

Greetings from the President



Toshikazu Hasegawa

Nowadays, there is an increasing demand for the healthy psychological development of children, who will have to deal with the reality of an aging society with a declining birthrate, and for the development of a society where young people can achieve their hope. Cross-sectional studies are not enough to understand the problems arising in the process of psychological development. An individual's interactions with the surrounding environment, which includes the family, school, and friends, contribute to their development, which further changes their relationship with their surroundings. This may sometimes turn into a vicious cycle that exacerbates their mental health problems. Although such chains of interactions with the environment are often emphasized with regard to childhood development, it is also an important factor in puberty and adolescence.

The lengthy life stages of puberty and adolescence—during which human traits such as ego and values mature—are known to be peculiar to humans. Therefore, the perspectives of phylogeny and evolutionary psychology are also necessary to understand how the human brain and mind adapt amid societies and artificial environments that are changing at a rate rarely seen before in history.

The human brain and mind become more and more diverse from infancy to adulthood, and they interact with society and adapt themselves. Despite its importance, the psychological understanding of this from the perspective of comprehensive human sciences has not advanced sufficiently.

Under the background, the “University of Tokyo Institute for Diversity & Adaptation of Human Mind” (UTIDAHM) was established at the University of Tokyo in close collaboration with the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Graduate School of Medicine, Graduate School of Humanities and Sociology, Graduate School of Education, and Graduate School of Law and Politics. In 2016, two new departments, the Graduate School of Science and Graduate School of Pharmaceutical Sciences, joined, and these seven departments of the University strive to further promote scientific research into the human mind.

This institute aims to integrate social sciences like psychology and experimental sociology into medical sciences like psychiatry, as well as basic research with clinical research. Furthermore, we are also working on nurturing cross-disciplinary human resources by collaborating with relevant departments of the University to provide comprehensive education in the field of human sciences about psychological development and mental health problems to students, young researchers, and practitioners.

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President

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