

Mediating Effects of Institution Trust and Activity Commitment between Youth Institution Satisfaction and Activity Competence: Focus on Structural Equation Model

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to assess the mediating effects of institution trust and activity commitment between youth institution satisfaction and activity competence. First, there was a significantly positive correlation among institution trust and activity commitment between the youth institution satisfaction and activity competence. Second, satisfaction with the youth training institution can have indirect effects on youth activity, competence through trust in the youth institution, or youth commitment to activity, though not having a direct effect on youth activity competence.

Keywords: Institution Trust, Youth, Youth Activity Commitment, Youth Institution, Youth Activity Competence

1. Introduction

The social environment surrounding youths is changing rapidly and the rate of change is accelerating¹. Additionally, the learning gap is getting wider due to polarization of income distribution and social functions for youths are becoming weaker because of increasing family disintegration. All of these factors make issues related to youths more complicated². The youth population was one in two in the 1960s but as the low fertility of society continued, the figure dropped to one in four after the 2000s. This situation is expected to worsen by 2030 when the youth population will be 7,160,000 (13.7%) of the total population of 52,160,000 in Korea³. Thus, it is necessary for the youth facing this dramatic transition to have appropriate experiences and competencies to cope with it. Youth competence can be defined as “an integrated and comprehensive ability to contribute to one’s own successful life and society, including knowledge, skill, and attitude required in adolescence”⁴.

Thus, youth competence is an orientation towards positive changes in society and individuals as an agent for solving individual problems related to rapid social change⁴. It is youth activities that develop and realize such competencies. Specifically, youth activity is educational activity that aims for the sound growth and development of the youth. Through the activities, the youth becomes ‘a social resource of potentials’ and an ‘active being who leads social changes with adults’^{5,7}. Moreover, youth activity is based on experiences obtained through voluntary participation of the youth in the real world⁸. Furthermore, youth activity is considered more important because it is an experiential activity to cultivate abilities and character in the youth⁹, required to develop individual and social competence necessary for adolescence¹⁰. Article 10 of Juvenile Activity Promotion Act designates youth institutions where youths develop their interests and aptitudes, having a variety of experiences and participation. They are referred to as youth training halls, youth training centers, youth cultural centers, specialized facilities

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for youths, youth camps, and youth hostels, in general. Some representative youth institutions are youth training halls, youth training centers, and youth cultural centers¹¹. In particular, youth training halls and youth cultural centers have easy and convenient accessibility for youths to use and participate voluntarily in activities.

Trust in youth institutions, which is one of the variables that impact youth activity competence, can be defined as 'trust in institution itself and the workers in it'. Trust in a youth institution has an important effect on satisfaction with the program of the youth institution and the credibility of the institution¹², enables predicting others' responses, and activates an activity more¹³.

Also, youth commitment to an activity, which is another parameter of youth activity competence, can be defined as an optimal state of emotion in which participants engross themselves in the youth activity program and concentrate on the activity in which they are engaged, losing their sense of time and space, even thoughts of themselves. This state is accompanied by positive sensations, which stimulates inner motivation for further voluntary participation in an activity¹⁴ and has a positive impact on youth activity competence.

With the Framework Act on Juveniles, which was legislated in 1991 and the Framework Planning on Juveniles, youth institutions grew considerably in numbers to 781 in December 2013 from 150 before 1991³. A few research reports have been published on the various effects of these institutions. They say that the higher the satisfaction with the programs and human service of youth training facility is the higher commitment the youth have to the youth activities¹⁵. However, some youth training institutions have something that does not live up to the expectation of the youth in terms of the use of the facility, such as long waiting times, the need for facility improvement, and the lack of particular programs¹⁶. Besides this, youth institutions, even in the center of political interest, do not also quite understand the significance of the institution, as addressed to the youths, who are the actual users of the institution¹⁷. These findings indicate that youth training institutions need to pay attention not only to quantitative expansion but also to qualitative enhancement of their quality.

Given this background, the present study aims to examine the satisfaction of the youth with training institutions, youth activity competence, trust in youth institutions, and youth commitment using structural equation modeling.

2. Research Method

2.1 Research Method

Satisfaction with a youth training hall has effects on youth activity competence^{2,18–20}, satisfaction with youth training facilities has a positive impact on trust in the training facility¹⁵, and satisfaction with the training facility influences youth commitment to the activity^{21,22}. The positive correlation between youth commitment to activity and youth activity competence can be inferred from the findings of Marks²³ and Skinner, Wellborn, & Connell²⁴. Park et al²⁵ demonstrated that trust can reinforce competence. The research model in Figure 1 was drawn on the basis of the literature review.

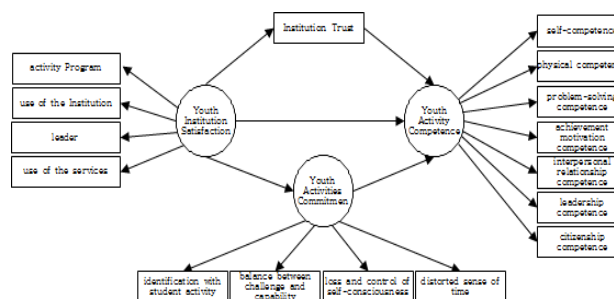


Figure 1. Research model.

2.2 Data Collection Procedure

This study stratified middle and high schools in three cities/counties to select 600 samples (adolescents) who used youth institutions and conducted a survey among them. Their school teachers acted as surveyors. With improper and insincere questionnaires excluded, in total, 590 questionnaires (231 from male students and 359 from females) were collected and used for the final analysis.

2.3 Measurement

All the measurements in this study were made with five-point Likert scales. A higher score means a higher tendency.

2.3.1 Youth Satisfaction with Youth Institutions

To measure youth satisfaction with youth institution, the scale used by Kim² was adopted. Its Cronbach's alpha was high (0.97).

2.3.2 Trust in Youth Institutions

Of the scales that An¹⁵ used to measure customer satisfaction with, trust in, commitment to, and loyalty to youth training facilities, those that were verified by Cha²⁶ and Kim²⁷ were used in this study. This scale consists of five questions and their reliability was 0.96 (Cronbach's alpha).

2.3.3 Youth Commitment to Youth Activities

The scale that Park¹⁴ translated and validated with The Flow State Scale²⁸ was used in this study to measure youth commitment to activities for which 26 questions were designed regarding 'identification with student activity,' 'balance between challenge and capability,' 'loss and control of self-consciousness,' and 'distorted sense of time.' Their reliability was 0.96 (Cronbach's alpha).

2.3.4 Youth Activity Competence

For the measurement of youth activity competence, this study used the scale 'The Test for Youth Activity Competence' developed by Kwon and Kim²⁹ to measure the activation of youth activity. It consists of 36 questions about 'self-competence,' 'physical competence,' 'problem-solving competence,' 'achievement motivation competence,' 'interpersonal relationship competence,' 'leadership competence,' and 'citizenship competence.' The reliability of those questions was 0.95 (Cronbach's alpha).

2.4 Demographics of the Youth

The general characteristics of the subjects are shown in Table 1. The sampled consisted of 231 male students (39.2%) and 359 female students (60.8%). By school level, middle and high school students were almost evenly distributed: 299 middle school students (50.7%) and 290 high school students (49.1%). By age, students ranged from 14 to 18. Of the respondents, 113 students (19.2%) lived in urban area and 476 students (80.7%) resided in rural areas.

2.5 Data Analysis

To carry out frequency and correlation analyses, we used the SPSS software (ver. 21.0 for Windows) and AMOS (ver. 21.0) to verify the structural equation model. In detail, for the data analysis, a frequency analysis was used to examine demographics and the normal distribution

To carry out frequency and correlation analyses, we used the SPSS software (ver. 21.0 for Windows) and AMOS (ver. 21.0) to verify the structural equation model. In detail, for the data analysis, a frequency analysis was used to examine demographics and the normal distribution of the data. Skewness and kurtosis were assessed on the basis of the criteria proposed by Curran, West, and Finch³⁰. When the absolute value of skewness is lower than 2 and that of kurtosis is lower than 7, variables are considered to satisfy the requirements of a normal distribution. Bivariate Pearson correlation analysis was used to examine correlations among variables. Additionally, confirmatory factor analysis and research model analysis were conducted to examine the structural relationships of the research model.

3. Results

3.1 Correlation among Key Variables and Descriptive Statistics

Pearson correlation analysis was carried out to assess the correlation among variables; the results are shown in Table 2. Satisfaction with the youth training facility, youth activity competence, youth commitment to the activity, and trust in the youth institution all were significantly and positively correlated.

1. Training activity program, 2. Training facility, 3. Trainer, 4. Facility service, 5. Identification with youth activity, 6. Balance between challenge and capability, 7. Loss of self-consciousness, 8. Distorted sense of time, 9. Trust in youth institution, 10. Self-competence, 11. Physical competence, 12. Problem-solving competence, 13. Achievement motivation competence, 14. Interpersonal relationship competence, 15. Leadership competence, 16. Citizenship competence, 17. Mean, 18. SD, 19. Skewness, 20. Kurtosis ** $P < 0.01$, *** $P < 0.001$. Frequency analysis showed that youth training activity program was the highest (mean = 3.540, SD = 0.761) of satisfaction with youth training facility. Self-competence was shown to the highest (mean = 3.940, SD = 0.761) among the sub-factors of youth activity competence. The balance between challenge and capability (youth commitment to activity) was highest (mean = 3.442, SD = 0.749). Finally, trust in the youth institution was medium (mean = 3.342, SD = 0.894).

The regularity of the data was tested by skewness and kurtosis. The absolute value of skewness was lower than 2 while that of kurtosis was lower than 7, so the data satisfied the requirements of a normal distribution³⁰.

Table 1. Characteristics of subjects

	Division	n	%		Division	n	%
Gender	male	231	39.2	Grade	7 Grade	170	28.8
	female	359	60.8		8 Grade	74	12.5
Residence Area	Urban area	113	19.2		9 Grade	55	9.3
	Rural area	476	80.7		10 Grade	233	39.5
					11 Grade	58	9.8

3.2 Test of the Research Model

Structural equation modeling was used to test the research model and the result is shown in Table 3. The χ^2 of the model, a goodness-of-fit index, was 551.090 (df = 115), which was not a fit. However, it turned out that TLI was 0.937, CIF was greater than 0.9 (0.947), and RMSEA was 0.07931, so the model was shown to fit.

Figure 2 shows the structural equation model and its standardized coefficient.

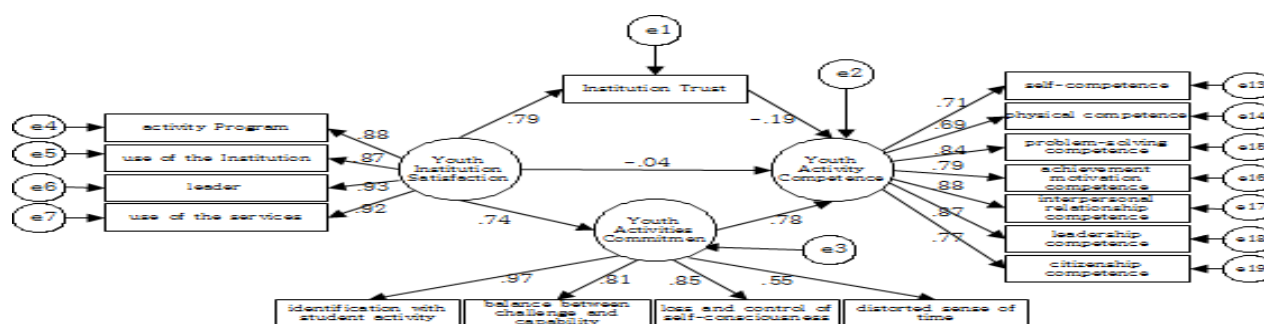


Figure 2. The structural equation model.

Path coefficients of the research model demonstrated on the one hand that there was a positive path between satisfaction with the youth training facility and trust in the youth institution ($\beta = -0.794$, $p < 0.001$) and youth commitment to the activity ($\beta = -0.738$, $p < 0.001$). On the other hand, the path coefficient between trust in the youth institution and youth activity competence was negative ($\beta = -0.186$, $P < 0.001$). Satisfaction with the youth training facility did not have a statistically significant path with youth activity competence. In particular, the path coefficient between satisfaction with the youth training facility and trust in the youth institution was higher than those of other endogenous and exogenous latent variables. It demonstrated that satisfaction with the youth training facility had a relatively more powerful effect than trust in the youth institution.

Table 5 shows the direct, indirect, and total effects between latent variables. First, the total effects between satisfaction with the youth training facility and trust in the youth institution and youth commitment to the activity were 0.794 and 0.738, respectively. Additionally, trust in the youth institution and youth activity competence had a total effect of -0.186 and youth commitment to the activity and youth activity competence had a total effect of 0.775.

3.3 Analysis of Mediating Effect

An indirect effect of 0.425 existed between satisfaction with the youth training facility and youth activity competence, which caused us to test the mediating effect between trust in the youth institution and the youth commitment to the activity. As a test method, Sobel's test was used to verify whether the indirect effect was statistically significant³². The result demonstrated that the indirect effect of youth commitment to activity was $z = 9.1446$ ($p < 0.001$), which was higher than the critical value of $z = |1.96|$. Thus, it was confirmed that there was a statistically significant effect. Moreover, the indirect effect of trust in the youth institution was $z = -3.1300$ ($p = 0.0017$), also higher than the critical value of $z = |1.96|$. Thus, statistical significance was confirmed. Accordingly,

Table 2. Correlation among key variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1	1															
2	.761 ^{***}	1														
3	.838 ^{**}	.799 ^{**}	1													
4	.793 ^{**}	.797 ^{**}	.865 ^{***}	1												
5	.679 ^{***}	.616 ^{***}	.641 ^{***}	.667 ^{***}	1											
6	.482 ^{***}	.450 ^{***}	.425 ^{***}	.469 ^{***}	.786 ^{***}	1										
7	.544 ^{***}	.532 ^{***}	.518 ^{***}	.554 ^{***}	.822 ^{***}	.728 ^{***}	1									
8	.425 ^{***}	.420 ^{***}	.403 ^{***}	.426 ^{***}	.537 ^{***}	.375 ^{***}	.490 ^{***}	1								
9	.684 ^{***}	.711 ^{***}	.725 ^{***}	.716 ^{***}	.690 ^{***}	.461 ^{***}	.559 ^{***}	.452 ^{***}	1							
10	.228 ^{**}	.151 ^{***}	.195 ^{***}	.198 ^{***}	.384 ^{***}	.455 ^{***}	.342 ^{***}	.169 ^{***}	.171 ^{***}	1						
11	.184 ^{**}	.184 ^{***}	.143 ^{***}	.192 ^{***}	.432 ^{***}	.476 ^{***}	.389 ^{***}	.293 ^{***}	.175 ^{***}	.637 ^{***}	1					
12	.315 ^{***}	.266 ^{***}	.288 ^{***}	.310 ^{***}	.510 ^{***}	.516 ^{***}	.467 ^{***}	.329 ^{***}	.287 ^{***}	.582 ^{***}	.595 ^{***}	1				
13	.324 ^{***}	.267 ^{***}	.284 ^{***}	.318 ^{***}	.535 ^{***}	.521 ^{***}	.495 ^{***}	.301 ^{***}	.262 ^{***}	.604 ^{***}	.582 ^{***}	.757 ^{***}	1			
14	.321 ^{***}	.284 ^{***}	.273 ^{***}	.293 ^{***}	.493 ^{***}	.455 ^{***}	.467 ^{***}	.306 ^{***}	.258 ^{***}	.572 ^{***}	.589 ^{***}	.720 ^{***}	.776 ^{***}	1		
15	.365 ^{***}	.286 ^{***}	.330 ^{***}	.326 ^{***}	.523 ^{***}	.488 ^{***}	.460 ^{***}	.265 ^{***}	.301 ^{***}	.628 ^{***}	.565 ^{***}	.723 ^{***}	.749 ^{***}	.764 ^{***}	1	
16	.379 ^{***}	.338 ^{***}	.342 ^{***}	.332 ^{***}	.480 ^{***}	.427 ^{***}	.420 ^{***}	.283 ^{***}	.315 ^{***}	.536 ^{***}	.465 ^{***}	.632 ^{***}	.643 ^{***}	.660 ^{***}	.737 ^{***}	1
17	3.54	3.327	3.538	3.429	3.421	3.442	3.397	3.237	3.342	3.94	3.444	3.524	3.604	3.577	3.627	3.672
18	0.761	0.794	0.773	0.816	0.657	0.749	0.679	0.888	0.894	0.761	0.876	0.679	0.706	0.681	0.679	0.72
19	-0.148	-0.098	-0.159	-0.186	0.538	0.138	0.485	0.069	-0.328	-0.171	0.046	0.351	0.165	0.213	0.161	0.109
20	0.485	0.192	0.518	0.473	0.167	0.008	0.244	-0.04	0.457	-0.613	-0.177	0.064	-0.136	0.165	0.246	-0.082

it was shown that youth commitment to activity played a mediating role between satisfaction with the youth training facility and youth activity competence.

These results are largely consistent with previous studies: a path between satisfaction with the youth training facility and trust in the youth institution¹⁵, a path between satisfaction with the youth training facility and youth

Table 3. Correlation among key variables

	χ^2	Df	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
The research model	464.714	100	0.946	0.955	0.079

Table 4. Correlation among key variables path coefficients of the research model

Path between variables			B	β	S.E	T
Youth Institution Satisfaction	→	Institution Trust	0.949	0.794	0.036	26.652***
	→	Youth Activities Commitment	0.485	0.738	0.038	12.924***
	→	Youth Activity Competence	-0.027	-0.037	0.054	-0.498
Institution Trust	→	Youth Activity Competence	-0.113	-0.186	0.035	-3.216**
Youth Activities commitment	→	Youth Activity Competence	0.858	0.775	0.088	9.767***

P < 0.01, * P < 0.001

Table 5. Direct, indirect, and total effects

			direct	Indirect	Total
Youth Institution Satisfaction	→	Institution Trust	0.794		.794***
	→	Youth Activities Commitment	0.738		.738***
	→	Youth Activity Competence	-0.037	0.425	0.388
Institution Trust	→	Youth Activity Competence	-0.186		-0.186**
Youth Activities Commitment	→	Youth Activity Competence	0.775		0.775***

4. Discussion and Conclusion

First, satisfaction with the youth training facility, youth activity competence, youth commitment to the activity, and trust in the youth institution turned all had positive correlations.

Second, the path coefficients of the research model showed that there was a positive path between satisfaction with the youth training facility and trust in the youth institution and between satisfaction with the youth training facility and youth commitment to the activity. There was also a negative path between satisfaction with the youth training facility and youth activity competence. commitment to the activity^{21,22}, s path between trust in the youth institution and youth activity competence²⁵,

and a path between youth commitment to the activity and youth activity competence^{23,24}.

Thus, it was shown that satisfaction with a youth training facility can have an indirect effect on youth activity competence through trust in the youth institution and/or youth commitment to the activity, although with no direct impact on youth activity competence. A conclusion section is not required. Although a conclusion may review the main points of the paper, do not replicate the abstract as the conclusion. A conclusion might elaborate on the importance of the work or suggest applications and extensions.

5. Acknowledgement

This study was undertaken with the support of a research

grant in 2014 from Hanseo University.

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