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## ABSTRACT

Employees help-seeking process toward professional psychological services: Focus on the inner experience of help-seekers

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The purpose of this study is to investigate the process of inner experience when employees seek professional psychological help. The subjects were 14 adults who had used psychological services. They were interviewed as to how and why they sought professional psychological services. Using a modified grounded theory approach, we identified 11 categories, 4 subcategories, and 34 concepts. A story line was delineated based on the results, which revealed three steps of the help-seeking process: “problem recognition,” “struggling period,” and “action period.” Besides those steps, there exists a “moderator” of the help-seeking process. The results showed that people gradually realize that they need professional psychological help during the struggling period, that is, problem recognition and coping, and later a trigger brings up this awareness in to their consciousness. This conscious awareness of the need for help was revealed to be the first step toward help-seeking behavior. Additionally, we presented guidelines for workplace intervention for promoting psychological services, since workplace factors, such as workplace mental health care system and relationships with boss and colleagues, influence people’s awareness that they need professional help.

**Key Words:** help-seeking, employee, workplace, modified grounded theory approach

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