

The effects of role model holding on changing help-seeking

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Introduction

This study examines how having a role model can improve help-seeking behavior.

Asking for help is not easy. To ask for help, one must disclose his/her weaknesses to potential help providers. This self-disclosure itself is known to induce lower self-esteem, or to lead to concerns that self-disclosure will reduce social reputation by revealing negative aspects of his/herself to others. Because of these risks, requesting help is not easy (DePaulo, 1983).

For example, parents have difficulties requesting help from others and from professionals. The main resistance to usual others is the formation of negative evaluations and stigma toward his/herself and the children. For professionals, the main resistance is the fear that they will not be understood even if they consult with them, as well as the inability to assume the effects of receiving professional care (水野, 2017).

The effects of interventions on the ability to make help-requests have been examined. From a meta-analytic review, it was found that interventions such as literacy education and destigmatization improve the willingness to ask for help, but do not increase actual help-seeking behavior (Gulliver, et al., 2012). It has also been found that when a person's physical and mental health is impaired to the extent that he or she should request help, it is difficult for him or her to do so on his or her own (Ishikawa, et al., 2020).

How can we improve the current situation in which people who need help are less likely to ask for it? People who need assistance are less likely to ask for it. Of course, it is neces-

sary for those around them to promote and intervene. However, we should clarify what those who need assistance can do, and what competencies even those who are exhausted can achieve to step forward to request assistance.

In this study, we focus on the possession of role models.

Social situation becoming unstable, individual careers themselves are becoming more diverse, and role models must create their own lives with no firm standards. In creating life, it is important to consider what kind of role one will assume and what kind of role one will use his/her life to acquire.

A role model is a person who serves as a role model in acquiring a role. Mizoguchi and Mizokami (2020) developed a psychometric scale to understand the function of role models in the acquisition of roles by recipients. By developing a psychometric scale to understand the function that role models have on the recipients' role acquisition, they obtained four factors: "identification," "advice," "respect," and "antagonism."

In this study, we examine the possibility that having a role model can improve help-seeking behavior. The functions of role models are diverse. (Mizoguchi & Mizokami, 2020) Not only do rolemodels provide advice to individuals, but their every move can serve as a model for behavior, emotions, reactions, and expectations. If the role model is a person who makes a request for help, he or she may be motivated to make a request for help through identification with the role model. Even if the role model is not a help-seeker, repeated exposure to interdependent commu-

nication (not psychological dependence, but mutually prescriptive communication based on each other's actions and statements) through interaction with the role model can lead to becoming accustomed to do that communication. Previous studies suggested that holding role model prompted the acquisition of skill requested on the occupation, and the acquisition of identity of the occupation (Tagawa, 2016). Role model holding and continuous communication with role model may enhance the intention of initiating help seeking.

The current study examines the differences in help-seeking behavior between those who have role models and those without role models.

Method

Participants and procedure

Fourteen 1st-year students, seventeen 2nd-year students, sixteen 3rd-year students and forty-seven 4th-year students. The examination was conducted through web form during a certain course at university. The form clearly stated that the responses could be stopped at will and that the responses would be taken as consent to participate in the study.

Items

Role model holding: at high school period: "Did you have a role model in high school?"; at the university period "do you have a role model in the university?" Response scale was 2-point scale "1 didn't have/ don't have, 2 had/has" (Mizoguchi & Mozogkami, 2020).

Help-seeking style: Psychological measurement scale developed by Nagai (2013), which measures the extent to which respondents tend to be dependent help-seeker, independent help-seeker, and avoidant help-seeker. Nagai (2013) consisted of three factors or styles of help-seeking: dependent style, independent style, and avoidant style. We asked "Please select only one number that applies

to you about each item." Respondents were asked to answer on a 5-point scale from "1. Not applicable to 5. Applicable."

Analysis

At first, as descriptive statistics, cross table between grade and role model holding and between role model holding at high school and at university was created. And average score of each three help-seeking style factors sliced by grad was aggregated. Secondly, to reveal how the role model holding facilitated help-seeking, specifically, facilitated dependent help-seeking style and independent help-seeking style, and decreased avoidant help-seeking style, regression analysis and nominal regression analysis were performed with help-seeking as objective variables and with help-seeking cluster as objective variables: commonly, role model holding was entered in the regression model as explanatory variables.

Interpretations were conducted to reveal whether through role model holding, help-seeking style of independence was facilitated and avoidance was decreased.

Results

Descriptive statistics

Table1 showed relation between the role model holding at high school and grade. Measured frequencies were higher than expected frequencies in Not hold at 2nd and 3rd, and Hold at 4th ($\chi^2=24.241$, $p<.000$, $CV=.508$). Table2 showed relation between role model holding at university and grade. There were no cells in which measured frequencies significantly differed from expected frequencies ($\chi^2=1.788$, $p=.618$, $CV=.138$). Role model holding at high school did not show any relation with role model holding at university ($\chi^2=2.242$, $p=.134$, $CV=.154$) (Table3).

None of the averages of three styles of help-seeking did differ by grade (avoidance style: $F(3, 89)=0.314$, $p=.861$, $\eta_p^2=.010$; independent style: $F(3, 89)=0.227$, $p=.876$, $\eta_p^2=.008$;

Table 1 Cross table between role model holding at high school and grade

		Role model holding at high school		Sum
		Not hold	Hold	
Grade	1st	2	12	14
	2nd	△ 7	▼ 10	17
	3rd	△ 9	▼ 7	16
	4th	▼ 2	△ 45	47
Sum		20	74	94

Note △ represented measured frequency was higher than expected frequency in the cell, and ▼ represented expected frequency was higher than measured frequency in the cell.

Table 2 Cross table between role model holding at university and grade

		Role model holding at university		Sum
		Not hold	Hold	
Grade	1st	6	8	14
	2nd	9	8	17
	3rd	5	11	16
	4th	18	29	47
Sum		38	56	94

Note △ represented measured frequency was higher than expected frequency in the cell, and ▼ represented expected frequency was higher than measured frequency in the cell.

Table 3 Cross table between role model holding at high school and at university

		Role model holding at university		Sum
		Not holding	Holding	
Role model holding at high school	Not holding	11	9	20
	Holding	27	47	74
Sum		38	56	94

Note △ represented measured frequency was higher than expected frequency in the cell, and ▼ represented expected frequency was higher than measured frequency in the cell.

Table 4 the averages of three styles of help-seeking sliced by grade

	N	Avoidance style		Independent style		Dependent style	
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1st	14	2.40	1.06	4.00	0.74	2.86	1.30
2nd	17	2.78	1.04	3.86	0.75	3.04	1.24
3rd	15	2.71	1.18	3.78	1.16	2.96	1.29
4ht	47	2.65	1.17	3.77	1.04	3.34	1.29

dependent style: $F(3, 89)=0.749, p=.526, \eta^2_p=.025$) (Table4).

Regression analysis based on parameters of help-seeking

We examined whether possessing a role model can change their help-seeking style. The three help-seeking styles were entered as objective variables into multiple regression model respectively, and the explanatory variables were role model holding in high school, role model holding in university, grade level, and a second-order interaction term.

The results of regression analysis (Table5) showed a significant coefficient of role model holding at high school for avoidance style negatively and for dependent style positively. Having a role model in high school tended to reduce avoidant style and increase dependent style.

Interaction terms were significant: role model holding at high school \times role model holding at university for dependent style and role model holding at university \times grade for avoidance style. The results of simple slope analysis were shown in Figure1 and 2. Figure1 showed that when grade was -1SD, role model holding at university was not related to avoidance style ($p=.353$), but avoidance style

showed direction to decreasing with increasing role model holding at university ($b=-0.526, SE=0.349, p=.132$) when grade was +1SD. Figure2 showed that when role model holding at high school +1SD, role model holding at university was not related to dependent style ($p=.392$), but dependent style increased with increasing role model holding at university ($b=0.599, SE=0.326, p<.10$) when role model holding at high school was -1SD. Those results suggested that role model holding at university had conditioned power to decrease avoidance style of help-seeking and increase dependent style of help-seeking.

In the analysis so far, we have treated the three help-seeking styles as parameters, respectively. In reality, the three parameters must be mixed in individuals in a specific balance. Therefore, we classified individuals into categories based on the balance of three help-seeking parameters through cluster analysis, and conducted nominal regression analysis for help-seeking cluster as objective variables to reveal how role model holding at high school and university show effects on help-seeking cluster.

Clustering help-seeking style

To find clusters of help-seeking style, hierar-

Table 5 Regression analysis based on parameters of help-seeking (objective variables=three styles of help-seeking respectively

Predictor	Avoidance style	Independent style	Dependent style
Role model holding at high school	-.21+	-.09	.27**
Role model holding at university	-.05	.13	.05
Grade	.11	-.09	.05
Role model holding at high school \times Role model holding at university	.09	-.11	-.18+
Role model holding at high school \times Grade	-.10	.04	.03
Role model holding at university \times Grade	-.18+	-.06	.05
R^2	.061	.05	.12**

** $p<.01, *p<.05, *p<.10$

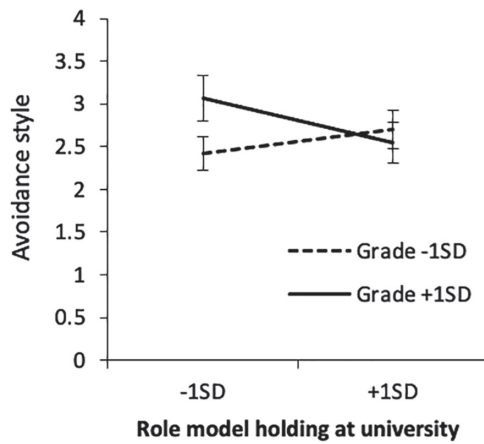


Figure 1 Simple slope analysis between avoidance style and role model holding at university sliced by grade

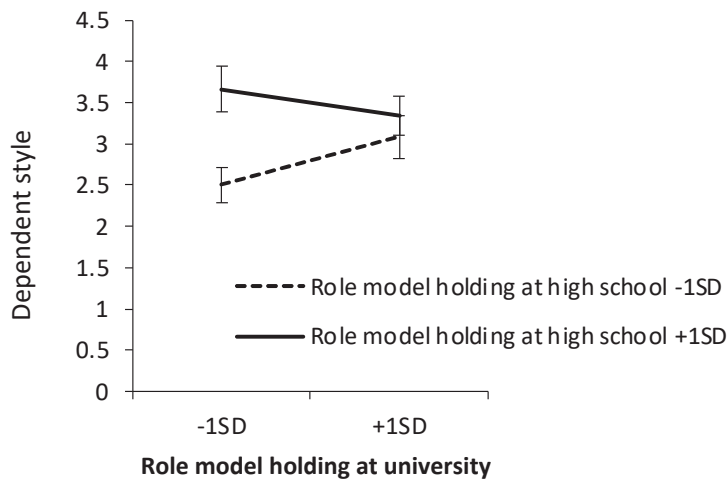


Figure 2 Simple slope analysis between dependent style and role model holding at high school sliced by role model holding at high school

chical cluster analysis was performed. To find the optimal number of help-seeking clusters, normal mixture distribution modeling was performed with the number of clusters specified as 1-5 and checked fit indices of each number of clusters (Table6). The number of clusters with the best goodness of fit indices was 4. Figure3 showed the results of hierarchical cluster analysis drawing the trait of

each four clusters. The first cluster was named Independent cluster because it was characterized by high independent style and low-dependent style. The second cluster was named Avoidance cluster because it was characterized by high avoidance style, and low remaining styles. The third cluster was named Hybrid cluster because it was characterized by showing high standardized score of

Table 6 Fit indices of clustering

N of clusters=	1	2	3	4	5
Log Likelihood=	-423.84	-405.89	-387.82	-380.38	-380.38
AIC=	859.68	837.77	815.64	814.75	828.75
BIC=	874.87	870.70	866.30	883.13	914.86
SBIC=	855.93	829.66	803.16	797.90	807.53

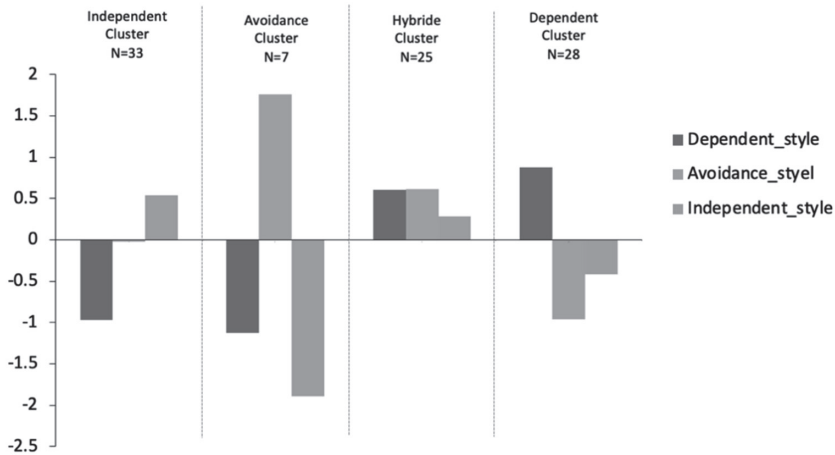


Figure 3 Trait of each help-seeking cluster

all three scores. The fourth cluster was named Dependent cluster because it was characterized by high-dependent style and low remaining styles. The cluster clarification was entered as respondent variable in a later regression analysis.

Table7 showed that role model holder at high school tended to belong to dependent cluster ($\chi^2=7.355, p<.10, CV=.281$), and Table8 showed role model holding at university had no effect on which help-seeking cluster respondents belonged to ($\chi^2=3.197, p=.362, CV=.186$).

Regression analysis based on cluster of help-seeking

Table9 showed the results of nominal regression analysis for help-seeking cluster as an objective variable, and for role model holding at high school and university as explana-

tory variables. The nominal regression analysis revealed that role model holding at high school increased the probability of getting belonging to dependent cluster compared to belonging to avoidant cluster.

Discussion

This study investigated how role model holdings were related to help-seeking style and cluster. Our results suggested that role model holding affected reducing the tendency to be avoidant style and increasing the tendency to be dependent style. As most important, independent help-seeking style did not increase with holding role model.

It is an important finding that having a role model can reduce the tendency to avoid requests for help. It is difficult to ask for help casually. Asking for help will make it known that people cannot solve the problem on their

Table 7 Cross table between help-seeking cluster and role model holding at high school

		Role model holding at high school	
		Not holding	Holding
Help-seeking cluster	Independent cluster	10	23
	Avoidant cluster	2	5
	Hybrid cluster	6	19
	Dependent cluster	▼ 1	△ 27

Note △ represented measured frequency was higher than expected frequency in the cell, and ▼ represented expected frequency was higher than measured frequency in the cell.

Table 8 Cross table between help-seeking cluster and role model holding at university

		Role model holding at university	
		Not holding	Holdign
Help-seeking cluster	Indeopendent cluster	17	15
	Avoidant cluster	3	4
	Hybrid cluster	18	7
	Dependent cluster	18	10

Note △ represented measured frequency was higher than expected frequency in the cell, and ▼ represented expected frequency was higher than measured frequency in the cell.

Table 9 Nominal regression analysis: the reference category=avoidant cluster

Predictor	b	SE	95%Lower	95%Upper	Z	df	p
Independent type	1.06	2.25	-3.36	5.48	.47	1.0	.64
Role model holding at high school	-.13	.88	-1.86	1.60	-.15	1.0	.88
Role model holding at university	.48	.81	-1.11	2.07	.59	1.0	.55
Hybrid type	-.87	2.28	-5.33	3.59	-.38	1.0	.70
Role model holding at high school	.12	.92	-1.67	1.92	.13	1.0	.89
Role model holding at university	1.22	.86	-.47	2.92	1.41	1.0	.16
Dependent type	-4.13	2.82	-9.66	1.39	-1.47	1.0	.14
Role model holding at high school	2.30	1.28	-.21	4.81	1.80	1.0	.07
Role model holding at university	.78	.85	-.89	2.45	.92	1.0	.36

**p<.01., *p<.05., .p<.10

own. There is a risk of damaging their reputation and thus their self-esteem. The fear of having their social reputation at stake is itself a psychological threat. Based on this premise, it is an important finding that we found factors that promote help-seeking. The possession of a role model facilitates seeking help.

Why does the possession of a role model in-

crease the likelihood that a request for help will be made? Role models also function as someone with whom one can casually consult. Or, having a role model helps people acquire the competency to consult with others more easily: because role model functions as a model of behavior, it is possible that one can get social skills for seeking help through modeling

or observational learning; because role model improves role model holders' goal setting, information exploration, self-esteem, behavioral planning and decision making, it is possible that one acquires cognitive dispositions that makes it easier to request help (Mizoguchi & Mizokami).

Alternatively, possessing a role model does not necessarily facilitate help-seeking in the most ideal way. Holding the role model facilitates to make seeking help dependently but not "independently." Ideally, help-seeking style should be independent style because depending style of help seeking decrease social adaptation: excessive dependence leads to psychological exhaustion of those around them. Our analysis did not show at all that holding role model at high school or at university facilitates acquiring the tendency to be "independent" help-seeker.

The remaining research tasks on this research were that: at first, whether concrete different agents of role model showed different effects on help seeking of role model holder; secondly, it must be revealed that who should be role model and what details role model should give to role model holder to make them seek help independently.

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