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## Network Diversity and Attitude towards Minorities in Japan\*\*

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### Abstract

This paper aims to explore social processes enhancing tolerant attitudes towards foreigners in ethnically homogeneous Japan. The influence of developing diverse networks in class and participating in voluntary associations will be examined. Based on analyses of a national sample of 2,160 individuals from the JGSS-2008, the results showed that knowing people in wider varieties of middle-class occupations, along with having a foreign acquaintance, is associated with a positive attitude towards minorities. Membership in an association is also positively associated with tolerance. We find that this positive association between participation in voluntary association and tolerance is mediated by network diversity, either through developing a variety of middle-class and working class ties or by getting to know foreigners in voluntary activities. Though the most consistent and strongest factor associated with tolerance is having any acquaintance with a foreign background, this study shows that we should pay more attention to a varying network-mediated process affecting tolerance in Japan.

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Tolerance for those who do not share cultural values or norms has grown to be an essential quality in today's society. In particular, developing positive and welcoming attitudes toward foreigners and accepting them as local residents, coworkers, and classmates, as well as building companionship and trust, have become crucial issues in the era of globalization (Yasuda, 2010).

The number of foreign nationals in Japan exceeded two million at the end of 2005, and reached its historical peak in 2008. Due to economic recessions, starting after the Lehman Shock, the number has recently decreased. However, the composition of Japanese society has diversified up to the present. In addition to the Chinese and Koreans living in Japan since before World War II, the number of "newcomers" from a variety of countries and regions – such as Brazil, Peru, the Philippines, and Vietnam – has increased.

In facing Japan's shifting realities, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication finally issued its "Multicultural Coexistence Promotion Plan" in March 2006. It proposed that Japan's municipal and prefectural government needed to enhance support systems for foreigners. This plan clearly highlighted the responsibility owed by local governments, as the main service provider and protector of human rights, to foreign residents (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication, 2006). The plan also encouraged Japanese residents, as the members of the host country, to nurture a more accommodating and understanding attitude towards foreigners.

Though xenophobia has never been a serious social issue in Japan,<sup>1)</sup> a great contrast to situations in Europe, distant and puzzled feelings towards "Others" have always existed in the rather homogeneous ethnic society, and a sense of exclusion against foreigners persists. According to a survey of attitudes towards foreigners, administered by the City of Osaka in 2009, the result showed that 35.2% of the respondents had negative images of foreigners, such as "do not feel close to foreigners due to language barriers and differences in customs" and "many of them do not follow social rules and are embarrassing." In contrast, those who have positive images, such as "We need them for Japan's future development" or "they promote globalization and make a society more diverse," remained at 25.8% (City of Osaka, 2009).

How can these public attitudes be altered, and what processes can facilitate tolerance towards foreigners? Previous studies on tolerance suggested that

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1) Recently, hate speeches against foreigners and demonstrations by right-wing groups are becoming a serious social concern in Japan as well.

experiencing a minority's position helps us to understand the stress or loneliness foreigners might face. By travelling abroad or studying overseas, people are presented with these challenges, and people with such experiences were found to have a higher degree of tolerance towards minorities (Suzuki, 2007). However, in recent years, the number of people travelling abroad is leveling off, and the number of students who study abroad has continuously dropped, from about 82,000 at its peak in 2004 to 58,000 in 2010 (MEXT, 2013). Though the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication indicated attitudinal shifts as one of the key factors for Japan's change into a multicultural society, opportunities for direct contact with various languages and cultures have been in decline when we need them most.

On the other hand, recent studies on tolerance pay more attention to the effect of the personal networks that the respondents' construct and become embedded in. Having direct and friendly contacts with foreigners is surely related to a higher degree of tolerance (Kanegae, 2001; Suzuki, 2007). In addition to that, those with a mixed composition of friends, in terms of distance or gender, also tend to have more open attitudes toward minorities and to be less prejudiced (Ito, 2000; Tanabe, 2001). Studies in North America have also found that class diversity in social networks is associated with positive and negative attitudes towards immigrants (Côté & Erickson, 2009).

Furthermore, Social Capital Theory has suggested that participation in associational activities helps to build a wider variety of weak and diverse ties, which enhance tolerance for diverse political views and social norms (Putnam, 2000). However, not all kinds of associations facilitate tolerance (Stolle & Rochon, 1998; Cigler & Joslyn, 2002; Côté & Erickson, 2009). Results vary depending on the national context, history, and policy, and in some cases, associational participation may discourage tolerance (Iglic, 2010). In any case, associational participation is considered to provide an important place, where people can form networks and can influence other people's attitudes.

As we have discussed, Japan has experienced the expansion of its foreign population during the last three decades. However, as a proportion of the population, this is still rather small. Even during its height in 2008, it consisted of only 1.74% of the population. Though the population is undergoing a gradual transformation, its level of cultural and ethnic heterogeneity is still limited in Japan, and conformity can be easily reinforced. In such a society, what kinds of social processes might enhance tolerance toward foreigners? By examining the association among people's network diversity, associational participation, and tolerance, this paper aims to explore this question.

## Literature Review

### Network Variety and Tolerance

Previous studies on tolerance towards foreigners and ethnic minorities have suggested that direct contact with them greatly contributes to mutual understanding and weakens the feeling of threat among the host population. Developing closer, active relationships – such as being friends, relatives, or participating together in social activities – are, in particular, found to have a more positive influence on easing perceived threats. Support for opinions such as “The society will be more diverse,” “It will lead to the revitalization of depopulated areas,” and “Prejudice against different cultures will decrease,” are higher among those with foreign acquaintances (Nagayoshi, 2007).

Studies have also suggested that the influence of network diversity on tolerance is not limited to racial and ethnic diversity. Tolerance can be enhanced by accessing any kind of heterogeneous network with different opinions and values through daily interaction. For example, when individuals are embedded in cohesive networks of kin and neighbors, it strengthens the pressure to conform to the shared norms of the group. As a result, their tolerance for nontraditional values or norms weakens. Thus, Ito (1997) found that tolerance toward non-traditional marriage or family formation is lower among those embedded in tightly knit, homogeneous kin-networks. On the other hand, among respondents who have long-distance friends (friends who live more than an hour away), the conservative values that are supported by relatives or neighbors weaken, leading to more tolerant attitudes toward various forms of marriage and family formations. Regarding anti-immigrant attitudes, Ito (2000) also showed that both a larger network size and long-distance friends are associated with tolerance.

Tanabe (2001) further explored the association between network diversity and tolerance. Network diversity is measured by various aspects of network composition, such as the gender ratio, age range, and type of relationships, for example, multiplex composition of relatives, friends, neighbors, and coworkers. Analyses demonstrated that, for women, having networks that are more diverse in gender and relational types contributed to a more tolerant attitude towards foreigners. The reason is that diverse contacts can expose women to more open and varied opinions and values that are otherwise rather traditional and normative.

Network variety has also been measured by class diversity, accessed through a person’s networks by using a position generator. Social class still has a great influence in our society, affecting our values, cultural tastes, consumption, social relations, health, and even the length of our lives. Thus, class diversity that is accessed through networks can be a reliable indicator for network diversity

(Erickson, 1996).

Côté and Erickson (2009) argued that there exist two contrasting processes through which network diversity may influence tolerance: Contact Theory and Social Influence Theory. First, Contact Theory suggests that interaction with many kinds of people may provide opportunities for learning a wider variety of values and cultural norms, which in turn enhances one's understanding of other's perspectives, feelings, and contributions. This, in turn, leads to an enhanced tolerance toward heterogeneous others. Contact Theory thus suggests that any kind of contact – either with those in a higher social class such as doctors, lawyers, professors or those in a lower social class – can provide richer, network-mediated, learning opportunities.

Second, Social Influence Theory is more concerned with the kinds of contacts with which people interact. Influence flows through networks. Personal networks affect the kinds of information that circulate among network members, and network members consciously and unconsciously impose pressure on each other to conform to the ideas and values that they appreciate. Therefore, Social Influence Theory suggests that the kinds of people an individual associates with do matter. Associating with people with negative and prejudiced attitudes toward minorities exposes individuals to such views and could enhance their own negative attitudes.

Côté and Erickson (2009) showed that knowing a wider variety of middle-class contacts contributed to greater tolerance towards immigrants in Canada. However, diverse contacts in working-class jobs were associated with negative attitudes toward those contacts, suggesting Social Influence Theory. The kinds of people whom we are associated with do matter. Those who work in white-collar occupations held in a high regard are more educated and less likely to be prejudiced due to their education. They are also exposed to less competition from foreigners. On the other hand, blue-collar workers tend to be less educated, and more threatened by the possibility of losing their job from intense competition with foreigners. These factors may contribute to a more tolerant attitude toward foreigners. Therefore, associating with many people with low-occupational status ties might enhance their anti-immigration feelings and lowered degree of tolerance.

Based on these previous findings, we will test how class diversity in networks might be associated with tolerance in a Japanese context. We will examine the following two competing hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 1–1:* Those who have a wider variety of contacts in both white-collar and blue-collar occupations tend to show a greater degree of tolerance toward foreigners (Contact Theory).

*Hypothesis 1–2:* Those who have a wider variety of contacts in blue-collar occupations tend to have a lower degree of tolerance toward foreigners. Only a wider variety of white-collar contacts will contribute to tolerance (Social

Influence Theory).

### **Association and Tolerance**

Putnam (1993) has argued that voluntary associations can act as a “seedbed of civic virtue” or as “schools of democracy.” Participation in voluntary associations, from neighborhood committees to interest groups, provide us with the opportunity to form social capital by meeting with diverse people with different lifestyles, political views, and social interests. We can receive new stimulation and enjoy cultural learning, developing our tolerance (Putnam, 2000). However, there are two different types of social capital: bonding and bridging. Bonding social capital tends to connect similar people with strong ties, furthering in-group cohesion and trust. This could lead to limited in-group tolerance, and a stronger sense of exclusion towards outsiders may emerge. Bridging social capital, on the other hand, connects diverse groups of people, cross-cutting social divides, facilitating interaction across social cleavages, and creating mutual acceptance and tolerance among different social groups (Putnam & Goss, 2002). Therefore, the types of social capital they form depend on the structure and composition of the association people participate in.

Studies in Europe and North America have already confirmed that membership heterogeneity and the level of democratic management vary across associations, and that not all types of associations facilitate social capital. For example, involvement in labor unions, farm co-ops, churches, veteran’s associations, and ethnic organizations lower moral tolerance, rather than non-involvement. In contrast, becoming involved in a political association, professional association, and literature/culture association enhances tolerance (Ciger & Joslyn, 2002: 18–19). Stolle and Rochon (1998) pointed out the importance of the associational structure. When members are homogeneous and form vertical stratified relationships, participation in such associations does not enhance tolerance. Ciger and Joslyn (2002) further proposed that being involved in many different types of associations, rather than in a single association, facilitates tolerance, since the latter may only connect participants to a homogeneous group of people with shared interests. In Japan, Ikeda and Richey (2009) also suggested that individuals with active memberships in plural associations-such as neighborhood associations, alumni associations, PTA, farm-coops, business associations, cooperative societies (co-op), social services, religious groups-showed a higher degree of moral tolerance. However, the relation between membership in associations and tolerance toward foreigners is less explored in Japan. Thus, in this study the first step is the exploration of the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 2:* Membership in any association will contribute to a higher degree of tolerance, rather than non-participation.

## Data

### JGSS 2008

By analyzing attitudes toward foreigners in Japan, this study examines the 2008 Japan General Social Survey, conducted from the beginning of October through December 2008. JGSS-2008 selected a sample using a stratified random sampling and used both interview and placement (self-administered) methods for each respondent ( $n=4220$ ). There are two forms of self-administered questionnaires: Form A and Form B. Form A was randomly distributed to half of the sample ( $n=2060$ , response rate 58.2%) while Form B was administered to the rest ( $n=2160$ , response rate 60.6%). This article uses variables from the interview questionnaire and Form B.

### Variables

**Dependent Variable.** JGSS 2008 involves six questions related with attitudes towards foreigners in Japan (see Table 1). In this study, we develop a tolerance scale by combining these six items. The first item asks about the respondent's willingness to welcome more foreigners ("Are you for or against an increase in the number of foreigners in your community?"). Those who answered "for" are coded 1 and those who chose "against" was coded 0. Positive attitude toward accepting more

**Table 1 Measures for Tolerance of Foreigners**

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1. Are you for or against an increase in the number of foreigners in your community? 1 = For, 0 = Against
2. Would you like foreign workers to increase or decrease in Japan? 1 = Increase greatly, Increase some, Stay the same, 0 = Decrease some, Decrease greatly
3. Would you like foreign brides to increase or decrease in Japan? 1 = Increase greatly, Increase some, Stay the same, 0 = Decrease some, Decrease greatly
4. How would you feel about working together with people from the following countries or regions? Can you accept people who are from each of the following countries or regions: China, South Korea, Taiwan, South East Asia, Europe, and North America? 1 = Yes to all six countries and regions, 0 = The rest
5. How would you feel about having neighbors who are from the following countries or regions? Can you accept the people who are from each of the following countries or regions: China, South Korea, Taiwan, South East Asia, Europe, and North America? 1 = Yes to all six countries and regions, 0 = The rest
6. How would you feel about having close relatives who are from the following countries or regions? Can you accept the people who are from each of the following countries or regions: China, South Korea, Taiwan, South East Asia, Europe, and North America? 1 = Yes to all six countries and regions, 0 = The rest

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Note.  $\alpha = .804$

foreign workers (“Would you like foreign workers to increase or decrease in Japan?”) and foreign brides (“Would you like foreign brides to increase or decrease in Japan?”) are also included. To arrange the units of analysis to make a scale, those who answered, “increase greatly,” “increase some,” and “stay the same,” are coded 1, representing a more welcoming attitude toward foreigners. Those who would like foreigners to “decrease some” or “decrease greatly” are coded 0.

JGSS-2008 also involves questions about the degrees of acceptance towards foreigners in three different relations: working together, living as neighbors, and becoming close relatives. It questions acceptance of those from the following six countries and regions: China, South Korea, Taiwan, South East Asia, Europe, and North America (USA and Canada). We found that a variance in the degree of acceptance towards foreigners from different regions exists. For example, the Chinese and Koreans are the two least accepted groups, while those from Europe and North America are the most accepted group among the Japanese.

Considering the varying attitudes toward foreigners from various countries and regions, only those who answered that they “accept” foreign workers from all six countries and regions are coded 1, representing a higher degree of tolerance, and the rest are coded as 0, representing less degree of tolerance. Acceptance of foreigners as neighbors, and as relatives, is also coded according to the same procedure.

As the final step, the scale of tolerance towards foreigners is constructed by adding the scores of all six items. The scale ranges from 0 to 6. Higher values represent a more positive and tolerant attitude toward foreigners. The scale has good reliability (Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .804$ ).

**Control Variables.** Controlling for the effects of other factors on tolerance, we will examine the effects of individual attributes, such as gender, age, education, and occupation. Gender is coded 1 for female, 0 for male. Age is measured in years of age, ranging from 20 to 89 years old. Level of education is a dummy variable, coded 1 for those who have completed post-secondary education and 0 for those with less than a high school education. According to the SSM Classification of Industries and Occupations, occupation is coded into three dummy variables. Clerical, sales, and service workers are grouped into “lower-level white-collar”; skilled and semi-skilled manual workers, unskilled manual workers, and agriculture, forestry, and fishery are grouped into “blue-collar and agriculture”; unemployed individuals, housewives, and students are grouped into “unemployed,” with “upper white-collar” (including professionals and administrators) as the omitted category in our multivariate tables.

**Measures of Network Variety.** Two measures of network variety are included in this analysis. It has been suggested that people have a more tolerant attitude towards foreigners when they directly associate with foreigners in the course of their



daily life (Kanegae, 2001; Suzuki, 2007). Thus, this study also takes into consideration whether the respondents have any foreign acquaintances in their social networks. JGSS-2008 asks the respondent whether they have any acquaintances from abroad. Those who have no foreign acquaintances are coded 0, and those with any foreign acquaintances are coded 1, representing those with more heterogeneous social networks.

Following the procedure used by Côté and Erickson, this study also develops another measure of network variety by using a position generator (Côté & Erickson, 2009). In JGSS-2008, respondents were asked whether they have any acquaintance in ten kinds of occupational categories, varying by occupational prestige. These ten occupational categories include legislators, senior officials, managers, professionals, technicians or associate professionals, clerical support workers, service or sales workers, skilled agricultural, forestry or fishery workers, craft or related trade workers, plant or machine operators or assemblers, and elementary occupations.

Though JGSS-2012 lists the occupation, JGSS-2008 only includes the list of occupational categories, which makes it more difficult to distinguish white-collar contacts from blue-collar contacts. To clarify the division between middle-class contacts and working-class contacts, we run a factor analysis (See Table 2).

Two factors are distinguished: a factor associated with middle-class-ties and a factor associated with working-class ties. Based on the result, we created two kinds of measurements for network diversity. Middle-class network diversity is measured by the number of middle-class occupations which the respondent reported knowing. Middle-class occupations include managers, professionals, technicians or associate professionals, and clerical support workers. The value ranges from 0 to 4. Working-class network diversity is measured by the number of working-class occupations in

**Table 2 Factor Analysis of Acquaintances in Ten Kinds of Occupations**

Acquaintances	Factor 1	Factor 2
Legislators, senior officials	0.324	0.371
Managers	0.814	0.065
Professionals	0.798	0.103
Technicians or associate professionals	0.642	0.185
Clerical support workers	0.702	0.220
Service or sales workers	0.416	0.431
Skilled agricultural, forestry or fishery workers	0.008	0.659
Craft or related trade workers	0.139	0.715
Plant or machine operators or assemblers	0.146	0.758
Elementary occupations	0.257	0.647
Factor Contribution	3.575	1.381
Rate of Factor Contribution (%)	25.99	23.58

which the respondent reported knowing people who are service or sales workers,<sup>2)</sup> skilled agricultural workers, forestry or fishery workers, craft or related trade workers, plant or machine operators or assemblers, and elementary occupations. This value ranges from 0 to 5.<sup>3)</sup>

**Measures of Associational Activities.** JGSS-2008 asks the respondents about their associational membership in the following eight associations: political associations, trade associations, social service groups, citizens' movements, consumer cooperative groups, religious groups, sports groups and clubs, hobby groups and clubs (chorus, photography, hiking, etc.), and cooperative societies (co-op). Past studies have indicated that those individuals who are active in association are more likely to have a higher degree of political tolerance (Ikeda & Richey, 2009). However, JGSS-2008 merely asks about membership. Thus, we can only explore whether membership in any kind of association is associated with increased tolerance towards foreigners.

As we have discussed in the Literature Review, previous research also found that membership in multiple associations, rather than membership in a single association, is associated with higher degree of tolerance towards minorities. Therefore, we also tried to construct a continuous variable to measure the influence of plural memberships. However, based on exploratory analysis of JGSS-2008, we found that in Japan the number of people who are involved in more than one association is quite limited. Therefore, for the multivariate analysis, we created a dummy variable: 1 for those who participate in any association and 0 for those with no membership.

We run a series of multiple regression analyses for individual attributes, networks, and associations, alone and in combination. Each set of possible predictors is added to the model in order to explore the predictors that affect tolerant attitudes toward foreigners. First, the effects of individual attributes will be tested. Then network diversity and association membership will be added to the models.

## Results

### Individual Attributes

First, we examine the association between individual attributes and tolerant attitudes towards foreigners. As we can see in Model 1 of Table 3, those with post-secondary education are more likely to have a tolerant attitude toward foreigners.

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- 2) Although service and sales workers are loaded at the middle level on both factors, we categorized them into working-class ties from the theoretical point of view.
  - 3) Legislators and senior officials are excluded from the variables since they loaded low in both factors.

Since direct contact with foreigners in a neighborhood or work environment is limited in Japan, education could be an important source for facilitating openness toward minorities.

In a previous study, age has a learning effect that makes older people more accepting of minorities. However, this does not apply to our study. Age has a negative association with tolerant attitudes, meaning that, in Japan, younger people are more accepting and have more tolerant attitudes. Though younger people tend to be more educated, the effect of age remains negative and significant even after we control for the effect of education. No correlation at all exists between gender and tolerance for minorities in Japan.

We also find that people's attitudes toward foreigners vary with their occupations. Compared with upper white-collar professionals, which is an omitted category, the coefficients for all three occupational categories show a significant, negative association. Blue-collar workers are the least tolerant group of the three. Professionals are more educated, and may have more frequent contacts with foreigners through their business, travel, or study abroad. They may also, compared to the members of other occupational categories, have foreign acquaintances. We will examine the network-mediated effect of occupational categories later, by controlling for network variables.

### **Network Variety and Tolerance**

Associating with different kinds of people exposes us to new information, culture, and values, all of which widen our worldview. Thus, we can anticipate that associating with a diverse group of any kind of people will help us to develop a more tolerant attitude toward others different from ourselves (Contact Theory). However, Social Influence Theory suggests that different kinds of network diversity will have different kinds of influences on tolerance. For example, Côté and Erickson (2009) found that only diversified ties to middle-class people will influence tolerance, and knowing a variety of working-class people in various occupations only led to a less tolerant attitude toward minorities in Canada.

Our study of the JGSS-2008 found slightly different results in Japanese context. As shown in Model 2 of Table 3, only networks with a diversity of middle-class contacts have a significant, positive association with a higher degree of tolerance. Thus, we can argue that associating with a wider-variety of middle-class contacts do have strong positive social influence. Diverse ties to working-class jobs also have a positive association with tolerance, but that association is insignificant.

These results might suggest that in addition to social influence from middle-class professionals with a higher education, a diverse association itself also may have some influence on tolerance.

Since Japanese people tend to conform to similar values and culture, those who maintain diversified ties in various social spheres are more likely to be exposed to diversity, and may be more likely to accommodate those differences. We will explore this association by controlling for individual attributes.

### **Associations and Tolerance**

Model 3 of Table 3 shows a positive association between membership in any association and tolerance. Although JGSS-2008 merely surveys membership, rather than the degree of active participation, involvement in any association has a significant, strong association with a higher degree of tolerance, as previous research has suggested.

JGSS-2008 did not ask the respondent about the member composition of their associations in terms of age, gender, occupations, or educational level. However, we can expect an association's activities may bring opportunities to meet new people, ideas, and culture through these networks. Thus, a positive association between membership in an association and tolerance may operate through the network-diversifying role played by associations. In the next set of multivariate analyses, we will look at this network-mediated influence of an association's membership.

### **Multivariate Analysis**

In the next step, we examine the possible mediating role of network diversity by comparing Model 4 (individual attributes and network diversity) of Table 3 to Model 1 (individual attributes only). By adding network variables, the significant and strongly positive effect of a post-secondary education weakens. However, network diversity in middle-class ties remains significant even after controlling for individual attributes. Knowing foreign acquaintances, another predictor of diversity in social networks, also keep a strong association with an individual's tolerance toward foreigners. Regardless of their educational level or class, when people maintain ties with foreigners, they tend to develop more positive attitudes toward minorities. Another change seen after adding variables for network diversity is that the negative effect of being unemployed (compared to being employed in an upper white-collar job) lost its significance. The unemployed, including housewives and students, have a lower access to diverse middle-class ties. This may be due to their absence from the labor market. Negative attitudes toward foreigners among the unemployed were caused by network diversity. Tolerance for minorities depends on who they are associated with, and whether they have access to diverse middle-class contacts, as well as to foreigners.

In order to explore the possible mediating role of voluntary associations, we compare Model 5 of Table 3 with Model 1. The regression coefficients for

**Table 3 Multivariate Analyses**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
<b>Individual Attributes</b>							
Female	-0.129			-0.072	-0.113		-0.065
Age	-0.025***			-0.024***	-0.026***		-0.024***
Post-secondary education	0.391***			0.218 +	0.370***		0.220 +
<b>Occupation</b>							
Lower-white collar	-0.410*			-0.328*	-0.383*		-0.333*
Blue collar and agriculture	-0.489**			-0.395*	-0.434*		-0.379*
Unemployed	-0.375*			-0.108	-0.374*		-0.132
Upper white-collar (reference category)							
<b>Network Diversity</b>							
Middle-class ties		0.170***		0.108**		0.168***	0.105**
Working-class ties		0.032		0.079*		0.032	0.076*
Foreign acquaintances		0.865***		0.714***		0.866***	0.708***
Membership in association			0.259**		0.292**	0.061	0.125
Constant	5.155***	2.944***	3.461***	4.429***	5.033***	2.921***	4.386***
Adjusted R2	0.07	0.066	0.003	0.11	0.075	0.067	0.111
N	1861	1724	1841	1705	1821	1696	1677

+ P<.10. \*p<.05. \*\*p<.01. \*\*\*p<.001.

individual attributes do not change, even after controlling for the membership in association. This suggests that membership in an association has a direct association with tolerance over and above the effect of individual attributes.

By comparing Model 4 of Table 3 with Model 2, we find that network effects are reduced after controlling for individual attributes. This result suggests that network diversity may be related to tolerance in spurious ways. Attributes like a post-secondary education and occupation might influence both the degree of tolerance and people's diversity in networks. However, some network effects remain. Interactions with middle-class people, who are more likely to be tolerant themselves, and interactions with foreign acquaintances, from whom we may learn foreign cultures and customs, help people to form more tolerant views toward, and opinions of, foreign residents over and above individual attributes.

Interactions with working-class people, who are likely to be less tolerant, have been, in past studies, found to reduce tolerance (Côté & Erickson 2009). However, in the Japanese context, a positive, significant association between working-class ties and tolerance emerged after controlling for attributes. Though the impact is relatively small, in Japanese context, Contact Theory receives support.

### **Associations and Network Diversity**

Social Capital Theory suggests that associations provide opportunities for meeting a variety of other people whom we otherwise may not interact with, which

in turn facilitates tolerance. Therefore, the positive association between membership in associations and tolerance could be mediated by network diversity, either through developing a variety of middle-class and working class ties or by getting to know foreigners. In this case, the apparent effects of membership weaken or vanish when we control for social network diversity. We will explore this possibility in the next step.

When comparing Model 3 and Model 6 of Table 3, which adds network variety variables, the coefficient for associational memberships changes from quite strong and significant to nothing at all. On the other hand, the strong and significant association between a diversity of middle-class ties and knowing foreign acquaintances remains. This result clearly supports the Social Capital Theory, suggesting that participation in associations, rather than non-participation, does play a role in diversifying an individual's networks, which enhances a positive and welcoming attitude toward minorities.

In Japan, foreigners are a relatively small proportion of the total population. Therefore, participation in associations may be an essential step toward developing a wider variety of social networks, which, as previous research has suggested, expose people to new values and opinions. Network variety, which is not limited to direct ties with foreigners, provides rich learning opportunities.

Finally, we add all of the variables together in Model 7. The results show that individual attributes, such as age and lower occupational status, are still related with a negative attitude toward foreigners.

Our results also demonstrate that network diversity also plays an important role in affecting people's attitudes. All network variables are significantly and positively associated with tolerance. This result supports Contact Theory, rather than Social Influence Theory, in a Japanese context. As we have already discussed, membership in an association does not have any positive association with tolerance after controlling for the network variables. These results show us the importance of the network-mediated process of tolerance.

## **Conclusion**

This study aims to explore the influences network diversity may have on people's attitudes toward foreigners in Japan. Since, in Japan, daily contact with foreigners is still limited, this paper focused not only on the direct effect of knowing foreigners, but also on network diversity in class, so that we can learn the process by which the public's attitude toward minorities shifts in the ethnically-homogeneous Japan.

Based on our analyses of JGSS-2008, we found the following results. First, individual attributes such as age, education, and occupations are significantly

associated with tolerance towards foreigners. Younger people and those with a higher level of education or secure professional jobs tend to be more tolerant towards foreigners. Education is necessary in order to shift the public attitude, but reducing the perceived threat of losing jobs to foreigners may also be another factor in easing negative attitudes toward foreigners among workers with a lower occupational status. We also found that some effects of individual attributes are indirect. For example, the effect of having a post-secondary education worked through an expanded network variety. Membership in an association also has a positive association with tolerance. This is also at work in affecting the network diversity of respondents, by providing them with opportunities to develop a wider range of middle-class contacts and foreign acquaintances.

Though these findings are instructive, our research has limitations. First, the measurement of network diversity in class should be more developed. JGSS 2008 asked questions regarding the occupations of respondent's acquaintances only by categories, rather than by direct selection from a list of occupations. Therefore, we could not determine in detail how variance in occupational prestige might be associated with tolerance.

Second, the types of associations, and their varying effect on tolerance toward foreigners, need to be explored. In this research, we examined the effect of membership compared with non-participation. However, previous studies suggested that membership in multiple associations was more important. Additionally, the composition and structure of the association also matters. We could not explore this using JGSS 2008. For future analyses, we should anticipate that not all types of associations generate bridging social capital.

Still, our results inform us that, in ethnically homogeneous Japan, network diversity, not limited to acquaintances with foreigners, will be another path to enhancing tolerance. We also need to explore further, how participation in associations can enhance tolerance toward outsiders that exceeds in-group trust.

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