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# Correlation between Physical Therapist Image and Motive for Entering School

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**Abstract** The present study was designed to clarify the correlation between physical therapist image and motives for entering school. The internal consistency of scales for physical therapist image and motives for entering school were Cronbach's coefficient 0.88 and 0.87 respectively. We found that physical therapist image was related to motives for entering school ( $r=0.38$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), and that correlations determined by gender were absent. However difference by gender was found to be significant for motive for entering school ( $p=0.007$ ), and this result is partially in accord with previous studies.

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**Key Words** : Physical therapist image, Motive for entering school

It is often said that university students in Japan are comparatively passive and enervated<sup>1)</sup>, and they are occasionally criticised for lack of enthusiasm and for talking in class. Such circumstances are also observed in schools of physical therapy.

An image is a vague but wide-ranging concept including thinking, belief, expectation, attitude, desire, impression etc. Generally, human beings consider images as the starting point of thinking. In consequence, social actions are discharged through a complex of thinking and images, and images are held to play primary roles in this process. On the other hand, it is generally recognized that motives for entering school are affected by gender, academic record, image of vocation, identity, and the human influence of surrounding people.

The present study was designed to clarify the correlations between physical therapist image and motives for entering school, an important facet of students' awareness and attitude. We believe that the results of this investigation can contribute significantly to the delivery of better instruction.

## Subjects and Methods

The subjects were students at three schools located within a single prefecture in Japan. All newly enrolled students in the three departments of physical therapy were invited to participate in this study. A total of 102 students (41 male, mean age

$19.2\pm 1.8$  years; and 61 female, mean age  $18.8\pm 2.0$  years) participated. Of the subjects, 61 were given a second questionnaire to investigate test-retest reliability after one week.

The physical therapist image scale was measured using a semantic differential method devised by Osgood. The semantic scale for physical therapist image is made up of 40 symbolically paired words chosen based on previous study<sup>2)</sup>. The scale uses a seven-step rating for each of the 40 items. The correlations between test and retest scores were 0.34-0.76 ( $p<0.01$ ). Item analysis resulted in significant item - total score correlations for 36 of the items, ranging from 0.25 to 0.63 ( $p<0.01$ ). Four of the items showed no significant correlations to total score, and the other 36 items were adopted. Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient was 0.88 for the subjects in this study.

The scale for assessing motives for entering school was developed by Fuchigami<sup>3)</sup> and is designed to measure fundamental awareness and attitude in relation to decision-making for school entrance. We adopted a shorter version of this scale, consisting of 31 items and using a four-step rating for each item. Test - retest reliability coefficients were 0.28 - 0.91 ( $p<0.05$ ). Item analysis yielded significant item - total score correlations for 30 of the items, ranging from 0.25 to 0.64 ( $p<0.05$ ). Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient was 0.87.

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Item analysis for physical therapist image was assessed by means of Pearson's product-moment coefficients of correlation between the total score and the subscores for each item. The internal consistency of the physical therapist image subscales was computed using Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient. The same type of calculations were performed on the scores for motives for entering school. The difference by gender for the physical therapist image and motives for entering school were compared using the Student's t-test.

All statistical analyses were performed with SPSS software. Statistical significance of data was accepted if  $P < 0.05$ .

### Results and Discussion

Correlation coefficients between the physical therapist image and motives for entering school is shown in Table 1. The score representing physical therapist image correlated significantly with the score reflecting motives for entering school score ( $r=0.38$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The correlations determined by gender were similar,  $r=0.35$ ,  $p < 0.05$  for male and  $r=0.36$ ,  $p < 0.01$  for female.

In this study, we focused on the correlations between physical therapist image and motives for entering school. In general, an image is a vague concept, and various information is involved in image formation. We found that physical therapist image is related to the formation of motives for entering school. Furthermore, the implication was irrespective of sex. This result suggests that it is important for us to better acquaint high school student with fundamental information on physical therapy.

Table 2 presents scores for physical therapist image and motives for entering school (mean, SD, and p-value) determined by gender for the subjects. The difference by gender was found to be statistically significant for motive for entering school ( $p=0.007$ ), while the comparison for physical therapist image score was not significant.

It was suggested that there are few differences by gender concerning the factors provided for image formation. This result, partially in relation to difference by gender for motive for entering school was in accord with a previous study<sup>3)</sup>. Previous

**Table 1** Pearson's product-moment coefficients of correlation between physical therapist image and motive for entering school

	overall(n=102)	male(n=41)	female(n=61)
correlation coefficient(r)	0.38 **	0.35 *	0.36 **

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$

**Table 2** Total score for physical therapist image and motive for entering school, determined by gender

	male(n=41)	female(n=61)	p-value
physical therapist image	87.5 ± 14.4	93.5 ± 16.3	ns
motive for entering school	55.9 ± 10.9	61.5 ± 19.5	0.007

researchers have found that motives for entering school are affected by academic record, identity, image of vocation, and the human influence of surrounding people, in addition to gender. It was also guessed in this study that these factors somewhat affected motive formation.

Research by means of correlation analysis as in this study seeks a general trend by marking a specific group. Thus, these results should be interpreted with caution in the counseling of individual students.

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## 新入学生の理学療法士イメージと進学志望動機との関連

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**要 旨** 長崎県内3校の理学療法学科に入学した新1年生102名を対象に、理学療法士に対するイメージと進学志望動機との関連について検討した。理学療法士イメージは学生の進学志望動機と性別に関係なく関連性があった。理学療法についての啓蒙活動の重要性の一端を示唆するものであった。また、進学志望動機については規定要因の関わりに性差を認めたが、その内容については今後の検討課題である。

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