

Press Release

World's First Analysis from a Third-Party Perspective of Hair Perception Differences in Japan and China

FineToday Co., Ltd. (Head Office: Minato-ku, Tokyo; Representative Director, President and CEO: Tetsuo Komori) has, for the first time in the world^{*1}, succeeded in analyzing the differences in hair perception by country from a third-party perspective. This was achieved by conducting a hair evaluation study in Japan and China using eye tracking technology.

The results of this study were presented at the 17th ASCS^{*2}, an international conference in Asia on cosmetic technology held in Manila, Philippines, from June 4 to 6, 2025.

■Background

In China, people prefer a soft and lightweight finish at the crown^{*3}, while in Japan, people tend to favor a heavier finish that prevents dryness at the tips of the hair. These findings suggest that preferences for hairstyles and hair textures may differ by country, beyond the two targeted by the study. However, conventionally, hair care products have been evaluated using rating terms (such as lustrous, smooth, dry, moist, etc.) that require experts to make subjective assessments. In tests with participants from countries other than Japan, these terms need to be translated, and the process often introduces discrepancies in their meanings and nuances, making it difficult to understand exactly what the subjects are perceiving.

In 2024, we developed a method for evaluating hair from a third-party perspective without relying on language, using eye tracking technology to record the focal points of people's gaze. To identify the differences in hair perception between Japanese and Chinese people, we conducted the world's first country-specific study using this evaluation method.

■Study details

This study involves 40 women in their 20s—20 Japanese and 20 Chinese—with a strong interest in beauty. They were presented with 10 images of hair with various textures and asked to select the images they perceived as “unfavorable.” During this selection process, their eye movements were tracked to gain insights into their perception of hair texture.

The results showed that both Japanese and Chinese participants had longer gaze fixation durations on hairstyles they perceived as “unfavorable.” This suggests a difference in aesthetic preferences: Japanese participants tended to prefer curly hairstyles, while Chinese participants favored straight styles. (Figure 1)

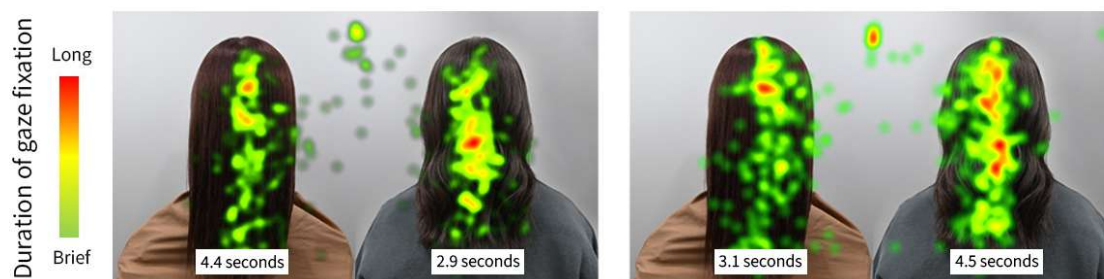


Figure 1-1 Average duration of gaze fixation among Japanese participants

Figure 1-2 Average duration of gaze fixation among Chinese participants

Red indicates a longer gaze, and green a briefer gaze.

Japanese participants exhibited longer gaze fixation durations on straight hairstyles, whereas Chinese participants fixated longer on curly hairstyles—both corresponding to the hairstyles they perceived as “unfavorable.”

In addition, Japanese participants tended to observe hair in a less focused and more holistic way, with minimal eye movement, while Chinese participants showed a tendency to observe hair more attentively, frequently refocusing their gaze in different spots across a wide area. (Table 1 and Figure 2)

These findings suggest that Japanese people tend to evaluate hair intuitively, while Chinese people take a more analytical approach.

Average area of gaze fixation on left hairstyle (cm ²)		Average area of gaze fixation on right hairstyle (cm ²)	
Japanese	Chinese	Japanese	Chinese
206.5	220.7	253.1	272.5

Table 1 Eye movement distribution ranges of Japanese and Chinese participants

The eye movements of Chinese participants showed a wider distribution range for both the left and right

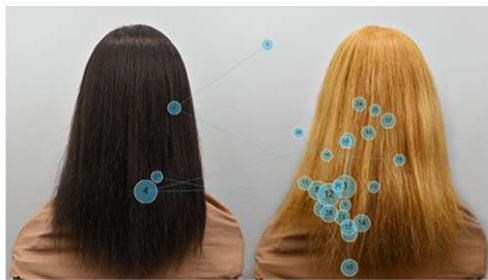


Figure 2-1 Number of gaze fixations by Japanese participants



Figure 2-2 Number of gaze fixations by Chinese participants

Circles indicate the frequency of gaze fixation. Chinese participants had a higher number of gaze fixations.

These findings demonstrate that eye tracking technology enables third-party perspective evaluations of country-specific differences in hair perception. Furthermore, Japanese and Chinese individuals differ in both their perceptions of hair and their preferences, suggesting that desired product benefits and effective marketing approaches may also differ between the two groups.

■Future prospects

By accurately identifying country-specific hairstyle preferences and potential challenges from an objective third-party perspective, this study will facilitate the rapid development of products aligned with local trends and needs, and enable more effective marketing to customers who are seeking such products.

Based on our Purpose (our reason for existence) to “enrich the lives of everyone today and for generations to come, one fine day at a time,” the FineToday Group is committed to meeting the diverse beauty needs of customers from different climates, cultures, and lifestyles through innovative research and product development.

*1 As of June 4, 2025 (Investigated by FineToday)

*2 An international academic conference where cosmetic technologists from across Asia come together to present and discuss the latest research findings

*3 A Mintel Analyst. (2022, October). How the 'high cranial top' aesthetic influences Chinese haircare [Industry Report]. Mintel.

<Related Article>

Press Release

Study on a Third-Party Perspective Hair Evaluation Method Utilizing Eye-Tracking Technology
—A Hair Care Industry First:

<https://www.finetoday.com/en/news/newsrelease/2024101701/>

<Links>

Official website: <https://www.finetoday.com/en/>

End

■About FineToday Group

FineToday Group was founded as an independent entity in 2021 after separating from Shiseido's personal care business.

Our purpose is to enrich the lives of everyone today and for generations to come, one fine day at a time. We integrate environmental / social sustainability with profitable growth to achieve the purpose.

Aesthetics originating from our DNA are carried forward in our refined operations, unique value propositions, and a global mode of behavior.

We aim to become Asia's No.1 daily beauty product producing company, bringing well-being by unlocking the joy of beauty to people worldwide.
