

## **Egalitarian Sex Role Attitudes: Scale Development and Comparison of American and Japanese Women<sup>1</sup>**

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*The English Form of the Scale of Egalitarian Sex Role Attitudes was administered to 238 American women after the original Japanese Form was developed and administered to 420 Japanese women. The results reveal that the English Form has a potential for use as a measurement of American women's sex role attitudes. The results of cross-cultural comparisons suggest that American women have more egalitarian attitudes than their Japanese counterparts. However, they have basically similar attitudes toward more general egalitarian values. Among the four roles of "woman," "wife," "mother," and "person," the majority of the American women choose "person" as the most important role, whereas the Japanese women do not claim any clear dominant role. But the results show that the Japanese women's attitudes toward women's roles have become more egalitarian and individualistic during the past two decades.*

Japanese society has undergone dramatic changes legally, economically, and socially since World War II. The promulgation of the Constitution, which guarantees equal rights for men and women, rapid industrialization, technological and economic growth, the prolongation of life expectancy, the decline of birth rates, and the increase of women with higher education are all examples of this.

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Paralleling these changes, Japanese consciousness and values have also changed. Most remarkable among them is the consciousness of equality of human relationships, including those between men and women (Mita, 1985), contributing to new roles and lifestyles for women. In fact, the modern lifestyles of Japanese women have become increasingly similar to those of American women (Robins-Mowry, 1983).

Have these changes brought about convergence in the sex role attitudes of contemporary Japanese and American women, in spite of the conspicuous cultural differences between the two countries?

In order to answer this question, the present research proposes to compare and contrast the sex role attitudes and role values between American and Japanese women. For this purpose, the Japanese Form of the Scale of Egalitarian Sex Role Attitudes was administered to the Japanese respondents and the English Form to the American respondents. The validity and reliability of the Japanese Form were already tested and determined (Suzuki, 1987). Those of the English Form will be examined in this study.

The present research makes the following contributions to the literature on sex role attitudes: (1) this is the social psychological research in which an original scale developed outside the United States is used to measure and compare the sex role attitudes of American and Japanese women, and (2) this study has a cross-cultural viewpoint that is scant in the sex role attitude literature.

### *Studies of Sex Role Attitudes of People in Japan and the United States*

*Japan.* The research on sex role attitudes of Japanese men and women by social scientists and some government offices began in the 1970s. Among them, attitudes toward women's issues (e.g., Schooler & Smith, 1978) and findings of demographic variables related to different sex role attitudes are mainly examined. As no original scale was developed to measure Japanese sex role attitudes, American scales were used.

The literature shows that the contemporary sex role attitudes of Japanese men and women became more egalitarian from the 1970s to the 1980s (e.g., Prime Minister's Office, 1988) and that sex, educational level, work experience, and age are strongly associated with sex role attitudes (e.g., Azuma & Ogura, 1984). A highly educated young woman with a professional/managerial job most likely has an egalitarian sex role attitude.

*United States.* In the United States, social scientists, especially sociologists and psychologists, have been trying to examine the following characteristics of sex role attitudes of American people: (1) the shifts of people's

sex role attitudes; (2) the findings of demographic, socioeconomic, and psychographic variables related to different sex role attitudes and studies of the best predictors of them; and (3) the causal relationships between sex role attitudes and other variables. For these purposes, numerous scales for measuring attitudes toward a variety of women's issues have been developed in the 1970s and 1980s (e.g., Beere, King, Beere, & King, 1984; Dreyer, Woods, & James, 1981; Larsen & Long, 1988; Spence & Helmreich, 1972).

The literature shows that there was a remarkable shift in the sex role attitudes of the American people toward an egalitarian orientation from the 1960s to 1985 (e.g., Cherlin & Walters, 1981; McBroom, 1987; Thornton, Alwin, & Camburn, 1983). These changes are widespread and are found among most sociodemographic subgroups of the population (e.g., Mason & Lu, 1988). The literature also indicates that sex, educational level, work experience, and age are strongly associated with sex role attitudes (e.g., King & King, 1985). A highly educated young woman with a professional/managerial job most likely has an egalitarian sex role attitude.

The main problem in the United States' research on sex role attitudes is the absence of cross-cultural perspectives. Cross-cultural designs help us distinguish what is common to human beings from what is specific to particular groups of them (Osgood, May, & Miron, 1975). Thus, cross-cultural research is essential for the purpose of "establishing the generalities of psychological" (Triandis, 1980, p. 9) and sociological propositions. Also, a cross-cultural approach contributes to finding the factors that cause the differences between the given cultures. Nevertheless, research on the sex role attitudes of people in Africa, Asia, and Latin America has been largely neglected (Rao & Rao, 1985). Moreover, the studies of sex role attitudes of people outside the United States and of cross-cultural comparisons often fail to examine the applicability of the measurements to people in different cultures. Furthermore, with few exceptions (e.g., Rosenberg, 1984), the studies are likely to examine only the attitudes of college students.

### *The Scale of Egalitarian Sex Role Attitudes*

The measurement instrument used in the present research is the Scale of Egalitarian Sex Role Attitudes (SESRA). SESRA is the first and only instrument originally developed in Japan that measures the degree of egalitarianism in one's sex role attitudes. Egalitarianism is defined as a belief in the equality of men and women as individuals. Sex role attitudes mean an individual's beliefs about appropriate roles for men and women. High scorers are regarded as egalitarian in their sex role attitudes, while low scorers are considered traditional.

The scale consists of 40 items. They are to be rated on a Likert-type 5-point scale [*from strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5)]. The minimum total score is 40 and the maximum total score is 200. For the 15 items that have nonegalitarian descriptions, the scoring is reversed. The scale has four domains or role categories: (1) marital domain (14 items)—attitudes toward marriage and matrimonial life; (2) parental domain (8 items)—attitudes toward having a child/children, children's education, and child rearing; (3) vocational domain (12 items)—attitudes toward women's employment; and (4) social domain (6 items)—attitudes toward general egalitarian values in society.

## METHODS

### *Respondents*

The American and Japanese samples were chosen from two regions that have similar geographic, historical, political, and industrial characteristics: the State of Massachusetts in the United States and Kanagawa Prefecture in Japan. The ages of the respondents in this research project ranged from 20 to 79 in both countries.

The English questionnaire<sup>3</sup> was distributed or sent to 600 American women who belonged to either a nonprofit organization for women, administrative offices in a university, or career development programs in the spring of 1988. The answer rate was 40% and the final sample size was 238 (Table I). The Japanese questionnaire was sent to 600 women who were either alumni of three local public high schools or members of two communities in the spring of 1987. The answer rate was 70% and the sample size was 420 (Table I).

### *Questionnaire*

The questionnaire consisted of the following three parts: (1) the SESRA; (2) demographic, socioeconomic, and psychographic variables—age, education, occupational status, marital status, fertility, income, race, religion, and a future work plan (race and religion were asked only of American respondents); and (3) role values—in this question, respondents were asked to rank

<sup>3</sup>The English questionnaire was translated from the Japanese questionnaire and modified in description. Five people who were well versed in the Japanese and English languages and cultures checked the contents and descriptions of the English questionnaire. The results of the pilot study of 20 working American women ensured the comprehensiveness of the translation of the questionnaire.

**Table I.** Demographic and Socioeconomic Characteristics of the American and Japanese Respondents

Characteristics	American ( <i>N</i> = 238; %)	Japanese ( <i>N</i> = 420; %)
Marital status		
Married	35	72
Living with a boy/girlfriend	8	—
Divorced	15	2
Widowed	2.5	5
Single	39	20
Child/children	40	66
Ages		
20s	33	19
30s	30	34
40s	19	26
50s	12	14
60s and above	5	7
Employment (full-time workers among working respondents)	83 (80)	63 (38)
Annual family income (\$1 = 125 yen) <sup>a</sup>		
Less than \$30,000	52	Less than \$40,000 30
\$30,000-\$79,999	32	\$40,000-\$99,999 52
\$80,000 and above	12	\$100,000 and above 14
Race (white)	91	—
Religious affiliation		
Protestant	30	—
Catholic	20	—
Jewish	15	—
No affiliation specified	24	—

<sup>a</sup>Overall, there were more Japanese respondents than American respondents whose annual family income was greater than \$40,000. This is because there were more married women and fewer single women among the Japanese respondents than American respondents. In addition, although the average annual incomes of American and Japanese families were almost the same (Labor Ministry, 1988, p. 69), the classifications of annual income were not the same for the Japanese and English questionnaires. This is because American real (substantial) income is about 1.5 times as large as that of Japanese income, as found in a 1987 study (Labor Ministry, 1988, p. 235).

the four (potential) roles in the order in which they valued them for themselves (from 1 to 4) (the four roles were woman, wife, mother, and person).

## RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

### *Reliability*

In order to test the reliability of SESRA—English Form, the correlations were examined. For comparison, the coefficient alphas of the Japanese Form (used for the Japanese sample of the present research) are also shown in parentheses.

1. The item-total reliability coefficient alpha is .89 (.93).
2. The domain-total reliability coefficient alphas are as follows: the marital domain— .74 (.79); the parental domain— .71 (.70); the vocational domain— .74 (.84); and the social domain— .69 (.83).
3. The split-half reliability coefficient alphas are as follows: odd number items— .79 (.86); even number items— .80 (.87).
4. Factor analyses of domain scores were employed to examine the underlying structure of each domain. The results show that all four domains had a single main factor. This factor reflected egalitarian-traditional sex role attitudes.

### *Validity*

Evidence of validity of SESRA—English Form was derived through the confirmation of the following hypotheses: (a) American women with higher educational levels have higher total mean SESRA scores than those with lower educational levels, and (b) American women have a higher total mean SESRA score than do Japanese women.

(a) Past literature has shown that education is one of the most important variables in predicting attitudes toward sex roles. The higher the education, the more egalitarian the attitude. This finding leads to Hypothesis (a).

Table II presents the total mean SESRA scores, standard deviations, and the *t* score between the college-or-more group and the junior-college-or-less group.<sup>4</sup> There was a significant difference between the subgroups ( $t = 2.74, p < .01$ ). These results support Hypothesis (a).

(b) The women's liberation movement in the 1960s and 1970s, the flourishing of women's studies in the United States, and the results of the research on the international comparison of sex role attitudes in 1982 by the Prime Minister's Office (1984) all indicate that American women have more egalitarian sex role attitudes than Japanese women.

The analyses of the present research show that the total mean SESRA score of American women (total mean = 163.7,  $SD = 15.1$ , item mean = 4.1) is significantly higher ( $t = 9.74, p < .001$ ) than that of Japanese women (total mean = 148.4,  $SD = 21.4$ , item mean = 3.7). These results supported Hypothesis (b).

The data presented here suggest that the English Form of SESRA has a potential as a measurement in research concerning the sex role attitudes of American women.

<sup>4</sup>As the number of American respondents who have lower education than junior college was too small to make reliable comparisons, the respondents were classified into only two groups, the college-or-more group and the junior college-or-less group.

**Table II.** Egalitarian Sex Role Attitudes and Educational Levels: American and Japanese Women

Level	American women			Japanese women			<i>t</i>
	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	
Junior college or less	35	157.4	13.2	278	143.0	20.7	4.00 <sup>b,e</sup>
College or more	203	164.8	15.1	138	159.3	18.8	3.01 <sup>b,d</sup>
<i>t</i>		2.74 <sup>a,c</sup>			7.76 <sup>a,e</sup>		

<sup>a</sup>*t* scores between the subgroups of junior-college-or-less and college-or-more in the same nationalities.

<sup>b</sup>*t* scores between the American and Japanese women with the same educational levels.

<sup>c</sup>*p* < .01.

<sup>d</sup>*p* < .005.

<sup>e</sup>*p* < .001.

A rival hypothesis is that the observed difference is due to differences in education rather than nationality. To test this hypothesis comparisons were made between the American and Japanese equal education subgroups on SES-RA scores. The difference of the total mean scores between the American and Japanese women with lower education ( $t = 4.00$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and that of women with higher education ( $t = 3.01$ ,  $p < .005$ ) were significant (Table II). These results suggested that the differences of the SESRA scores were caused by a difference in nationality rather than educational level.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *The Scores of SESRA*

*Total and Domain Scores (Table III).* As reported in the subsection on validity, the total mean SESRA score of American women is higher than

**Table III.** Mean SESRA Scores of Total and Domains: American and Japanese Women

Group (item) <sup>c</sup>	American <sup>a</sup>			Japanese <sup>b</sup>			<i>t</i>
	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Item mean	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Item mean	
Total (40)	163.7	15.1	4.1	48.4	21.4	3.7	9.74 <sup>d</sup>
Domain 1 (14)	57.4	6.1	4.1	49.5	8.1	3.5	12.66 <sup>e</sup>
Domain 2 (8)	32.8	4.4	4.1	28.8	5.0	3.6	10.00 <sup>e</sup>
Domain 3 (12)	49.9	5.1	4.2	45.6	7.2	3.8	6.04 <sup>e</sup>
Domain 4 (6)	24.6	3.2	4.1	24.6	4.3	4.1	0.02

<sup>a</sup>*N* = 238.

<sup>b</sup>*N* = 420.

<sup>c</sup>Domain 1: Marital; Domain 2: Parental; Domain 3: Occupational; Domain 4: Social.

<sup>d</sup>Total mean:  $p < .001$ .

<sup>e</sup>Domain mean:  $p < .001$ .

that of Japanese women, confirming that American women in general have more egalitarian sex role attitudes than Japanese women.

The comparison of domain totals reveals that the total mean scores of American women were significantly higher than Japanese women in three domains: marital ( $p < .001$ ), parental ( $p < .001$ ), and occupational ( $p < .001$ ). In the social domain, Japanese women had the same total mean score as that of American women. This suggests that Japanese and American women shared similar attitudes toward general egalitarian values.

The other characteristics of the respondents are worthy of special mention. The standard deviations of the Japanese scores are much larger than those of the American scores. Moreover, among all the American and Japanese respondents, the one who had the highest score was a Japanese woman; of the 19 women who had SESRA scores above 190, 11 were Japanese, while the 7 with scores under 100 were all Japanese. These results imply that while egalitarian sex role attitudes prevailed among American women, there is greater variety of sex role attitudes, from superegalitarian to supertraditional, among Japanese women. The reason for the variety could be that the changes in sex role attitudes of Japanese people are in transition. Some Japanese women retain the traditional belief in sex segregation and some believe in the equality of men and women even more than the most liberal American women.

*Item Scores (Table IV).* The comparison of the scores of each item shows that American women scored significantly higher in 27 items out of 40. Among them, three items concerning the division of labor by sex in the family and the importance of child rearing for a woman showed the biggest differences on the scores. Both issues advocate the traditional responsibilities of women in the family. Japanese women scored significantly higher on 8 items. The contents of these items mainly concern the advantage and necessity of women's participation in the labor force and of women's independence. In five items out of 40, there were no significant differences in the Japanese and American scores. These are about the basic egalitarian values of education and women's participation in the occupations. From these results, we see that Japanese women are more liberal on women's rights in the workplace than in family roles.

Besides the cultural differences, there is another possible explanation for the difference in sex role attitudes between contemporary Japanese and American women. Some studies about the sex role attitudes of American women in the early 1970s revealed that many women were more traditional in their attitudes toward the division of labor by sex in the family and were more liberal regarding equalities in the workplace (e.g., Mason, Arber, & Czajka, 1976). These characteristics of American women in the early 1970s seem applicable to those of Japanese women today. It is possible that the



**Table IV.** Items of SESRA, Mean Scores, and *SDs*: American and Japanese Women<sup>a</sup>

Item	Mean ( <i>SD</i> )	
	American	Japanese
(a) Items in which American women scored significantly more than one point higher than Japanese women.		
1. Domestic chores should be shared between husband and wife.	4.4 (0.5)	3.3 (1.5) <sup>d</sup>
2. A woman should have and raise one or more children.	3.7 (1.0)	2.7 (1.5) <sup>d</sup>
3. Bringing up children is the most important job for a woman.	3.7 (1.3)	2.4 (1.5) <sup>d</sup>
(b) Items in which Japanese women had significantly higher scores than American women.		
1. A working wife has more in common with her husband, so she is a better wife.	3.2 (1.0)	3.5 (1.0) <sup>d</sup>
2. Boys and girls should play with the same toys.	3.7 (0.9)	3.9 (1.2) <sup>b</sup>
3. Women should work even if they are not in need economically	3.3 (1.0)	3.6 (1.0) <sup>c</sup>
4. Whether married or not, for purposes of independence, women should work.	3.6 (0.9)	4.0 (0.9) <sup>d</sup>
5. The differences of capabilities between individuals are more numerous than those between men and women.	4.1 (1.0)	4.5 (0.5) <sup>d</sup>
6. There will be much social progress and development when more women work.	3.8 (0.9)	4.0 (0.9) <sup>c</sup>
7. In order to be equal with men, women should aim to better their position through independence.	3.7 (0.9)	4.1 (1.0) <sup>d</sup>
8. Women should try to better themselves as human beings and to pursue self-realization through working.	3.7 (0.9)	4.2 (0.5) <sup>d</sup>
(c) Items in which there is no significant difference between the scores of American and Japanese women.		
1. Working women put a strain on the family.	3.7 (1.0)	3.7 (1.0)
2. A mother who stays home and raises children is not the only ideal type of mother.	4.4 (0.6)	4.3 (0.9)
3. Boys and girls should have equal opportunity in education.	4.8 (0.6)	4.8 (0.6)
4. For a woman, the roles of wife and mother are important, but working outside is equally important.	3.8 (0.9)	3.9 (1.1)
5. Women should enter into jobs traditionally held by men, those of pilot, engineer, taxi driver, and chef.	4.1 (0.7)	4.2 (1.0)

<sup>a</sup>Scale range: 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The scores of items (a) 2, (a) 3, and (c) 1 are reversed so that a higher score means disagreement with the content of the item statement.

<sup>b</sup> $p < .05$ .

<sup>c</sup> $p < .01$ .

<sup>d</sup> $p < .001$ .

attitudes of Japanese women may shift during the next two decades toward an egalitarian orientation similar to that of American women's attitudes, which shifted during the past two decades.

However, the appearance of egalitarianism could not be totally the same because of cultural differences in the concepts of equality of men and women. American equality, in its ideal form, is based on opportunities (Chafe,

1977) supported by individualism and the merit system. Regardless of sex, an individual is treated according to his/her effort and ability. By contrast, Japanese equality is ideally one of results, in which resources are divided equally (Takenaka, 1985). Japanese equality of men and women in practice remains based on the division of labor by sex. Today, however, Japanese sex roles have become more interchangeable, to the point that giving birth may eventually become the only remaining basis for division of labor.

### *Role Values*

There was a general assumption that until recently Japanese women put greater emphasis on the mother-child relationship than on the husband-wife relationship. Have these role values changed during the past two decades?

In 1972, Smith and Schooler surveyed the role values of Japanese women and asked them to rank the four roles: mother, wife, individual (person), and female (Schooler & Smith, 1978; Smith & Schooler, 1978). This is a question that examines how a respondent identifies her own role. The results were that "mother" was preferred by 43% of the respondents, "wife" by 22%, "individual" by 34%, and "female" by 2%. They concluded that although the role of mother was the central one for Japanese women, there was a potential for change in Japanese women's values to more individualistic and less traditional because "in Japan, just as in the United States, environmental complexity produces individualistic values, reducing adherence to traditional ones" (Smith & Schooler, 1978, p. 619).

In the present research a similar questionnaire to that of Smith and Schooler's was used to compare and contrast the role values of Japanese and American women today. It was hypothesized that every woman had four (potential) roles (woman, wife, mother, and person) that she is expected to play in her life and that in deciding which is her most important role, she inevitably expresses her values.

The roles of wife and mother are the traditional ones assigned to women. The woman who ranks "wife" or "mother" first can be assumed to "put the interests of her husband and children first" (Morgan & Walker, 1983, p. 149). The women who rank either of these roles first are regarded as having traditional attitudes toward women's roles.

As for the term "woman," strictly speaking, it is not a role but an aspect of an individual who was born female. The word "woman" carries a connotation of a strong awareness of difference from "men," or interest in one's attractiveness to men and happiness as a sexual being. Thus, "woman" is not a traditional role value, but an individualistic one, because it places em-

**Table V.** Role Values of American and Japanese Women: Percentages of First Roles and SESRA Means (*SDs*) of the Subgroups Divided According to the Role Selection (%)

Year <sup>d</sup>	Woman	Wife	Mother	Person
1986 (J) <sup>a</sup>	36(147.7/19.2)	15(151.6/19.2)	21(153.0/14.5)	28(160.5/17.3)
1987 (J) <sup>b</sup>	30(148.9/18.8)	19.5(138.0/20.4)	27(141.1/19.6)	23.5(162.7/19.3)
1988(A) <sup>c</sup>	13(166.5/18.1)	1(148.5/11.5)	3(155.7/11.8)	83(164.3/14.2)

<sup>a</sup>*N* = 163.<sup>b</sup>*N* = 394.<sup>c</sup>*N* = 224.<sup>d</sup>J = Japanese. A = American.

phasis not on husband/children but on one's own happiness. Although Smith and Schooler did not explain the meaning of each role, judging from the context, "female" is equivalent to "woman." The role of "person" is, in comparison, not sex marked, and is considered to be most individualistic, independent, and responsible, and to have a broad orientation towards society. In American culture, independence and individualism are the dominant values. The ideology of women's liberation enhanced the importance of the independence and autonomy of women all the more. However, in Japan, there have not been severe social pressures for becoming independent and individualistic on Japanese people, especially women. Rather, these two terms "carry the connotation of selfish" (Smith & Schooler, 1978, p. 614) for them.

Table V presents the results of Japanese women's role selection in research done in 1986 (Suzuki, 1987) and in the present research done in 1987. The table provides the percentages of the respondents, the mean SESRA scores, and standard deviations of the respondents' subgroups which were divided according to which role they evaluated first. The mean SESRA scores of subgroups were compared using *t* tests in Table VI.

In 1986, "woman" won 36%, "wife" 15%, "mother" 21%, and "person" 28%. In 1987, 30% chose "woman," 19.5% "wife," 27% "mother," and

**Table VI.** *t* Scores of the SESRA of the Subgroups of Japanese Respondents Divided According to Role Selection in 1986/1987

Role	Woman	Wife	Mother
Wife	.81/3.76 <sup>c</sup>	—	—
Mother	1.39/3.00 <sup>b</sup>	.32/1.05	—
Person	3.30 <sup>b</sup> /5.31 <sup>c</sup>	1.99 <sup>a</sup> /8.01 <sup>c</sup>	2.03 <sup>a</sup> /7.84 <sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup>*p* < .05.<sup>b</sup>*p* < .01.<sup>c</sup>*p* < .001.

23.5% "person." The number of women who chose either "woman" or "person" reached more than 50% both in 1986 and 1987.

From the comparisons, we can conclude that contemporary Japanese women have become, as Smith and Schooler predicted, more individualistic and more egalitarian since 1972. We can also make the following inference from the results: there seems no central role for Japanese women, and that means either (a) there is not a social consensus or a socially established vision of a contemporary Japanese women's appropriate role(s); or (b) with the changes in Japanese society, a diversity of life styles and values has become available for women, and they enjoy the freedom of choice. In either case, although Japanese women have become more individualistic and more egalitarian, traditional women's roles such as "mother" and "wife" have remained important.

Table V also indicates the role values of American women of the present study in 1988. About 83% of the respondents chose "person" as the first role. There were no significant differences in SESRA scores among the subgroups. In the second step of analysis, the respondents were divided into subgroups according to the demographic and socioeconomic variables. But in all the subgroups, "person" was dominantly chosen as the central role. This confirms that the value of "person" is uniform and firm across demographic and socioeconomic subgroups of American women.

There are two other noteworthy findings. First, Japanese women who chose "person" first had significantly higher scores of SESRA than the other women both in 1986 and 1987. This is supportive of King and King's finding (1985) that a more egalitarian person is individualistic. Second, Japanese women who chose "person" first in 1986 and 1987 also gained mean scores similar to their American counterparts. It might be safely said that the most individualistic women of the Japanese sample had the most egalitarian sex role attitudes and the ones most similar to American women. This is another example of the variety of sex role attitudes of Japanese women. And it also shows that there are some women who have very similar sex role attitudes despite cultural differences.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The data and the analyses of the present study suggest the following:

1. The SESRA, both the Japanese and the English Forms, has a potential for use as a measurement of an individual's attitudes toward appropriate roles for men and women.
2. Overall, American women were more egalitarian in sex role attitudes than Japanese women. The difference is conspicuous in sex segregation of

domestic labor and child rearing. However, they share similar sex role attitudes toward the basic concept of the equality of men and women in education, occupation, and society. Assuming that individualism, independence, and egalitarianism are the universal values pursued in the modern world, these similarities can be shared with the women in the other advanced industrial societies where lifestyles are similar to those of American and Japanese women.

3. The characteristics of the sex role attitudes of American women in the early 1970s seem applicable to those of the contemporary Japanese women. The differences between contemporary American and Japanese women might be the differences not only in the cultures but also in the pervasiveness of egalitarianism in the society. While the egalitarian sex role attitudes have already prevailed in American society, the changes in sex role attitudes of Japanese people are in process. Within the next two decades Japanese women's sex role attitudes may shift toward an egalitarian orientation similar to that of American women's.

4. Japanese women today have become more egalitarian and more individualistic in their role values than those in the 1970s. However, they have not yet found a role model. The direction of their individualism seems different from that of their American counterparts, who exhibited only one dominant role value, that of "person." It is likely that more Japanese women will chose "woman" than "person." In a sense, this is a risky trend for Japanese society because the connotations of "woman" lack sociality and responsibility. Individualism without this backing can easily turn into selfishness or self-indulgence.

While contemporary Japanese women enjoy a variety of role alternatives and lifestyles, ambivalent sex role attitudes of traditionalism and egalitarianism characterize them. The sex role chaos will last until new appropriate roles for them are established. Until then, Japanese society remains "a mosaic of sex role attitudes."

Finally, it is important to consider the effect of the skewness of the samples on the results of the present research. The findings cannot necessarily be generalized to the total population of American and Japanese women because each sample was collected in a restricted area. Also, the American response rate was low and most of the respondents were white women with a high education and full-time employment, and they tended to be younger. It is highly possible that there was a self-selection of more egalitarian types in this study. These women might represent one of the more liberal subgroups of all American women. So, we can infer that American women might be less egalitarian and less individualistic than the sample, and that American and Japanese women share more similarities in their sex role attitudes and role values. Further studies are needed not only for validation of the present

findings but also for the development of the cross-cultural research on sex roles.

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