

POSTER

MALE-MALE SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS IN A SEMI-FREE RANGING GROUP OF JAPANESE MACAQUES (*MACACA FUSCATA*)

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ABSTRACT

Navigating through group life means interacting with different group members in various contexts and in further consequence forming social relationships. Building and maintaining affiliative relationships are argued to serve the purpose of increasing an individual's fitness either directly through increasing its own reproductive success or indirectly through increasing a close relative's reproductive success. Even though it was claimed for non-human primates that long-lasting affiliative relationships between males should be rare since males not only compete for food resources but also for females in oestrus, they were nonetheless found in many species and not just between kin.

This study shows that male Japanese macaques (*Macaca fuscata*) form affiliative relationships with other males despite living in a despotic society with a strict linear dominance hierarchy. We observed a semi-free ranging group of Japanese macaques at the Affenberg Landskron, Austria (Affenberg Research Station) with a focus on sexually mature males ($N = 41$). To measure the directionality and strength of dyadic affiliative relationships we calculated a Composite Sociality Index (CSI) for all possible male-male dyads using the frequency of proximity and the duration of grooming behaviour collected through continuous focal animal sampling. There was a wide variation in CSI values but both high- as well as low-ranking male Japanese macaques formed multiple affiliative relationships with other males.

Long-term studies building upon these results will be able to investigate the influence of male social relationships on social status and reproductive success in despotic primate societies, while also offering insights into parallels with human friendships.