

A CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARISON OF ATTITUDES TOWARD ROBOTS AMONG A JAPANESE AND US UNIVERSITY FACULTY USING IMPLICIT AND EXPLICIT MEASURES

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A CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARISON OF ATTITUDES TOWARD ROBOTS AMONG A JAPANESE AND US UNIVERSITY FACULTY USING IMPLICIT AND EXPLICIT MEASURES

[Vasudevan, Sandosh K.](#)



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Abstract:

ABSTRACT Vasudevan, Sandosh K. MS, Indiana University, May, 2008. A Cross-Cultural Comparison of Attitudes toward Robots among a Japanese and US University Faculty using Implicit and Explicit Measures. Major Professor: Karl F. MacDorman. Japan has more robots than any other country, and robots play a role in many areas of Japanese society, including manufacturing, healthcare, and entertainment. However, there have been relatively few cross-cultural studies to examine Japan's robot-oriented culture, and the studies there have been tend to suffer from a self-selection bias by sampling among participants who are visiting robotics exhibits or robot-related news groups. In addition, no studies have considered implicit measures of attitudes toward robots, which are indicative of uncontrolled cognitive processes, thus reducing self-presentational bias. This study presents a cross-cultural comparison of attitudes toward robots at a US and Japanese faculty using explicit and implicit measures. The results of this study indicate Japanese faculty had many more robot-related experiences than the US faculty. Although US participants reported a slightly stronger preference for peo-

ple than the Japanese participants did, and Japanese participants reported slightly warmer feelings toward robots, implicit measures showed virtually no difference between the groups. Both groups had significantly more pleasant associations with humans than with robots. Both the Japanese and US faculty reported people as being more dangerous than robots but implicitly associated robots more strongly with weapons than people. This gap was bigger for the US faculty. It may indicate a conflict between rational fears of people and unconscious fears of robots. Given the higher prevalence of violent crime in the US, people are a known danger, but the danger of robots is harder to assess owing to a lack of experience with them.

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