

# **Job interview training targeting nonverbal communication using an android robot for individuals with autism spectrum disorder**

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Job interviews can present significant barriers for people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) because they often lack strong nonverbal communication skills. We developed a job interview training programme using an android robot (JUA), who looks like an actual person. JUA consists of the following three stages: 1) tele-operating an android robot and conversing with others through the android robot, 2) a face-to-face mock job interview with the android robot, and 3) feedback based on the mock job interview and nonverbal communication exercises using the android robot. Participants with ASD were randomly assigned to one of the following two groups: 13 people with ASD received interview guidance from teachers (IGT) and also had JUA, and 16 people with ASD received IGT alone. Before and after the training, participants in both groups underwent a mock job interview with a human interviewer, who provided rating of their nonverbal communication, self-confidence and measured their salivary cortisol (an index of stress). After the training sessions, the participants who received the combined IGT and JUA training showed improved nonverbal communication skills and self-confidence and had significantly lower levels of salivary cortisol (stress) compared to the participants who only received IGT. Therefore, it seems that JUA improved various aspects of job interview performance in people with ASD.