

Reassurance-Seeking: Interpersonal Model of Depression and Psychometric Validation of the Chinese Reassurance Seeking Scale in Taiwan

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Coyne (1976b) proposed an interpersonal theory of depression to portrait the nature of the interaction between the depressed individual and her/his significant others. Such interaction will eventually produce an interpersonal space where depressed symptoms will elicit negative emotions and rejection from others. More importantly, it is assumed that these perceived rejections from others would in turn lead to the maintenance and/or deterioration of depressive symptoms in depressive individual. Joiner, Alfano, and Metalsky (1992) further postulated that reassurance-seeking serves as a core element in the interpersonal theory of depression. To demonstrate their theory, Joiner and his colleague have completed a series of research since 1992 on this topic and mainly found that reassurance-seeking not only serves to “moderate” the effects of depression, but also plays as a “vulnerability” role of depression. However, after a more thorough review of related literature, it is found that the item number and conception of the measure tool still need more clarifications and refinement. Therefore, two studies were conducted to examine: (1) the psychometric properties of the Chinese Reassurance-Seeking Scale (CRSS) including its factor structure, reliability and validity; (2) the contributory effects of reassurance-seeking on depression. Study 1 reported that the CRSS yielded satisfactory psychometric properties and demonstrated that reassurance-seeking is a reasonably cohesive, replicable, and valid construct. Study 2, by using a prospective research design in a group of initially symptom-free participants, showed that reassurance-seeking could predict future depression in response to stress and the predictive path was mediated by perceived negative responses from others. The finding is supportive to the **vulnerability/contribution hypothesis** of reassurance-seeking.

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