Original Paper

Developing a Scale to Measure Sense of Resistance to *Azatoi* Behavior

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Abstract

The main purpose of the present study is to develop a scale measuring the sense of resistance to azatoi behavior in female Japanese university students. The participants in this study were 114 Japanese female university students and 18 items were rated. First, the factor structure of the Azatoi Behavior Resistance Scale (ABRS) was investigated using exploratory factor analysis. Then, the validity of the structure was examined using confirmatory factor analysis. The result of the analysis showed that the fit indices indicated the best fit for the four-factor model, and the four factors were gesture, physical contact, adjustment, and typical behavior.

Keywords

Azatoi Behavior Resistance Scale, university students, interpersonal relationship

1. Introduction

The word *azatoi* is a Japanese adjective that means clever, smart, unscrupulous, and crooked; as these meanings show, it has both positive and negative connotations. However, the meaning of the word is gradually changing, especially among adolescents and young adults. They interpret *azatoi* behavior as deliberate and calculated behavior to make positive impressions on others and consider it positive. *Azatoi* behavior is a very important social skill for young people to maintain relationships with each other. Self-presentation (Tylor, 2012) aims to convey a particular image of, or particular information about, the self to other people and can manifest as assertive or defensive, for instance. Assertive self-presentation actively asserts one's positive traits, whereas defensive self-presentation aims to keep people from having negative impressions of us. *Azatoi* behavior resembles assertive self-presentation in some ways, but *azatoi* behavior shapes not only one's image but also one's subsequent behaviors and relationships with others.

Paulhus (1993) stated that self-presentation can be unconscious and automatic or it can be deliberate, whereas automatic self-presentation is almost effortless and requires little thought, and deliberate self-presentation requires effort. Schlenker and Wowra (2003) also referred to automatic impression management as repeating deliberate self-presentation efforts until they become habitual and then automatic. *Azatoi* behavior differs from both automatic self-presentation and automatic impression management in that it is not unconscious or automatic but rather is targeted at one purpose: controlling others' impressions of oneself.

In this study, we define *azatoi* behaviors as deliberate and calculated behaviors to control others' impressions of oneself, but the sense of what is *azatoi* differs for different people. Sato (2018) found that excessive self-presentation could cause stress and be a risk factor for mental illness. The concept of *azatoi* originally had negative connotations, and many young people still feel ambivalent about it. Generally, the image of *azatoi* behavior is positive among young people, but some are resistant to it. Therefore, measuring resistance to *azatoi* behavior is useful for understanding the new communication style among young people. The main purpose of the present study was to develop a scale measuring the sense of resistance toward *azatoi* behavior in female Japanese university students.

2. Method

2.1 Item Selection

We interviewed eight female university students to ask them to list behaviors they considered *azatoi*. We used these as the initial items for the scale we aimed to develop.

2.2 Participants

The participants in this study were 114 female Japanese university students (mean age = 20.0, SD = 2.97).

2.3 Procedure

To create the first version of the *Azatoi* Behavior Resistance Scale (ABRS), we used 18 of the items that the initial eight students had listed. The study participants rated each of the items on a 5-point Likert-type scale from 1 (disagree) to 5 (agree). We first examined the factor structure of the ABRS using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and then checked the validity using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and calculated Cronbach's alpha (α) to determine the scale's reliability.

3. Result

The EFA results indicated a four-factor model as the best fit; the factors were gestures, physical contact, adjustment, and typical behavior, and the factor loadings ranged between 0.386 and 0.998 for gestures, 0.361 and 0.850 for physical contact, 0.652 and 0.702 for adjustment, and 0.423 and 0.626 for typical behaviors (Table 1). We selected the three suitable items with high loadings in each factor for the next step. The model's fit indexes were all acceptable (CFI = 0.952, RMSEA = 0.064), and all paths for each

item were significant ($p < 0.01$). Cronbach's α for the subscales were 0.73 for gestures, 0.83 for physical contact, 0.75 for adjustment, and 0.57 for typical behaviors. Figure 1 shows the results of the ABRS.

Table 1. EFA Results for the *Azatoi* Behavior Resistance Scale

		F1	F2	F3	F4
F1: Gesture					
6	Tilting one's head to show oneself in a cute way	.998	-.258	-.215	.188
9	Increasing hand movement	.696	-.021	-.028	.058
13	Speaking in a cute way	.574	-.125	-.058	-.029
18	Turning up the tone of voice	.500	.152	.181	-.152
10	Putting on a cute act	.476	-.097	.205	-.116
15	Introducing photogenic foods	.471	.134	.136	-.054
12	Glancing upward when talking	.386	.381	.160	-.278
F2: Physical contact					
14	Touching others' bodies when no one is looking	-.011	.850	.018	-.074
16	Touching others' bodies for no reason	-.188	.826	.168	.045
1	Touching other's hands when talking	.182	.753	-.257	.066
3	Making eye contact with others	-.083	.428	-.007	.074
5	Bringing one's face closer	.336	.361	-.009	.258
F3: Adjustment					
17	Always responding with a smile	-.035	-.061	.702	-.039
8	Always responding positively	-.105	-.004	.696	.190
11	Talking about topics that are appealing to others	.151	.075	.652	.082
F4: Typical behavior					
2	Separating foods for others	-.154	.111	-.032	.626
7	Asking others to open tight bottle caps	.297	.118	.031	.427
4	Swinging one's legs when sitting in a chair	.146	-.097	.210	.423
	F1		.637	.661	.263
	F2			.517	.286
	F3				.172

The CFA confirmed the EFA factor structure as shown in Table 1. Among the scale items, the gestures, such as tilting the head or speaking cutely, aim to appeal to others and be non-threatening. Physical

3

contact items such as touching people's hands while talking or touching people for no reason aim to demonstrate physical intimacy. Always responding positively and with a smile indicate efforts to adjust to others, and typical behaviors such as asking someone to remove a difficult bottle cap or swinging one's legs when sitting in a chair are popular among Japanese female university students for showing themselves as cute or *kawaii*.
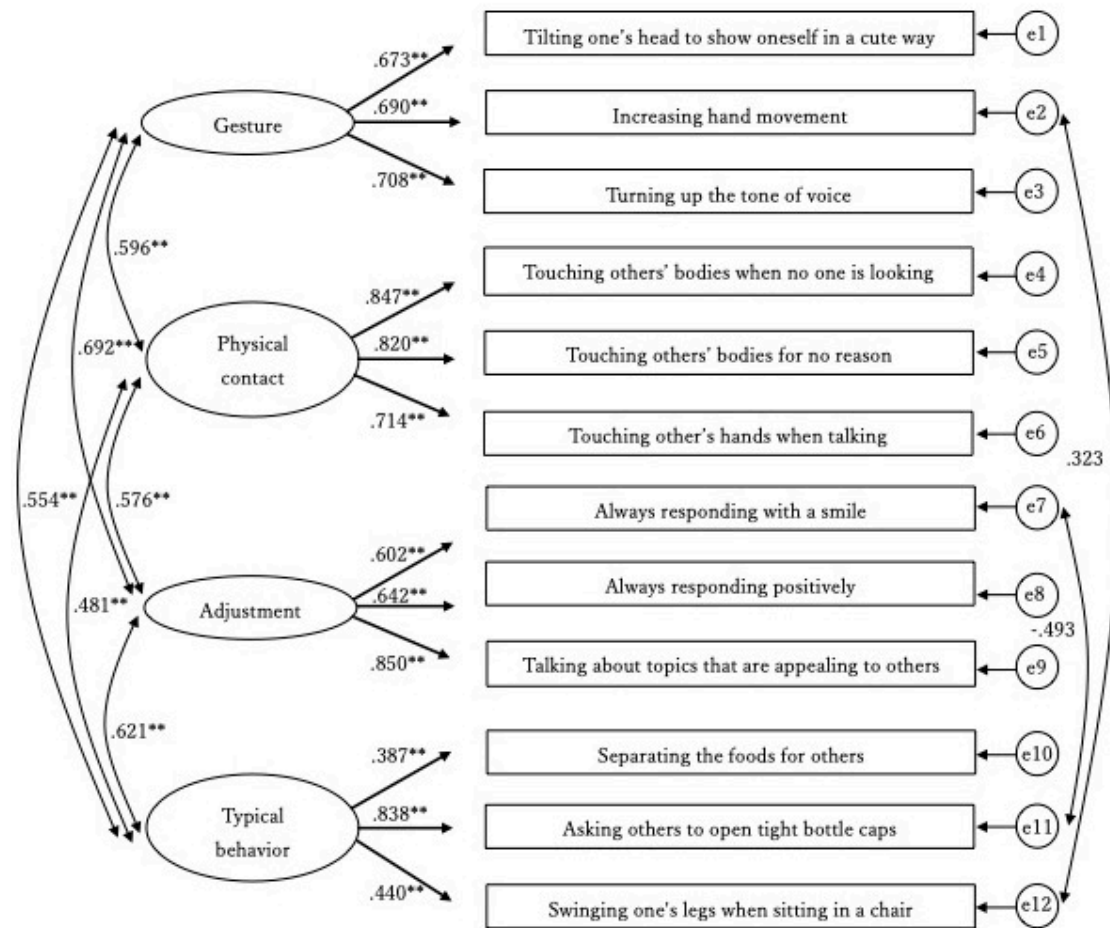

Figure 1. CFA Findings for the *Azatoi* Behavior Resistance Scale

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The main purpose of this study was to develop a new scale for measuring *azatoi* behavior resistance. The analysis results including fit indices indicated the best fit from a four-factor model with the following factors: gestures, physical contact, adjustment, and typical behaviors. As we mentioned earlier, different generations define *azatoi* differently, but we identified a consensus among today's generation of university students of what they now believe constitutes *azatoi* behavior; future researchers could compare understandings of *azatoi* behavior across generations. In addition, in this

4

study, we focused on female students, but *azatoi* behavior is deeply concerned with interpersonal relationships, especially with the opposite sex; therefore, researchers could also examine men's interpretations of these behaviors. Finally, the concept of *azatoi* is quite specific in Japanese culture; future researchers could examine whether it or similar concepts apply to interpersonal relationships in other countries and cultures.

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