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#### **Authors**

Yang, Kunhao

Fujisaki, Itsuki

Ueda, Kazuhiro

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# **Geeks are different: Exploring the relationship between engineering knowledge and categorization patterns.**

**Kunhao Yang**

Shibaura Institute of Technology, Tokyo, Japan

**Itsuki Fujisaki**

University of Tsukuba, Ibaraki, Japan

**Kazuhiro Ueda**

The University of Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan

## **Abstract**

Categorization is a fundamental cognitive process that shapes how people organize experience. Previous research has shown that industrialization can significantly affect categorization patterns across different cultures. However, one question remains unresolved: Does the amount of engineering knowledge affect individual categorization patterns, even within a culturally homogeneous population? This study addressed this question using data from two web-based surveys conducted in Japan, one focusing on the automobile ( $N = 600$ ) and the other on audio device industries ( $N = 200$ ). Our findings indicate that individuals with greater engineering knowledge are more inclined to employ taxonomic categorization, whereas those with less engineering knowledge tend to favor thematic categorization. Given the connection between industrialization and categorization demonstrated in previous studies, our findings suggest that individual differences in categorization are associated with exposure to technology-oriented social environments, illustrating one way in which industrialization may influence cognition.