

Original Paper

The Causal Relationship among Rolefulness, Self-esteem, and Depression

Daiki Kato^{1*} & Mikie Suzuki²

¹ Kinjo Gakuin University, Nagoya, Japan

² University of Human Environments, Okazaki, Japan

* Daiki Kato, Kinjo Gakuin University, Nagoya, Japan

Received: July 29, 2020

Accepted: August 5, 2020

Online Published: August 10, 2020

doi:10.22158/jpbr.v2n2p32

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22158/jpbr.v2n2p32>

Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to examine the causal relationship between rolefulness and depression. In particular, the mediating effect of self-esteem on the relationship between rolefulness and depression was examined. Based on data from 856 Japanese high school students, three models were constructed and the validity thereof examined. The most appropriate model revealed that social rolefulness affected internal rolefulness, self-esteem, and depression. Subsequently, internal rolefulness improved self-esteem and reduced depression.

Keywords

rolefulness, self-esteem, depression

1. Introduction

1.1 Literature Review

Rolefulness may be defined as the continuous sense of role satisfaction in our daily lives (Kato & Suzuki, 2018). The concept encompasses social and internal aspects. Social rolefulness is a sense of role satisfaction based on social experiences and relationships with others and includes notions of one's role being necessary for other people and having a role in a group to which one belongs. In contrast, internal rolefulness is a more internalized feeling of role satisfaction and becomes the basis of the cognition for individuality and confidence. Moreover, it involves notions of realizing one's identity through one's role and gaining confidence because of one's role.

Previous studies have revealed a significant correlation between self-esteem and depression. Cong, Ling, and Aun (2019) revealed that both self-esteem and problem-focused coping negatively correlated with adolescents' depression. Furthermore, self-esteem mediated the association between

problem-focused coping and adolescents' depression. Saha and Tamanna (2018) demonstrated that an increase in maternal depression causes a decrease in adolescents' self-esteem and academic achievement. Moritz and Roberts (2018) suggested that depression and low self-esteem function to prejudice negatively how individuals believe they are perceived by others in new acquaintanceships and therefore, may be imperative in the development of interpersonal relationships. In essence, self-esteem and depression are key concepts in understanding the effect of interpersonal relationships and social roles on mental health.

Kato and Suzuki (2018) revealed the significant relationship between rolefulness and self-esteem. Furthermore, Szkody and McKinney (2019) found that the perception of friend support was indirectly related to internalizing and externalizing problems through self-esteem. Social support and self-esteem were demonstrated to both have significantly positive predictive effects on life satisfaction (Li & Bian, 2016).

Rolefulness development in adolescence is also a fundamental factor in the promotion of mental health. Suzuki and Kato (2019) revealed a significant relationship between school maladjustment and rolefulness in a study that examined the prospective associations between them. Social relationships function as both a risk and protective factor for depression (Nguyen, Walton, Thomas, Mouzon, & Taylor, 2019). Nho, Yoon, Seo, and Cui (2019) found a full mediating effect of social support in the relationship between depression and school adjustment. One may, therefore, deduce that constructing good relationships with others and receiving appropriate social support is a core factor involved in preventing depression.

Further evidence has revealed the moderating role of social support in the association between self-esteem and depression (Shen, Shi, Zhang, Tsamlag, Wang, Chang, ..., Cai, 2019). Social skills also have significant relationships with self-esteem (Losa-Iglesias, López López, Rodríguez Vazquez, & Becerro de Bengoa-Vallejo, 2017) and depression (Moeller & Seehuus, 2019). Furthermore, while rolefulness correlates with social skills significantly (Kato & Suzuki, 2018), it may be a predictor of self-esteem and depression. Accordingly, we hypothesized a dynamic interactive model among rolefulness, self-esteem, and depression.

1.1 The Causal Relationship Model of Rolefulness, Self-esteem, and Depression

While both social and internal rolefulness have been found to correlate with self-esteem and depression significantly (Kato & Suzuki, 2018), social rolefulness has been found to have a more significant correlation with these variables than internal rolefulness. Therefore, it was hypothesized that social rolefulness would be the starting point of the path model. The primary model, depicted in Figure 1, was constructed in accordance with the hypothesis. Social rolefulness, as the starting point of the model, affects internal rolefulness, self-esteem, and depression. Subsequently, internal rolefulness improves self-esteem and decreases depression.

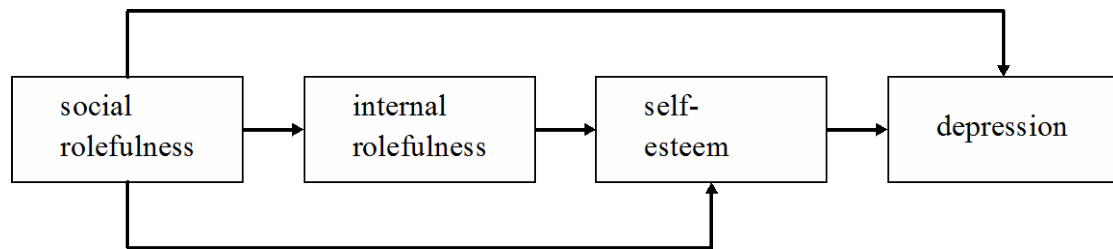


Figure 1. Model 1

The second model, presented in Figure 2, is based on an alternative hypothesis. The position of social rolefulness and internal rolefulness is reversed in this model. Consequently, while internal rolefulness influences self-esteem, depression and social rolefulness mediate its effect.

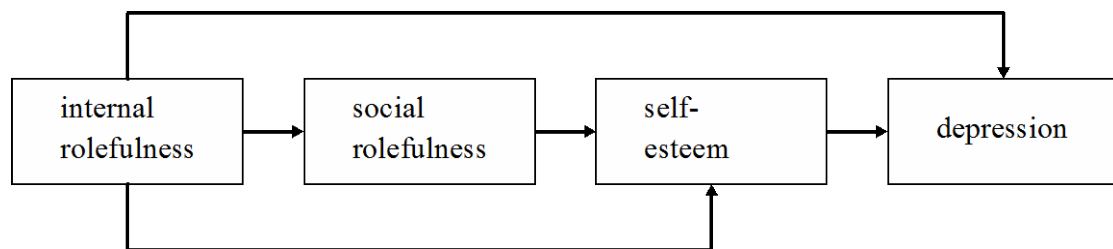


Figure 2. Model 2

The third model, illustrated in Figure 3, employs the latent variable. Both social and internal rolefulness factors are converged into a rolefulness factor, which affects self-esteem. It continuously reduces depression.

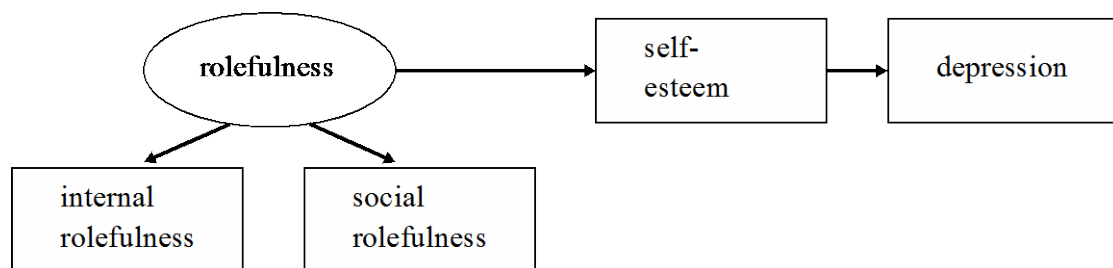


Figure 3. Model 3

The purpose of the present study was to confirm the validity of these models. We hypothesized that the first model would be the most appropriate to describe the relationship among rolefulness, self-esteem, and depression.

2. Method

2.1 Participants

A total of 1,029 Japanese high school students' data (484 males and 545 females) were collected. These data were the same as those collected by Kato and Suzuki (2018). As some students' data were incomplete, the data of 856 students were analyzed.

2.2 Measurements

The rolefulness scale (Kato & Suzuki, 2018) was employed to measure social ($\alpha = 0.87$) and internal rolefulness ($\alpha = 0.90$). Self-esteem ($\alpha = 0.88$) was measured by employing KINDLE (Ravens-Sieberger & Bullinger, 1998a, 1998b), and the Depression Self-Rating Scale for Children (Birmaher, 1981) was used to measure depression ($\alpha = 0.84$).

3. Result

The validity of the models was analyzed by employing Structure Equation Modeling (SEM). The result of SEM revealed that the fit indexes were the most appropriate in model 1 (CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = 0.00, AIC = 6019.273). The fit indexes of model 2 (CFI = 0.948, RMSEA = 0.253, AIC = 6074.692) and model 3 (CFI = 0.921, RMSEA = 0.221, AIC = 6102.648) were inadequate and in model 1, AIC was the lowest. The final model that depicts the relationships among rolefulness, self-esteem, and depression, based on the model 1, is presented in Figure 4. The description of error variables are omitted from the figure.

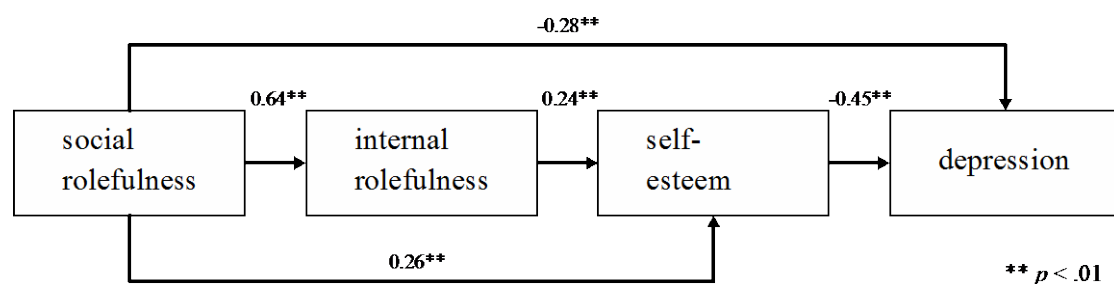


Figure 4. The Relationships among Rolefulness, Self-esteem, and Depression

4. Discussion

The result of the analysis revealed that social rolefulness improved internal rolefulness and self-esteem and decreased depression. Furthermore, internal rolefulness mediated the relationship between social rolefulness and self-esteem, and self-esteem reduced depression. The primary aspect of the model is that social rolefulness is first developed and internal rolefulness, subsequently. Kato and Suzuki (2020) examined the effect of collaborative group work on rolefulness and found that it facilitated both social and internal rolefulness. A comparison of effect size revealed that social rolefulness increased through work more than internal rolefulness. Consequently, social rolefulness reflects the result of

communication with others directly and it may be changed in the short-term because of the influence of social experience. In contrast, internal rolefulness is concerned with deeper parts of our mind such as identity and self-confidence (Kato & Suzuki, 2018) and needs a longer period to develop. These features of both factors are reflected in the order of the variables in the accepted model.

The term awareness is important in the context of cognitive behavior therapy. Metacognitive awareness mediated the reduction effect on depression (Katsukura, Ito, Nedate, & Kanetsuki, 2009). The results of this study revealed that the awareness of internal psychological processes is important to cope with mental health problems such as depression. Internal rolefulness correlated with identity and self-esteem significantly (Kato & Suzuki, 2018). In other words, internal rolefulness is concerned with the self-awareness of our core psychosocial tendencies including identity and self-esteem. This awareness of self may be an important factor because internal rolefulness was found to mediate the causal relationship among social rolefulness, self-esteem, and depression.

Furthermore, self-esteem mediated the relationship between rolefulness and depression. As noted previously, Cong et al. (2019) revealed that self-esteem mediated the relationship between coping style and depression. Zhou, Li, Tian, and Huebner (2020) found that loneliness mediates the relationship between self-esteem and depression. Both coping style and loneliness are established in accordance with social relationships, which may also be applied to rolefulness. Thus, self-esteem is an important medium between rolefulness and depression.

In conclusion, the results of the study revealed the causal relationship between rolefulness and depression. The results further demonstrated that self-esteem mediates the relationship between rolefulness and depression. It is recommended that the effect of rolefulness on other mental health indexes be examined in future studies.

References

- Birelson, P. (1981). The validity of depressive disorder in childhood and the development of a self-rating scale: A research report. *Journal of Psychology and Psychiatry*, 22, 73-88. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-7610.1981.tb00533.x>
- Cong, C. W., Ling, W. S., & Aun, T. S. (2019). Problem-focused coping and depression among adolescents: Mediating effect of self-esteem. *Current Psychology: A Journal for Diverse Perspectives on Diverse Psychological Issues*, 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-019-00522-4>
- Kato, D., & Suzuki, M. (2018). Rolefulness: Social and internal sense of role satisfaction. *Education*, 138(3), 257-263.
- Kato, D., & Suzuki, M. (2020). The effects of collaborative block creation on the sense of rolefulness. *Journal of Psychology & Behavior Research*, 2(1), 39-42. <https://doi.org/10.22158/jpbr.v2n1p39>
- Katsukura, R., Ito, Y., Nedate, K., & Kanetsuki, M. (2009). Mindfulness training and depressive tendencies in college students: Mediating effects of metaconitive awareness. *Japanese Journal of*

- Behavior Therapy*, 35(1), 41-52.
- Li, B., & Bian, Y. (2016). Junior middle school students' life satisfaction and effect of social support and self-esteem: 3 years follow up. *Chinese Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 24(5), 900-904.
- Losa-Iglesias, M. E., López López, D., Rodríguez Vazquez, R., & Becerro de Bengoa-Vallejo, R. (2017). Relationships between social skills and self-esteem in nurses: A questionnaire study. *Contemporary Nurse*, 53(6), 681-690. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10376178.2018.1441729>
- Moeller, R. W., & Seehuus, M. (2019). Loneliness as a mediator for college students' social skills and experiences of depression and anxiety. *Journal of Adolescence*, 73, 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2019.03.006>
- Moritz, D., & Roberts, J. E. (2018). Self-other agreement and metaperception accuracy across the Big Five: Examining the roles of depression and self-esteem. *Journal of Personality*, 86(2), 296-307. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jopy.12313>
- Nguyen, A. W., Walton, Q. L., Thomas, C., Mouzon, D. M., & Taylor, H. O. (2019). Social support from friends and depression among African Americans: The moderating influence of education. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 253, 1-7. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2019.04.013>
- Nho, C. R., Yoon, S., Seo, J., & Cui, L. (2019). The mediating effect of perceived social support between depression and school adjustment in refugee children in South Korea. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 106, 104474. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2019.104474>
- Ravens-Sieberer, U. & Bullinger, M. (1998a). Assessing health related quality of life in chronically ill children with the German KINDL: First psychometric and content-analytical results. *Quality of Life Research*, 4(7), 399-407. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1008853819715>
- Ravens-Sieberer, U., & Bullinger, M. (1998b). News from the KINDL-Questionnaire—A new version for adolescents. *Quality of Life Research*, 7, 653. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1008853819715>
- Saha, A. K., & Tamanna, M. N. (2018). Effect of maternal depression on adolescents self-esteem and academic achievement. *Journal of Psychosocial Research*, 13(2), 275-285. <https://doi.org/10.32381/JPR.2018.13.02.2>
- Shen, Q., Shi, Y., Zhang, S., Tsamlag, L., Wang, H., Chang, R., ..., Cai, Y. (2019). How involuntary subordination and social support influence the association between self-esteem and depression: A moderated mediation model. *BMC Psychiatry*, 19(1), 390. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-019-2330-1>
- Suzuki, M. & Kato, D. (2019). School Maladjustment and Rolefulness during High School: A Longitudinal Cross-Lagged Panel Analysis. *The Japanese Journal of Personality*, 28(2), 171-174. <https://doi.org/10.2132/personality.28.2.10>
- Szkody, E., & McKinney, C. (2019). Indirect effects of social support on psychological health through self-esteem in emerging adulthood. *Journal of Family Issues*, 40(17), 2439-2455. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X19859612>

Zhou, J., Li, X., Tian, L., & Huebner, E. S. (2020). Longitudinal association between low self-esteem and depression in early adolescents: The role of rejection sensitivity and loneliness. *Psychology and Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice*, 93(1), 54-71.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/papt.12207>