

The Different Types of Role Model Prompted the Different Types of Help-seeking

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Introduction

People may refrain from seeking advice or help when faced with difficulties (DePaulo, Nadler, & Fisher, 1983). Seeking help when a problem cannot be solved alone is preferable to giving up or continuing alone without success (Newman, 1991). Despite this, people often do not seek help when it could alleviate their distress.

Two reasons for the difficulty in seeking help in the face of difficulties have been focused on so far. The first is considered to stem from the perception that asking for help may be regarded as 'not autonomous' (Deci & Ryan, 1987). Requests for help may be inhibited by the presumption that seeing the resolution of difficulties on one's own is a requirement for maturity. Secondly, it has been believed that requests for help are restrained because of fears that seeking help from others will be a demonstration of incompetence (Nadler, 1987). It is rational to ask for help from others when there is concern about one's own competence, but in practice, the anxiety about appearing incompetent is foregrounded, and requests for help are discouraged (Newman & Goldin, 1990). These two problems can be considered two aspects of a single factor. Person is more concerned about covering up his or her own incompetence than about overcoming the problem.

This study aims to explore ways in interpersonal relationships that could resolve the tendency to avoid requests for help.

Different types of requests for help are assumed to be possible. The first is a request for help made when attempts to overcome difficulties on one's own have failed (Butler & Neuman, 1995). This is sometimes referred to as the 'autonomous type'. Autonomous type help seeking is considered to be an adaptive style of help seeking, as it involves understanding and adapting to the problem s/he faced with and can be expected to change towards autonomy in the long term, as the help is sought when the person is proactively facing difficulties. The second type is the 'excessive type'. This is a help-seeking style that seeks solutions rather than hints and explanations, and aims to overcome difficulties rather than understand them. It is not linked to environmental adaptation and may not be adaptive in the long term (Newman & Schwager, 1995). The tendency to avoid help-seeking should be eliminated, but that it would be more desirable to acquire an 'autonomous' help-seeking style that is adaptive in the long term.

As an interpersonal relationship that facilitates help-seeking, in this paper the focus is on the possession of role models. A role model is a person who provides values and goals, serves as a role model and from whom one wishes to learn through imitation. Many psychosocial adjustment benefits can be

associated with role modelling. Possessing a role model provides inspiration, motivation, good habits, goals, etc.

The aim of this research is to explore how holding a role model facilitates help-seeking. Holding a role model allows the holder to acquire goals, behaviors and motivations. The acquisition of goals, behaviors, and motivations may contribute to the suppression of concerns about one's own competence and concerns that one's own incompetence will be revealed. According to Mizoguchi et al. (2020), several different types of functions are provided by role models to their holders. These are 'identification (wanting to emulate, wanting to live like this in the future)', 'support and advice (receiving guidance, advice, encouragement, consultation)', 'role modelling (reference, receiving inspiration, learning by observation, listening to experiences, broadening horizons)', 'teaching' and 'respect'. The purpose of this study is to examine how these functions work with people who have low self-esteem and promote help-seeking behavior, and to examine the correspondence between the two. The research was conducted with university students, or to compare the influence of having a role model in high school and having a role model in university on the acquisition of a help-seeking style.

Method

Participants and procedure

A questionnaire survey was conducted among university students attending University A. Fourteen first-year students, 17 second-year students, 16 third-year students and 47 fourth-year students responded to the survey using a smartphone or similar device. There were 60 males and 34 females. The total number of respondents was 94.

Measures

Role Model Scale (RMS): the Role Model Scale (RMS) of Mizoguchi et al. (2020) was used; the RMS was a scale consisting of a four-factor structure and 30 items in total. Specifically, the RMS consisted of Respect/Ideal Image (8 items), Expanded Vision (7 items), Behavioural Model (3 items) and Avoidance (5 items). In order to reduce the burden on respondents in this study, selected items of the RMS were extracted and asked to be answered. Specifically, three items with high factor loadings each were used from 'Respect and ideal image', 'Expansion of vision', 'Model of behaviour' and 'Model of behaviour'. The RMS were asked to recall one 'role model from high school' and one 'role model from university' each, and to respond as an impression rating of the person they recalled.

Help-Seeking Style Scale (HSSS): the Nagai's (2013) Help-Seeking Style Scale (HSSS) was used; the HSSS consisted of 'excessive style (4 items)', 'avoidant style (4 items)' and 'independent style (4 items)'. In order to reduce the burden on respondents in this study, three items with high factor loadings from each subscale were selected for the survey respectively.

Analysis

A confirmatory factor analysis was first conducted to determine the factor structure of the two scales. The scale scores calculated on the basis of the factor structure obtained were used in later analyses. Next, the correlation coefficients between the subscales of the two scales were calculated to examine the relationship between the two constructs. Finally, a multiple regression model was estimated with the HSSS subscales as response variables and the RMS subscales as explanatory variables. Through this analysis, we aimed to clarify how the possession of role models conditions help-seeking behavior.

The study was approved by the Ethical Review Committee of Yamanashi Gakuin University (22-006) .

Results

Factor analysis of role model scale (RMS)

When the number of factors in the RMS was explored with diagonal SMC, MAP, parallel analysis, and SMC parallel analysis, all methods proposed a three-factor structure. An exploratory factor analysis with maximum likelihood method and promax rotation, specifying three factors, yielded a simple three factor structure that could be interpreted. The first factor was named 'ideal' because it brought together items such as 'I want to live like a ____' and 'I admire the way of life of ____'. Factor 2 was named 'mental' because it brought together items such as '_____ worries with me' and '_____ is willing to talk to me about it'. The third factor was named 'new value' because it brought together '_____ gave me new ways of thinking and values' and '_____ gave me a chance to think about' (Table 1).

Tab. 1 Pattern matrix of Role model scale (RMS)

Item	Factor			h^2
	1	2	3	
I want to live like a _____	.84	-.01	-.01	.70
I admire the way of life of _____	.83	-.16	-.06	.66
_____ is my ideal image	.71	.16	.09	.61
I try to act like a _____	.67	.14	-.01	.50
I became interested in what _____ was doing	.53	-.12	.06	.29
I started doing the same thing because _____ was doing it	.38	.10	.03	.17
_____ worries with me	-.03	.93	-.18	.82
_____ is willing to talk to me about it	.16	.84	-.05	.75
_____ accepts my ideas	-.12	.71	.28	.65
_____ gave me new ways of thinking and values	.08	-.11	.82	.68
_____ gave me a chance to think about	-.07	.12	.77	.62
_____ has broadened my horizons	.07	-.06	.64	.42
Factor Contribution	2.97	2.34	1.99	

Factor analysis of help-seeking style scale (HSSS)

Exploring the number of factors in the HSSS, diagonal SMC, MAP, parallel analysis, SMC parallel analysis,

all methods proposed a three-factor structure; an exploratory factor analysis with maximum likelihood method and promax rotation, specifying three factors, yielded a simple structure that could be interpreted. The first factor consisted of items such as 'If you have a problem, even if it is not a serious one, talk to them about it' and 'Talk to them about even relatively trivial problems', and was therefore named 'Excessive' was named. Factor 2 consisted of items such as 'I don't talk to them even if the problem is something I can't solve by myself' and 'Even if my problems are serious and I can't solve them alone, I don't talk to them about them', so it was named 'Avoid'. The third factor was 'Try things out on your own before asking for help, and ask for help when you get stuck', 'Even if it is a little difficult, face your problems by yourself, and if you still can't do it, ask for help', and so on, and was named 'Autonomous' (Tab2).

Tab. 2 Pattern matrix of Role model scale (HSSS)

Item	Factor			h^2
	1	2	3	
If you have a problem, even if it is not a serious one, talk to them about it	.95	-.06	.02	.94
Talk to them about even relatively trivial problems.	.87	.00	-.02	.77
Even if it seems like nothing if you think about it, you talk to them about it.	.80	.04	-.01	.61
I don't talk to them even if the problem is something I can't solve by myself.	.14	.98	.05	.87
Even if my problems are serious and I can't solve them alone, I don't talk to them about them.	-.09	.83	-.02	.75
I take care of my problems by myself until the end.	-.10	.66	-.05	.49
Try things out on your own before asking for help, and ask for help when you get stuck.	-.05	-.01	.88	.78
Even if it is a little difficult, face your problems by yourself, and if you still can't do it, ask for help.	.06	.04	.81	.64
Try things out on my own first and then ask for help.	-.04	-.04	.78	.61
Factor Contribution	2.64	2.40	2.05	

Correlation between role model scale and help-seeking scale

The correlation coefficients between the scale scores of RMS and the scores of HSSS were presented in Tab3.

Tab. 3 Bivariate correlation matrix

	in high school			in univeristy		
	idea	mentor	new value	idea	mentor	new value
Excessive	.31 **	.10	.19	.18	.17	.23 +
Avoid	-.24 *	-.20 +	-.14	-.13	-.31 *	-.14
Autonomous	-.06	.13	-.07	.07	.40 **	.23 +

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

Multiple regression with help-seeking style as response variable and with role modeling as explanatory variable

Multiple regression analysis was conducted with each of the three HSSS subfactors as the objective variable and each of the RMS subfactors from high school/university as the explanatory variable (Tab4).

The impact of RMS in high school on the current HSSS showed that ideal had a positive impact on Excessive ($\beta=.44, p<.05$) and a negative impact on Avoid ($\beta=-.38, p<.05$). Examining the impact of RMS in high school on the current HSSS, mentor had a positive impact on Autonomous ($\beta=-.57, p<.01$).

Tab. 4 Multiple regression with help-seeking style as response variable and with role modeling as explanatory variable

	Excessive	Avoide	Autonomous	VIF
Role modeling in high school				
ideal	.44 *	-.38 *	-.06	1.67
mentor	-.11	-.05	-.20	1.82
new value	.07	-.08	-.02	1.07
Role modeling in university				
idea	-.33	.09	-.08	1.82
mentor	.20	-.25	.57 **	1.96
new value	.28 +	-.07	.28 +	1.12
	R^2	.23 **	.26 **	.27 **

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

Discussion

This study examined the influence of having a role model in high school/university on current help-seeking styles. In respect to the influence of high school, it was found that having an ideal person in high school led to a strong Excessive style and a weak Avoidant style in the present. The influence of having a role model during university showed that having a role model who provides help can lead to the Autonomous help-seeking style.

Having a role model was found to reduce the tendency to avoid help-seeking (Avoid) and promote an autonomous help-seeking style (Autonomous). Having a role model is thought to promote career reflection, self-understanding, learning new skills and competencies, challenging difficulties, setting high goals and improving behavior (McCullough, 2013). It can be seen that the presence of role models has a strong impact on providing learning opportunities and improving behavior. The present study suggests that the presence of a role model has the effect of encouraging the expression of helping behaviors that are often avoided.

On the other hand, role model holding was shown to have negative aspects on helping behavior. Namely, it reinforces the 'Excessive' style. Previous research has shown that an excessive help-seeking style is associated with a tendency to confirm again and again (Nagai, 2013). Furthermore, a tendency to make inappropriate self-disclosures when requesting help has also been found (Nagai, 2017). Additionally, although they possess many support resources, they are known to have high levels of depression and denial anxiety (Nagai, 2019). A state in which an Excessive help-seeking style is exhibited may rather indicate that psychological maladjustment is occurring.

Although the mechanism by which role model possession influences help-seeking seems to be unclear, there are studies that focus on attachment styles: Turan et al (2014) investigated the influence of internal working models and rumination on help-seeking behavior, and found that holding a stable attachment model facilitated help-seeking. More specifically, attachment models towards others, rather than attachment models towards the self, influenced help-seeking. If the acquisition of a role model increases the stability of the attachment style, then a mechanism can be postulated whereby the acquisition of a role model increases the stability of the attachment style, resulting in a reduction in evaluation anxiety and facilitating the help-seeking behavior. This point is to be addressed in the future.

The present study classified three types of role models and examined which type of role model possession during high school/university facilitates current help-seeking behavior. As a remaining question, it is necessary to examine the influence of psychological adjustment state as a mediating factor in the relationship between role model possession and help-seeking behavior. Help-seeking refers to the autonomous but appropriate use of others' help in constructively overcoming problems beyond one's control. Depending on how poor the psychological adjustment state is, the type of assistance that is appropriate to elicit from role models and the effective style of help-seeking may vary. In other words, it is necessary to examine the relationship between the psychological adjustment state and the type of role model in relation to the attainment of an autonomous help-seeking style.

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