THE APPARENT LACK OF AGENCY, EMPATHY, AND CREATIVITY AMONG JAPANESE YOUTH: INTERPRETATIONS FROM PROJECT TEST RESPONSES

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Cultural psychological studies have indicated that agency is less developed in Japan compared with American cultures. This study attempted to investigate changes of agency among Japanese youth. The Rorschach scores of 47 students in 2013 were compared with those of 47 students in 2003 in Japan. The 2013 group showed more direct emotional responses, fewer M responses, longer reaction time, and a greater number of undefined responses (e.g., “some kind of animal”) than the 2003 group, suggesting that the 2013 group was characterized by a weaker agency. These results indicate that the 2013 group shared the features with an autism spectrum disorder group reported previously (Hatanaka, 2013). However, they made undefined responses rather intentionally without any confusion, which stands in sharp contrast to the autism spectrum disorder group. This might suggest that the current Japanese students chose an undefined attitude in order to adjust to cultural changes in Japanese society.

Key words: agency, autism spectrum disorder, change of consciousness, Japanese culture, Rorschach inkblot test

INTRODUCTION

Clinical psychology attempts to interpret the prevalent form of mental symptoms in reference to the psychological trends of the times. For example, depression has been explained as a result of too rapid social change and a social system in which the authority is no longer clearly defined (Iida, 1972). Because mental stress and disorders are understood among the individual reactions to changes of society, a particular cultural social situation can elicit a specific style of mental disorders. There are two major factors for such psychological transitions; culture and time. For example, Hikikomori (social withdrawal) is considered as a Japanese culture-bound form of anxiety disorder, as Toivonen, Norasakkunkit, and Uchida (2011) related it to the Japanese interdependence-oriented culture. In addition, cultural psychological phenomena change along with the times. Today, we can find few patients with taijin-kyofusho (anthrophobia, a special kind of social phobia), which is a Japanese culture-specific syndrome that was frequently seen until the 1970’s. We can observe the transition of popular symptoms in Japanese society; from taijin-kyofusho to borderline personality disorder in the 1980’s, to dissociative disorder in

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the 1990’s, and to autism spectrum disorder in the 2000’s (Kawai, 2009a). Similar transitions can be noted within individual disorders. As for depression, today’s cases are milder compared with those from the 1970’s. Kasahara (2009) who is a prominent Japanese psychiatrist, indicated, based on his experience of 60 years, that young patients of the present day tend to exhibit reactive depression instead of intrinsic depression, and proposed new types of depression. Such changes of mental disorder occur as a result of progress of medical treatment and medication as well as rapid global changes of the social cultural situation, with which individual consciousnesses have difficulty to catch up (Nishizono, 2009; Kitanaka, 2011).

Mental disorder could be regarded as a radical reaction to the social situation of the contemporary times. Therefore, transition of mental illness means that normal and general personalities also undergo changes as times shift. The present study focuses on the psychological change of normal Japanese youth in the past ten years, taking into account the relevant clinical and social psychological context.

In this paper, we focus on agency, which is among the controversial topics today for the following two contexts.

1) Cultural Psychological and Sociological Context: Cultural psychological studies have indicated the difference of the style of agency between European and American and Japanese cultures. The Japanese tend to take a high degree of agency to effectively adjust themselves to various interpersonal contingencies, in contrast to the independent style of European and American cultures (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Kitayama & Uchida, 2005; Markus, Uchida, Omoregie, Townsend, & Kitayama, 2006). Kitayama and Uchida (2005) defined agency as what is inherently personal, and is best characterized as a force that emanates from the inside core of the person and then guides his or her action towards the environment (p. 138). It is the central function that directs, regulates, and energizes one’s own thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

Sociology has also discussed Japanese agency with respect to the change in the style of relationships the Japanese youth have. They are always caring and keeping contact with others, which has to do with changes in the communication methods, i.e., mobile phones and social networking services that allow us to easily contact others. This indication suggests that the interdependent Japanese style of agency might shift to become even more interdependent.

2) Clinical Psychological Context: Clinical psychology has also paid attention to agency in connection with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Since 2000, ASD has become more prevalent in advanced countries (Honda, Shimizu, Imai, & Nitto, 2005; Kogan et al., 2009; Pederson et al., 2012). In particular in Japan, the presumed prevalence rate of ASD is currently high from both the epidemiological perspective and clinical impression (Tsuchiya, Matsumoto, & Takei, 2009). Although ASD is regarded as neurological disorder with social-cognitive deficits, the increasing number of population recently in a society may suggest its psychosocial factors. Psychotherapy research on ASD indicate that the main common characteristic of ASD is weakness of agency, which result from the weaker boundary between self and the other. Because of the uncertain boundary between self and the other, ASD patients often have some problems about language, social interaction, and
imagination (David et al., 2008; Kawai, 2009b). In this context the agency is understood more in the sense of separation between subject and object as well as differentiation among objects. Kawai (2010) and Kawai and Tanaka (2013) have proposed a new therapeutic paradigm for children and adults with ASD who barely have conflict or consistent inner images. The separation in the therapeutic relationship and differentiation in the expressed materials such as picture enable patients to establish and strengthen the function of agency.

These tendencies of weak agency can be found not only in ASD but also rather normal patients. Kawai (2006) pointed out that consciousness is changing toward a new one from modern consciousness which has to do with self-reflective viewpoint and inner conflict. This indication is based on the clinical fact that there is an increasing number of cases that are characterized by dissociation and acting out without the feeling of conflict. These investigations indicate that the present Japanese consciousness might be reflective of a still weaker agency.

The present study investigated whether the consciousness of normal Japanese youth has changed in the past ten years through analyses of Rorschach inkblot tests. If these findings have changed, what differences could be observed? This test is adequate for the purpose of studying agency because it provides the participants with a subjective task, i.e., to allow them to decide what an obscure inkblot looks like. Furthermore, its analysis is not for the content of the response but rather for the participant’s attitude towards the object. This is not just an objective perception but is also quite a subjective process. Stewart and Bennett (1991) pointed out that cultural differences are found in subjective processes of interpretation in which one constructs category boundaries that define figure/ground objects, transforming them into perceptual objects (p. 26). Comparing Rorschach scores of university students in 2013 with students at the same university in 2003, we would be able to illustrate the change of the style of agency for the current Japanese youth.

To investigate the style of agency of the Japanese youth, we adopted the original index of an “undefined response.” Hatanaka (2013) examined 147 autism spectrum disorder patients and extracted a new index, which reflects weakness of agency i.e., “undefined response”, which is defined as follows: 1) a response for which the core concept remains unclear, 2) a response which remains undecided even though the participant presents some concrete ideas. An example of the former is “This is some kind of animal, but I don’t know what animal it is”, and an example of the latter is “This is a cat or horse. Is that a cat? Or, a horse? Umm.” These are different from an abstract response like “This is an animal”. As for undefined response, the participant cannot identify the animal, even though he or she tries to focus on what kind of animal it is. In many cases, an ASD person presents an undefined response with confusion or puzzlement. The ASD group presents significantly more undefined responses than neurotic patients and normal students. This result indicates that the undefined response is a sign of weakness of agency, which make it difficult for the participant to focus on the object. This index would help in understanding the change of agency over the past ten years.

Study 1 investigates whether Japanese youth have changed psychologically from 2003 to 2013. Statistical comparison of the Rorschach scores of the students between 2013 and 2003 would indicate their level of agency, emotional sensitivity and reactivity, and
sensibility and ability for empathy. Study 2 examines the individual responses to further discuss how to understand the psychological changes over these ten years.

**STUDY 1**

Study 1 compares the Rorschach scores of the university students in 2013 to students at the same university in 2003. We examine whether there were statistically significant differences between the two groups.

**METHOD**

*Participant and Procedure*

The same examiner administered the Rorschach inkblot test individually to two groups of undergraduate students at X University in Japan. For **2003 group** (n = 47 (Male 22/Female 25), RANGE age 18–24, \( M_{age} = 20.4, SD_{age} = 2.2 \)) the test has administered from 11/2003–12/2003. For **2013 group** (n = 47 (Male 22/Female 25), RANGE age 18–24, \( M_{age} = 20.2, SD_{age} = 1.9 \)) the test has administered from 11/2013–2/2014.

*Measures*

Adding to the undefined response as the index of the level of agency, basic Rorschach variables of reaction time, location, determinant, and form level rating were analyzed statistically.

*Data Analysis*

All data were scored with the Kataguchi scoring system, which is based on the Klopfer system. Comparisons of the basic Rorschach variables and undefined responses for the two groups were made using the Mann-Whitney U test (confidence levels < 0.05.)

**RESULTS**

The results are shown in Table 1.

1) Reactivity and Inner creativity

With respect to the number of responses, there was no significant difference by Mann-Whitney U test between the 2003 group and the 2013 group. On reaction time, three indices, i.e. total time, time per response, and first reaction time, the 2013 group took significantly longer than the 2003 group (p < .01). With respect to the location indices (W%, D%, d%, Dd%, S%), and the rate of animal (A%) and human responses (H%), there were no significant differences. On the other hand, the 2013 group exhibited a significantly wider range of content (p < .01).

While the reactivity and creativity of the two groups were not different, the 2013 group required more time for the process and showed a wider interest.
Table 1. The Results of Statistical Comparisons of the Rorschach variables between the 2003 group and 2013 group

| Variable                     | 2003 group | 2013 group | **<.01 | *<.05 |
|------------------------------|------------|------------|--------|-------|
|                              | M          | SD         | M      | SD    |
| Total Time                   | 781.0      | 483.0      | 1430.0 | 827.2 | **    |
| Reaction Time/1response      | 37.7       | 16.8       | 57.9   | 53.9  | **    |
| Reaction Time of 1st response| 12.0       | 10.1       | 18.3   | 19.7  | *     |
| VIII IX X%                   | 29.0       | 6.3        | 32.0   | 6.8   | *     |
| Rejection                    | 0.0        | 0.2        | 0.0    | 0.0   |       |
| Failure                      | 0.0        | 0.0        | 0.0    | 0.0   |       |
| R+ %                         | 83.0       | 16.4       | 77.8   | 16.6  |       |
| F+ %                         | 92.0       | 22.5       | 84.3   | 18.8  |       |
| F–                            | 0.0        | 1.0        | 0.0    | 1.7   | **    |
| Popular Response             | 4.0        | 1.7        | 3.0    | 1.3   | **    |
| Content Range                | 9.0        | 2.8        | 10.0   | 2.6   | **    |
| R                            | 20.0       | 10.8       | 23.0   | 19.5  |       |
| M                            | 3.5        | 3.0        | 3.0    | 2.4   | *     |
| FM                           | 2.0        | 2.0        | 2.0    | 2.3   |       |
| m                            | 1.0        | 2.9        | 1.0    | 2.0   |       |
| FK                           | 0.5        | 1.0        | 0.0    | 1.5   |       |
| F                            | 8.0        | 7.6        | 12.0   | 12.5  |       |
| Fc+c                         | 1.5        | 1.5        | 1.0    | 1.6   | **    |
| C’                            | 0.5        | 1.2        | 1.0    | 1.2   |       |
| FC                            | 1.0        | 1.1        | 3.0    | 2.3   | **    |
| CF                            | 1.5        | 1.9        | 1.0    | 1.5   | **    |
| SumC                         | 1.5        | 2.0        | 2.0    | 2.1   |       |
| W%                           | 81.3       | 17.7       | 81.8   | 23.9  |       |
| D%                           | 12.3       | 13.1       | 14.3   | 16.3  |       |
| d%                           | 0.0        | 0.9        | 0.0    | 2.0   |       |
| Dd%                          | 0.0        | 5.5        | 2.9    | 6.6   |       |
| S%                           | 0.0        | 2.4        | 0.0    | 3.9   |       |
| F%                            | 42.1       | 17.7       | 52.2   | 29.1  | **    |
| A%                            | 36.0       | 14.5       | 40.0   | 12.2  |       |
| SumH                         | 5.0        | 3.7        | 7.0    | 6.4   |       |
| Undifined Response           | 0.0        | 1.8        | 1.0    | 1.9   | **    |
2) Inner Sensibility and reactivity

The M (human movement) response is one of the most important indices for reflecting sensibility for empathy, inner creativity, and imagination, and these analyses. The result indicated that the 2013 group exhibited fewer M responses \( p < .05 \).

Reactivity to color is considered to reflect sensitivity and the management style for emotion. The FC number was significantly higher than the 2003 group \( p < .01 \), and the number of CF was significantly lower \( p < .01 \). FC indicates a response given with color and a stable or solid notion, and CF indicates a response with color and lower form level. This means that the color responses of the 2013 group were not as deep and lively as the 2003 group, but exhibited a more stable form. VIII IX X\% (the rate of responses of multiple colored cards) reflects the reactivity and sensitivity to outer emotional stimuli. The 2013 group exhibited a significantly higher rate of VIII IX X\% \( p < .05 \). These results indicate that the 2003 group tended to react to emotional incentives more directly and naively than the 2013 group.

3) Agency

We examine the indices of agency referring to the prior research (Hatanaka, 2013). The 2013 group exhibited a significantly wider content range \( p < .01 \), a significantly higher rate of F%, and significantly fewer F- (form response with destructive or broken form) \( p < .05 \). High F% and fewer F- indicate that the subjects tend to approach the object rather plainly, i.e. to not use their emotion or inner imagination and creativity.

The 2013 group exhibited a significantly greater number of undefined responses. The responses of students in 2013 reflect more ambiguous or unfixed attitudes.

These two results indicate that the 2013 group approached the inkblot with weaker agency than the 2003 group.

**DISCUSSION**

The results above indicate that the function of agency in 2013 has become weaker. The 2013 group collectively shows a less direct emotional reaction, a less destructive response, less imaginative and sympathetic response, and an unclear attitude. They approach the object less subjectively but more naively, simply and plainly. Interestingly, however, the 2013 students take longer time to provide a response, which suggests that the 2013 youth consciousness is not just a light and simple one.

A new question now arises. If the 2013 students have a milder agency, do they become close to autism spectrum disorder? The features of the 2013 group are similar to that of ASD group, as described by Hatanaka (2013); i.e., longer reaction time, poor determinants and weaker agency. However, the number of responses suggests that there are differences. While the ASD group provided significantly fewer responses than the university student group in 2003 (Hatanaka, 2013), the 2013 student group showed no significant difference from the 2003 group. This means that the weaker agency of the ASD group results in poor creativity but that of the 2013 student group does not show such poor
productivity. We must therefore examine the quality of agency in the 2013 group in further detail.

**STUDY 2**

An undefined response is originally unexpected in the Rorschach test, because this test requires the subject to define an ambiguous object as something concrete. If the subject gives an ambiguous response the examiner has to ask what it is. This presumption itself shows that agency, which decides, thinks, feels, and imagines what it is, and has been thought to be a natural and intrinsic one since the 1980’s Rorschach test was imported and used frequently in Japan. The result of Study 1 indicates that the milder style of agency is not just specific to ASD patients. However, does it mean that today’s Japanese youth have an immature agency?

To answer this question, Study 2 investigated the agency of the 2013 students more concretely, referring to the raw data of the responses, which reflects the weaker agency. Moreover, for supplementary analysis, the undefined response of the university students in 2013 was compared to the data of boys and girls at puberty today to determine whether the agency of the university students is reflective of their immaturity.

**METHOD**

*Participants and Procedure*

The same examiner administered the Rorschach inkblot test individually to the two groups described in Table 2.

*Data Analysis*

a) The comparison of the number of undefined responses for the two groups was performed using the Mann-Whitney U test (confidence levels < 0.05.)

b) Because undefined response is not an adequate answer for the Rorschach test, the subjects had to deal with the ambiguity of their answer when the examiner requested them to provide a clearer answer. As such an undefined response could only be indicated when they could pass through the demand of the test situation. Therefore, the undefined responses of university student group would be determined by the manner in which they dealt with the lack of clarity of their response.

| Table 2. Subject Characteristics of University student group and Puberty group |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| **N** | **Age** | **Period** |
| University student group | 47 (Male = 22, Female 25) | 18–24, $M_{age} = 20.4$, $SD_{age} = 2.2$ | 11/2003–12/2003 |
| Puberty group | 45 (Male = 31, Female 14) | 14–17, $M_{age} = 15.2$, $SD_{age} = 2.3$ | 4/2012–6/2014 |
RESULTS

Table 3 shows the result of analysis a) that the puberty group exhibited significantly fewer undefined responses than the university student group (p < .05). This result indicates that we cannot report that younger or more immature people provide a greater number of undefined responses.

The result of analysis b) is shown in the following discussion (Table 4).

DISCUSSION

Weak agency as a secondary acquired attitude

Because the Rorschach test provides the subjects with an ambiguous object, it is natural that the subjects would sometimes fail to provide a clear response. In the puberty

| Variable          | University | Puberty | * < .05 | ** < .01 |
|-------------------|------------|---------|---------|----------|
| Undefined Response| 1.0        | 0.0     | 1.9     | 1.7      | *        |

Table 4. The examples of undefined response of the university student group in 2013: no conflict for the lack of clarity

| Number | Subject | Undefined Response |
|--------|---------|--------------------|
| No. 1  | age 18 Male | Some kind of animal. Not a specific kind of animal. |
| No. 2  | age 19 Female | This is an insect. Is this a grasshopper? Umm, but it can be seen as a butterfly. Seeing only this part, it must be a snail. [Are they separated?] Rather than separated, I think there is no exact thing. It may be this, but it may be that. |
| No. 3  | age 19 Male | Some kind of animal that walks with four feet. I can imagine an animal like this. |
| No. 4  | age 19 Female | This is a squirrel or a monkey. Oops? Which is this? I hesitate to decide. If this is a squirrel, here is the tail. If this is a monkey, here is the tail. This is an unclear point. |
| No. 5  | age 19 Male | This is a bird or a person. I don’t know which. |
| No. 6  | age 19 Male | This is like a bat, or a butterfly. Something like that. I think the wing is too small for a butterfly, but I don’t know exactly. |
group, most of the responses exhibited a simple form without any adjective phrase, i.e., “a flower” or “a bear”, but we could find a greater number of unclear responses. However its form was not given by an undefined form but rather as an unidentifiable or unknown concept. For example, “monster I have never seen”, “weird ghost”, or “strange animal”. They express in a definite form their difficulties in grasping what the inkblot is. In other words, they recognize the ambiguity on one hand, but they do not try to focus any further and left it obscure on the other hand. Therefore, it can be said that the university student group possesses a more active consciousness to attempt to deal with the obscurity. Thus the undefined responses of the university student group might be the result of a secondary achieved attitude to approach an unclear object rather actively and consciously.

The examples of an undefined response

To illustrate the style of agency of the university student group, Table 4 describes examples of undefined responses.

Examples No. 1 and No. 2 in Table 4 are the cases in which the subjects did not attempt to explain or deal with the lack of clarity of the response without conflict. They were able to explain that their response was not clear but did not provide further explanation. No. 3 and No. 4 are the cases in which the subjects expressed the fact that they did not or could not decide what kind of notion it was. It appears as if they think that they are not responsible to decide what the inkblot is. No. 5 and No. 6 are cases in which the subjects expressed that they did not try to concern themselves in making a fixed response.

As seen above, the university students in 2013 exhibited undefined responses without confusion or perplexity. They clearly expressed the lack of clarity of their response and point this out without hesitation. Even when the examiner asked them to make their response clear, they did not try to fix their response. What these examples make clear is that the undefined responses of university students are not the result of confusion or difficulty in providing response, but rather the result of an intentionally adopted attitude. In other words, this is not to say that their agency itself is weak and immature, but that they have a unique type of agency so as to avoid judging by themselves consciously.

General Discussion

Weaker agency as a chosen attitude

The Rorschach test does not offer a clear-cut answer and demands that the subject find his or her way to connect an ambiguous inkblot with something more tangible. In such a situation, the subject has to be subjective to provide a specific idea for which no one can provide an objective answer. This is exactly the point to involve one’s agency. Study 1 makes it clear that the agency of the 2013 students group was milder than the 2003 student group. The 2013 group does not have any tendency to use their inner sensibility to catch movement but to react to rather direct incentives, such as color. The 2013 group shows more undefined responses than the 2003 group, which reflects weaker ego-function to decide, select, separate, and confirm. On one hand, their reactivity to the outer world is
high, whereas, their initiative to the outer object and inner creativity is not particularly active. Such tendencies are similar to those of ASD patients with respect to weaker agency and subjectivity. However, Study 2 indicated that the weaker agency of the 2013 university student group is not a result of their immaturity or low level of consciousness. In comparison to the puberty group that does not try to define the object but simply understand it as an unknown object, it can be said that university student group has the capacity to define the object. Undefined responses are not the result of confusion or difficulty in creating responses but are due to deeper interest and association with the object. The longer reaction time shown in Study 1 also supports this conclusion, as they take longer and select undefined responses.

**Interdependence-oriented relationship with the object**

Social psychological studies have pointed out that today’s Japanese youth have stronger interdependence-oriented tendencies than before. Asano (2011) indicated that Japanese adolescents have a situation oriented attitude and multi-dimensional self. Some social investigations have shown that the self-image of Japanese youth is not consistent with a single, integrated one, but is dependent on the situation. Here, “multi-dimensional” does not mean a rich and versatile identity. Japanese youth today show different faces depending upon the situation, but they do not feel that their various faces are linked together as a single self. The results of a questionnaire by a mobile communication research group that investigated the change of self-image among Japanese adolescents from 2001 to 2011 (Asano, 2014) support such a tendency among Japanese young people. To the question “It is not clear what kind of person I am” and “I intentionally show a different self”, the 2011 group exhibited higher points than the 2001 group (respectively, +4.6%, +6.9%). Moreover, the following result is interesting; the 2011 group scored lower points for the question item, “There is a real self and a false self” (–5.4%). If one has a coherent sense of self, one could feel the central and superficial side as a real self and a false self, respectively, even if the self is multi-sided. Doi (2009) pointed out that contemporary Japanese youth switch among plural solid “characters” according to the situation without any conflict. Their self does not have an integrated identity but is inseparably bound to the others or situation. The identity of the person is not closed in him or herself but is rather dependent on the situation. Based on these indications, the undefined response shown in the 2013 university student group can be regarded as a reflection of their interdependence-oriented relationships with the object. In the case of the Rorschach test, responsibility to define the object should originally belong to the subject. The subject holds a dominant position to the object, so that the function of agency can be assessed through the test. Now, the subject is not always the determining agency. The responsibility to decide what the object is might not be bound to the subject, but is located between the subject and the object. In other words, the meaning of the object is not limited within an individual agency, but is more open to the situation, which represents the interdependence-oriented relation of the 2013 students group with the object. Research of cultural psychology argue the interdependent agency in Japanese culture in contrast to independent agency in the West (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Interdependent agency seems weaker compared to independent one that can select and
delineate its object more clearly and definitively. The agency of the 2013 students is apparently weaker because they become more interdependent than the 2003 students. Based on the findings of previous studies, our results can further argue that the interdependence can be seen not only in interpersonal relationships but also in the people’s attitude to the objects.

Absence of Content

If today’s youth become still more dependent upon their relationships, as mentioned above, how do we regard the result of Study 1 that the 2013 group exhibited fewer M (human movement) responses than the 2003 group? The M response is one of the major indices for the Rorschach inkblot test, because it is good indicator of empathy. Has the sympathetic mind of today’s young people become poorer?

We can find the absence of content as another feature of current consciousness. Doi (2008) indicated that many young people build “always-on, connected relationships”. They chat through social networking services constantly, and tend to feel anxious when it is difficult for them to access their communication device, for example, during bath time. It is important for them to simply keep in touch with their friends, so that they do not need any particular message for their friends. There is no content but simply a relationship. Here, we can find another form of interdependence-oriented relationships.

Let us return to the discussion on the M response. The M response has been regarded as a sign of the sensibility for empathy, because the ability to imagine is necessary to feel some movement from a static object. However, in consideration of the style of today’s relationships, as mentioned above, it might not be essential for the intimate relationships of today’s youth to imagine and empathize with other’s inner movement. For always-on, connected relationships, it would be important to react immediately rather than to conceive of another’s inner movement. The high reactivity to color of the 2013 students group also supports this thesis. Japanese young people are not sympathetic but more conscious of direct noticeable stimulus than hidden inner activity when adapting themselves to the situation.

Conclusion and Further Research

The present study has taken up two features of today’s Japanese youth consciousness; “interdependence-oriented relationship with object” and “absence of content” through analysis of the Rorschach test performance. Projective techniques, including the Rorschach test, now tend to be regarded as invalid methods, especially in the United States (Lilienfeld, Wood, & Garb, 2000). However, as we discussed above, this conventional method is suitable to shed light on the change of consciousness. Even if the traditional way of analysis has some difficulties and problems, the invalidity itself can be regarded as a reflection of the change of attitude and consciousness today.

This paper focused on the change of agency in Japanese youth. However, as further research accumulates, we can investigate the same theme among other generations. Furthermore, because globalization, such as social network services, might lead people who live in different areas to a similar orientation and consciousness, cross-cultural research will likely contribute to interesting results and discussion.
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