests are shown in Table 6 and Figure 1.

| Factor                        | I    | II   | III  | IV   |
|-------------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| 13. I can feel empathy with people. | 1.065 | -0.119 | -0.125 | -0.144 |
| 5. I have good time with people.    | 0.717 | -0.196 | 0.230 | 0.083 |
| 9. I feel good in this environment because I can talk freely. | 0.688 | 0.272 | -0.282 | 0.213 |
| 28. I can show my real character in this environment. | 0.611 | 0.039 | -0.072 | 0.113 |
| 25. I’m understood by people. | 0.551 | 0.080 | 0.287 | -0.068 |
| 17. I have something in common with people here. | 0.545 | -0.294 | 0.301 | -0.117 |
| 26. I’m accepted in this environment. | 0.460 | 0.180 | 0.238 | 0.085 |
| 1. I can fit in with this environment. | 0.426 | 0.087 | 0.350 | 0.017 |
| 12. I feel people are cold to me. | 0.007 | 0.730 | -0.083 | 0.103 |
| 20. I feel I don’t fit in this environment. | -0.241 | 0.700 | -0.043 | 0.237 |
| 24. I feel people interfere too much with me. | 0.290 | 0.676 | 0.163 | -0.124 |
| 16. I feel out of place in this environment. | -0.293 | 0.599 | -0.022 | 0.098 |
| 21. I feel I’m isolated. | -0.284 | 0.483 | 0.035 | -0.012 |
| 8. I feel people don’t recognise the existence of me. | 0.237 | 0.443 | -0.349 | -0.013 |
| 14. I have my role in this environment. | -0.029 | -0.197 | 0.767 | 0.072 |
| 2. I can feel I was trusted by people. | 0.042 | 0.010 | 0.730 | -0.025 |
| 6. I can feel I am needed. | 0.177 | 0.092 | 0.571 | 0.084 |
| 18. I’m appreciated in this environment. | -0.097 | 0.378 | 0.545 | 0.063 |
| 10. I think I’m interested by people. | 0.036 | 0.178 | 0.461 | 0.230 |
| 3. I have something that I am really into. | 0.099 | -0.163 | 0.061 | 0.705 |
| 19. I have a purpose that I have to do here. | -0.236 | 0.011 | 0.119 | 0.613 |
| 7. I can do what I want to do. | 0.213 | -0.039 | 0.089 | 0.600 |
| 23. I can behave at my own pace. | 0.019 | 0.381 | -0.159 | 0.463 |

Factor correlation

| II  | III  | IV   |
|-----|------|------|
| 0.677 | 0.686 | 0.528 |
| 0.589 | 0.447 | 0.549 |

*aReversed score.*
Table 4. Correlation between subscales \((n = 119)\).

|                           | Selectiveness in friendship | Situational change | Trust in friends | Self-confidence in personal relationship | Belief in the power of friendship | Sense of comfort | Absence of feelings of inferiority | Feelings of acceptance and trust | Existence of task and purpose |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Selectiveness in friendship| 0.457**                    |                    |                  |                                          |                                  |                 |                                  |                                 |                               |
| Situational change        |                            |                    |                  |                                          |                                  |                 |                                  |                                 |                               |
| Trust in Friends          | -0.265**                   | -0.342**           |                  |                                          |                                  |                 |                                  |                                 |                               |
| Self-confidence in personal relationship | 0.092                     | -0.058             | 0.554**          |                                          |                                  |                 |                                  |                                 |                               |
| Belief in the power of friendship | -0.268**                 | -0.199*            | 0.544**          | 0.343**                                  |                                  |                 |                                  |                                 |                               |
| Sense of comfort           | -0.180*                    | -0.266**           | 0.692**          | 0.472**                                  | 0.611**                         |                 |                                  |                                 |                               |
| Absence of feelings of inferiority | -0.146                   | -0.289**           | 0.602**          | 0.429**                                  | 0.484**                         | 0.643**         |                                  |                                 |                               |
| Feelings of acceptance and trust | -0.061                    | -0.078             | 0.624**          | 0.658**                                  | 0.531**                         | 0.738**         | 0.600**                         |                                 |                               |
| Existence of task and purpose | -0.096                    | -0.116             | 0.422**          | 0.469**                                  | 0.307**                         | 0.524**         | 0.396**                         | 0.549**                         |                               |
| Satisfaction of friends   | -0.260**                   | -0.271**           | 0.522**          | 0.258**                                  | 0.400**                         | 0.607**         | 0.415**                         | 0.449**                         | 0.330**                       |

\(* *p < 0.01; *p < 0.05.\)
The first cluster (CL1) was characterised by low social self-efficacy, high situational change and selectiveness in friendship. The second cluster (CL2) was characterised by moderate social self-efficacy, moderate situational change and selectiveness in friendship. The third cluster (CL3) was characterised by high social self-efficacy, low situational change and selectiveness in friendship. The fourth cluster (CL4) was characterised by high self-confidence in social skills and high situational change and selectiveness in friendship.

**Table 5.** Means and SDs of situational change and selectiveness in friend and social self-efficacy by the clusters.

|                      | CL1   | CL2   | CL3   | CL4   | F value | Turkey’s post hoc |
|----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------|-------------------|
| Selective in friendship | 4.05(0.60) | 3.54(0.92) | 3.41(0.73) | 4.02(0.53) | 4.25* | 1 > 3 |
| Situational change    | 4.25(0.58) | 3.75(0.90) | 2.67(0.86) | 4.38(0.47) | 9.86* | 4, 1, 2 > 3 |
| Trust in friends      | 2.21(0.42) | 3.07(0.25) | 3.87(0.33) | 3.06(0.44) | 113.40* | 3 > 2, 4 > 1 |
| Self-confidence in personal relationship | 2.36(0.67) | 2.66(0.40) | 3.52(0.55) | 3.92(0.32) | 47.27* | 4, 3 > 2, 1 |
| Belief in the power of friendship | 2.95(0.74) | 3.44(0.59) | 4.18(0.52) | 3.37(1.06) | 17.73* | 3 > 2, 4, 1 |

*p < 0.01.

The first cluster (CL1) was characterised by low social self-efficacy, high situational change and selectiveness in friendship. The second cluster (CL2) was characterised by moderate social self-efficacy, moderate situational change and selectiveness in friendship. The third cluster (CL3) was characterised by high social self-efficacy, low situational change and selectiveness in friendship. The fourth cluster (CL4) was characterised by high self-confidence in social skills and high situational change and selectiveness in friendship.

**Table 6.** Means and SDs of subjective adjustment to university and friend’s satisfaction by the clusters.

|                      | CL1   | CL2   | CL3   | CL4   | F value | Turkey’s post hoc |
|----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------|-------------------|
| Sense of comfort      | 2.41(0.67) | 3.20(0.51) | 3.90(0.61) | 3.32(0.61) | 29.58* | 3 > 4, 2 > 1 |
| Absence of feelings of inferiority | 2.63(0.66) | 3.33(0.63) | 3.85(0.64) | 3.29(0.48) | 16.79* | 3 > 2, 4 > 1 |
| Feelings of acceptance and trust | 2.22(0.69) | 3.00(0.53) | 3.59(0.60) | 3.58(0.49) | 27.74* | 3, 4 > 2 > 1 |
| Existence of task and purpose | 2.91(0.81) | 3.36(0.80) | 3.86(0.57) | 4.15(0.42) | 12.49* | 4, 3 > 2, 1 |
| Friendship satisfaction | 2.53(0.84) | 3.04(0.63) | 3.37(0.54) | 3.09(0.54) | 7.46* | 3, 4, 2 > 1 |

*p < 0.01.

**Difference among clusters**

A one-way ANOVA was conducted on the four factor scores of the subjective adjustment to school scale and the friendship satisfaction scores to examine the difference between the four clusters. The result of the one-way ANOVA is shown in Table 6 and Figure 2. All the variables of subjective adjustment to school and friendship satisfaction were significant. The results of the post hoc comparisons using Turkey’s HSD are also shown in Table 6.

**Discussion**

In this study, we examined how social self-efficacy and methods through which participants maintain friendships affect the extent to which they adapt to university life and their level of satisfaction with friendships.
Figure 1. Means of situational change and selectiveness in friend and social self-efficacy by the clusters.

Figure 2. Means of subjective adjustment to university and friend’s satisfaction by the clusters.
Correlations among situational change, selectiveness in friendships, social self-efficacy, adjustment to the university and friendship satisfaction

Based on the results of correlations, it appears that students who have high scores on situational change and selectiveness in friendship did not have positive feelings and attitudes towards their friends and were not satisfied with their friends. As situational change and selectiveness in friendship negatively correlated with sense of comfort, it appears that they also felt uncomfortable in university life. These findings of the current study correspond with those of Otani (2007) and Saitoh & Nonaka (2011) who demonstrated that situational change and selectiveness in friendship correlated with psychological stress reaction and distrust of friends.

On the other hand, students did not have the necessary self-confidence in their basic social skills because the correlation of selectiveness in friendship with both situational change and self-confidence in personal relationship was not significant. Okada (2007) pointed out that young people who have a multidimensional self had high interpersonal skills and could switch to different faces depending on the situation. However, the results of this study were not consistent with Okada’s results. It is possible to divide people who had high scores of situational change and selectiveness in friendship into two types. One type would be people who have high confidence in their social skills and another type would be people who can change attitudes depending on the situation because they do not have the self-confidence in their social skills that would enable them to express themselves honestly towards their friends.

In addition, all three factors of social self-efficacy positively correlated with the four factors of subjective adjustment to university and friendship satisfaction. These correlations suggest that students who have high social self-efficacy adapt to university life and are satisfied with their friendships. Taken together, as predicted in the first hypothesis, situational change and selectiveness in friendships related to low social self-efficacy, university adjustment and friendship satisfaction.

University adaptation and friendship satisfaction difference in cluster composition

The cluster analysis showed that CL3’s mean scores for sense of comfort, absence of feeling of inferiority, feelings of acceptance and satisfaction with friendship were higher than those of the other clusters. CL4’s mean score for existence of task and purpose was the highest among the four clusters. CL1’s mean score was the lowest in all variables among all clusters. Although the mean scores of selectiveness in friendship and situational change among CL1 and CL4 were high as well, as shown in Table 5 and Figure 1, there was a significant difference between CL1 and CL4 in the mean levels of the subject adjustment to school and friend’s satisfaction. Presumably, the students of CL1, which was characterised by low social self-efficacy and high selectiveness, changed their attitudes depending on the situation because they did not have the self-confidence to show their real character. On the other hand, the students of CL4, which was characterised by high social self-efficacy and selectiveness in their friends, changed their attitudes depending on the situation because they were able to switch characters flexibly. Based on ANOVA, it appears that CL4 students feel more comfortable in their environment than CL1 students. Finally, as predicted in the second hypothesis, students who were categorised into low situational change and selectiveness in friendship with high social self-efficacy had the highest score in university adjustment and friendship satisfaction.

In conclusion, the results of this study suggested that situational change and selectiveness in friendship are negatively correlated with adjustment to university life and
friendship satisfaction. Students who changed their attitudes based on their friends and those who selected friends based on situational change did not trust their friends, nor did they feel they were trusted by their friends. However, according to the results of the cluster analysis, students who had both characteristics of selectiveness and high social skills did not feel necessarily uncomfortable in university life.

Several limitations require consideration concerning this study. First, the number of participants was relatively small, limiting the generalisability of the current findings. Second, in this study, we administered the questionnaire only to female students. However, from the results of earlier studies, the difference of qualitative friendships between the sexes has been confirmed (Caldwell & Peplau, 1982). Therefore, we also need to administer the questionnaire to male students and examine the difference between the sexes in the future. Third, as the validity and stability of the four clusters were not confirmed in this study, future research that examines the validity and stability of clusters would be a valuable contribution.

Notes on contributor
Rumi Matsushima, PhD, is associate professor of educational psychology at Kyoto Notre Dame University in Japan. Her current research interest is the relationship among interpersonal relationships, academic motivation, and adjustment to the university.

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