

## *Original Paper*

# Relationship between HEXACO Personality Traits and Rolefulness

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### **Abstract**

*The main purpose of the present study was to examine the relationships between HEXACO personality traits and rolefulness. Data were collected from 96 Japanese university students. The results showed that honesty–humility was negatively associated with social rolefulness, and extraversion and openness were related to increased social rolefulness. In addition, openness to experience and emotionality were associated with increased internal rolefulness. This model revealed significant relationships between personality traits and rolefulness, contributing to the understanding of how rolefulness develops based on individual characteristics.*

### **Keywords**

*HEXACO personality model, rolefulness, university students*

## **1. Introduction**

Rolefulness is 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. It includes notions of one's role as being necessary for other people and is associated with having a role in a group to which one belongs. In contrast, internal rolefulness is a more subjective feeling of role satisfaction and provides a cognitive basis for individuality and confidence. Internal rolefulness is also associated with self-identity and increased self-confidence because of one's role.

Kato and Suzuki (2020a) examined the causal relationship between rolefulness, self-esteem, and depression. The result of their study showed that rolefulness increased self-esteem and decreased depression. Kato et al. (2020) also examined the relationships among rolefulness, self-esteem, and depression using the four-quadrant model. The model includes four categories, defined as integrated,

developing, groundless, and immature rolefulness. Individuals in the integrated category have high scores in both social and internal rolefulness. In contrast, those in the immature group have low scores in both social and internal rolefulness. The developing group only has high scores for social rolefulness, while the groundless category displays high scores for internal rolefulness only. A comparison of the four groups indicated that both self-esteem and depression differed significantly among them.

Collaborative group activities have also been found to facilitate both social and internal rolefulness (Kato & Suzuki, 2020b). Suzuki and Kato (2019) examined the relationships among social competence, maladjustment, and rolefulness using cross-lagged panel analysis. The results showed significant relationships among the factors, with rolefulness mediating the relationship between social competence and maladjustment.

In this study, we focused on the HEXACO personality model (Ashton & Lee, 2009). This model is based on the Big Five personality theory but includes an additional factor. It comprises six sub-scales: honesty-humility, emotionality, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience. As mentioned above, self-esteem, depression, and social adjustment are related to rolefulness. These factors also relate to personality. McKay, Garcia, Clapper, and Shultz (2018) showed that benevolent personality traits were related to careless responding and used the HEXACO model and self-esteem to define benevolent personality traits. Extraversion, conscientiousness, and openness to experience significantly correlate with career adaptability (Udayar, Fiori, Thalmayer, & Rossier, 2018). Bourdage, Roulin, and Tarraf (2018) especially focused on honesty and examined the relationship with impression management. The result showed that there is a positive relationship between them. Therefore, honesty is concerned with how we show ourselves to others in social settings. Sartori, Ceschi, Costantini, and Scalco (2016) developed the new scale for role-related personal profile based on the Big Five model. There were significant relationships between HEXACO personality traits and decision-making competence (Weller, Ceschi, Hirsch, Sartori, & Costantini, 2018). These attempts demonstrate that the Big Five and HEXACO models are closely related to our social roles.

Therefore, the main purpose of the present study is to investigate the relationship between HEXACO personality traits and rolefulness. We hypothesized that HEXACO traits would affect the formation of both social and internal rolefulness. Based on this hypothesis, we developed a causal relationship model and examined its validity.

## **2. Method**

### *2.1 Participants*

The sample consisted of 96 Japanese university students (Mean age = 19.83, male = 18, female = 78).

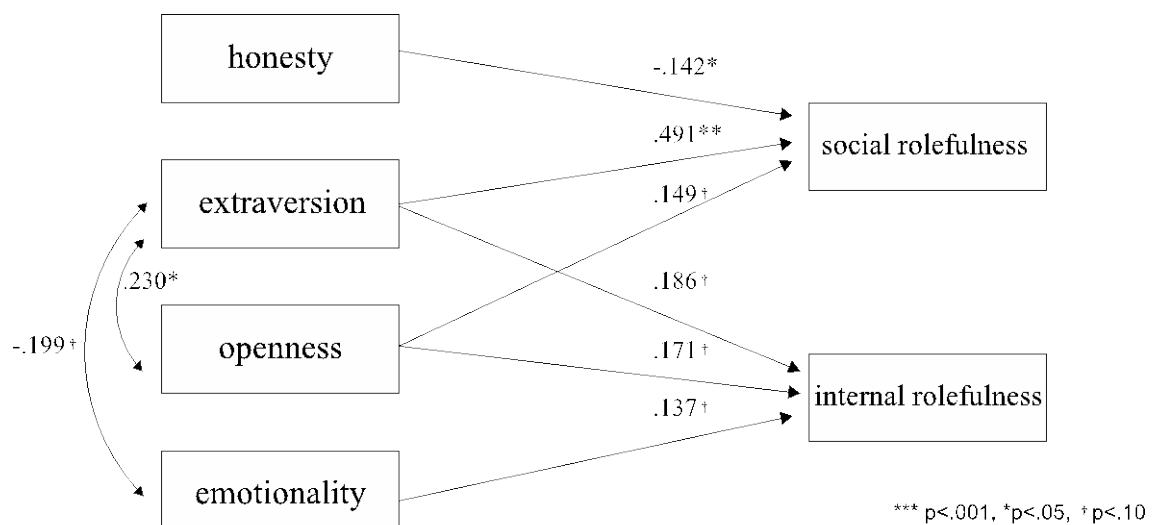
### *2.2 Measurements*

Personality was measured using the HEXACO-60 scale, Japanese version (Wakabayashi, 2014). The instrument was employed to measure the following six dimensions: Honesty–humility ( $\alpha = .69$ ),

Emotionality ( $\alpha = .68$ ), Extraversion ( $\alpha = .80$ ), Agreeableness ( $\alpha = .61$ ), Conscientiousness ( $\alpha = .65$ ), Open to experience ( $\alpha = .77$ ). The rolefulness scale (Kato & Suzuki, 2018) was employed to measure social rolefulness ( $\alpha = .87$ ) and internal rolefulness ( $\alpha = .87$ ).

### 3. Result

The validity of the models was analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The result of SEM revealed that the fit indexes were appropriate (CFI = 0.981, RESEA = 0.056). The model that depicts the relationships among personality and rolefulness is presented in Figure 1. The description of error variables is omitted from the figure.



**Figure 1. Causal Relationships among HEXACO Traits and Rolefulness**

### 4. Discussion

The result of the present study showed that honesty–humility was associated with lower levels of social rolefulness. Ceschi, Sartori, Dickert, and Costantini (2016) showed how honesty–humility moderates the relationship between job demands and exhaustion. Therefore, individuals with high levels of honesty–humility may be more vulnerable to overwork due to difficulty in establishing their own pace. These tendencies decrease self-confidence and may suppress social rolefulness. Items in the social rolefulness subscale, such as “I can apply my strong point for society,” reflect the relationship of social rolefulness to self-confidence. Thus, high levels of honesty–humility may be a risk factor for decreasing social rolefulness.

Both extraversion and openness to experience are related to variables, such as interpersonal relationships and curiosity, which in turn affect how one relates to their environment. This similarity may explain the significant correlation between these two factors observed in the present study. Extraversion and openness to experience increase both social and internal rolefulness. The path from

extraversion to social rolefulness was especially strong. Social rolefulness is recognized based on feedback from others and has strong interpersonal features. Therefore, the path between extraversion and social rolefulness may be explained by their interpersonal nature.

In addition, the results showed that emotionality increased internal rolefulness. The emotionality factor includes the subcategories of fearfulness, anxiety, dependence, and sentimentality. Items used to evaluate fearfulness and anxiety includes “When it comes to physical danger, I am very fearful” and “I sometimes can’t help worrying about little things”, respectively. Dependence was assessed by items such as “When I suffer from a painful experience, I need someone to make me feel comfortable”. Lastly, the sentimentality subscale contained items such as, “I feel like crying when I see other people crying”. Therefore, the concept of emotionality seems related to several aspects of state anxiety and sympathy. We must therefore be cautious when interpreting the meaning of the significant relationship between emotionality and internal rolefulness. In the HEXACO model, honesty-humility, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience are positive aspects. In contrast, emotionality includes risk factors for mental illness. At first glance, emotionality may appear to have positive effects on mental health, but facets such as “dependence” may also carry a risk of excessive dependence on others. A person with high emotionality may have low self-confidence and high dependency. They may have difficulty feeling confident in themselves and therefore rely on their social roles as a source of confidence. They may become dependent on occupational or family roles, feeling anxious when these roles are threatened. The lack of basic confidence and security may increase the need for satisfaction with internal roles.

This study showed a relationship between HEXACO personality traits and rolefulness. The latter was associated with positive traits, such as honesty-humility, extraversion, and openness to experience, as well as negative aspects, such as emotionality. The relationships between these factors must be investigated more carefully using subcategories of the HEXACO model in future studies.

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