



THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LIGHT TRIAD PERSONALITY TRAITS, SELF-ESTEEM AND POSITIVE RELATIONS

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Abstract

Empathy–Perspective-taking, Emotion Recognition, Emotional Contagion, Compassion Concern for Others Who Suffer, Distress Tolerance, Desire to Reduce Others' Suffering, Understanding the Universality of Human Suffering and Altruism Warm Glow represents personality traits investigated by the researcher in the last decade. Positive relations and Self-esteem were related in various studies with the mentioned personality traits from Light Triad. The major objectives of the present study are focused on evidencing the correlation between the dimensions of Light Triad, Positive relations (WB) and Self-esteem. Also, two linear regression models were tested. The participants were a number of 26 people, different professional background, aged between 19 and 56 (Mean= 35.2; S.D.=10.99). The instruments were the followings: The Ryff Well-being scale (Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Keyes, 1995), Rosenberg Self-esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965) and The Light Triad Scale (Johnson, 2018). The instruments were applied on-line by filling out a Google document form. The participants were informed about the anonymous and informed consent accepted. The results confirmed the research hypotheses evidencing that there are positive bivariate correlations between the variables: Cognitive Empathy, Self-esteem, Positive relations, Distress tolerance and positive relations (WB). Furthermore, Cognitive empathy/emotional contagion and positive emotions predicted the Self-esteem dimension. Further studies should focus on Universality of Human Suffering, Cognitive Empathy, Self esteem regarding the human support, altruism and development in the society.

Keywords: *Universality of Human Suffering, Cognitive Empathy, Self-esteem, Positive relations, Distress tolerance.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Kaufman, Yaden, Hyde & Tsukayama (2019) evidenced the Light personality triad traits in contrast with the Dark personality traits. Johnson (2018) highlighted in the dissertation paper that empathy as Light triad represents an affective reaction

another perception as the cited authors Joliffe & Farrington (2006) mentioned.

Neumann, Kaufman, Brinke, Yaden, Hyde, & Tsykayama, (2020) conducted a study regarding the personality traits Light Triad versus Dark Triad. The authors analysed the personality traits as Kantianism, humanism, faith in humanity versus the dark personality traits. They evidenced that human nature highlighted both light and dark personality traits related with the professions. Eslinger, Moll & Oliveira (2002) highlighted the role of emotional perception-action process. Ruvalcaba Romero, Fernández-Berrocal, Salazar-Estrada & Gallegos (2017) were focused on evidencing the relationship between the Positive emotions, self-esteem, interpersonal relationships, emotional intelligence, life satisfaction and social support. The findings highlighted the mediator role of the self-esteem and positive emotions as mediators between emotional abilities and satisfaction with life.

Coll, Mateu, Espert & Prado (2020) conducted a study regarding the relationship between Empathy, Self-Esteem, Emotional intelligence and Life Satisfaction. Hence, Empathy predicted high level of Self - esteem until the age of 19 years old participants, while Rizeanu & Chraif (2020) conducted a study concerning the relationship between humour, life satisfaction, emotions and well-being.

Neff & Seppala (2017) were interested to study the relationship between Compassion, Well-Being, and the Hypo-egoic Self. The authors highlighted the role of Self-compassion and interpersonal relationships regarding a training program. Further research questions rise on highlighting the compassion for self and others.

Demarree & Rios (2014) conducted a study regarding the relationship between self-esteem and self-clarity. Hence, the relationship between Self-esteem and Self clarity was confirmed, but the high level of self - esteem according the authors was desirable. An interesting point of view regarding the Self-esteem was the manipulation.

Khajeh, Baharloo, & Soliemani (2014) were interested to evidence the relationship between psychological well-being and empathy. The participants were a number of 200 married students from Iran. The Alpha Cronbach was .88 for Positive relations. Hence, the authors evidenced that Empathy predicted Positive Well-being according the linear regression model tested.

Musek & Grum (2021) were interested to study the bright side of human personality. The authors were interested in highlighting which of the personality traits predict well-being and prosocial values. In this sense, the dimensions of the Light Triad instrument were associated with life satisfaction and social and cognitive values.

2. OBJECTIVE AND HYPOTHESES

2.1. OBJECTIVE

The research objectives:

- Establishing bivariate correlation between the dimensions of Light Triad, Positive relations (WB) and Self-esteem.
- Establishing regression models to predict the Positive relations (WB) and Cognitive empathy/emotional contagion.

2.2. HYPOTHESES

The research hypotheses are the followings:

1. H1: We assume that there is a statistically significant correlation between Positive relationship (WB) and Self-esteem.
2. H2: We assume that there is a statistically significant correlation between Cognitive empathy/emotional contagion and Self-esteem.
3. H3: We assume that there is a statistically significant correlation between Distress tolerance and Self-esteem.
4. H4: We assume that there is a statistically significant correlation between Cognitive Empathy – Perspective-taking and Understanding the Universality of Human Suffering.
5. H5: We assume that Self-esteem predict Cognitive empathy/emotional contagion.
6. H6: We assume that Self-esteem predict Positive relations (WB).

3. METHOD

3.1 THE PARTICIPANTS

The participants were a group of approximately 26 people aged between 19 and 56 (Mean= 35.2; S.D.=10.99), both women and men from different professional backgrounds. They responded by filling out a Google document form.

3.2. THE INSTRUMENTS

1. The Ryff Well-being scale (Ryff, 1989; Ryff, & Keyes, 1995). From this instrument were selected the items corresponding to the Positive relations dimension. The positive dimension consists of 7 items on the Likert scale from 1 to 6.
2. Rosenberg Self-esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965). The internal consistency (Alpha Cronbach) is estimated between 0.61 and 0.71. The reliability was estimated by Johnson et al. (1983). Test-retest reliability was estimated at 0.88 (Coopersmith, 1967). Rosenberg constructed a scale of ten items to which subjects can respond by choosing one of four answer options: "true," "rarely true," "sometimes true," "false." The global level of self-esteem influences the choices in the lives of individuals. The scores obtained at this scale are between the values 10, which represent the lowest possible self-esteem grade and 40 which represent the highest possible self-esteem grade.

3. The Light Triad Scale (Johnson, 2018). The dimensions of the light triad are the followings: Empathy Cognitive, Empathy – Perspective-taking, Cognitive Empathy - Emotion Recognition, Affective Empathy - Emotional Contagion, Compassion Concern for Others Who Suffer, Distress Tolerance, Desire to Reduce Others’ Suffering, Understanding the Universality of Human Suffering, Altruism Warm Glow and Principle of Care. The instrument is composed from 36 items on a Likert scale from 1 to 5. Johnson (2018) highlighted that values less than .06 indicates good fit and for the CFI and TLI, values greater than .90 indicate good fit, and values greater than .95.

3.3. PROCEDURE

From the beginning the Ethical code and GDPR legislation were respected. The instruments were applied on-line by filling out a Google document form, with the participants anonymous and informed consent accepted. The participants agree with the research, understood the objectives and agreed with the data analyses and publications in research journal respecting the research ethics.

3.4. THE DESIGN

Testing the correlation hypothesis the variables were: Positive relationship (WB), Self-esteem, Cognitive empathy/emotional contagion, Distress tolerance, Cognitive Empathy – Perspective-taking, Understanding the Universality of Human Suffering.

In order to test the regression hypotheses, the variables were the followings:

- Independent variables: Self-Esteem.
- Dependent variables: Cognitive empathy/emotional contagion, Positive relations (WB).

4. RESULTS

After the data collection the hypothesis were tested using the program SPSS.

Testing hypothesis 1:

“We assume that there is a statistically significant correlation between Positive relationship (WB) and Self-esteem”.

Table 1 – Correlation matrix between positive relationship and Self-esteem

	Positive relationship (WB)	Self-esteem
Positive relationship (WB)	1	r = .698
Self-esteem	r = .698	1

The hypothesis was statistically significantly confirmed at the .01 threshold with a Pearson bivariate correlation coefficient ($r = .698$).

In table 2 can be seen the correlation between the variables: Cognitive empathy/emotional contagion and Self-esteem. Hence, the second hypothesis “We assume that there is a statistically significant correlation between Cognitive empathy/emotional contagion and Self-esteem” was confirmed for the threshold $p=.038 <.05$.

Table 2 – Correlation matrix between the variables Distress tolerance and Self-esteem

	Cognitive empathy/emotional contagion	Self-esteem
Cognitive empathy/emotional contagion	1	$r=.582$
Self-esteem	$r=.582$	1

Testing the third hypothesis, in table 3 can be seen the bivariate correlation between the variables: Distress tolerance and Self-esteem. Hence, the second hypothesis “We assume that there is a statistically significant correlation between Distress tolerance and Self-esteem” was confirmed for the threshold $p=.002 <.01$.

Table 3 – Correlation matrix between the variables Distress tolerance and Self-esteem

	Distress tolerance	Self-esteem
Distress tolerance	1	$r=.582$
Self-esteem	$r=.582$	1

Testing the fourth hypotheses “We assume that there is a statistically significant correlation between Cognitive Empathy – Perspective-taking and Understanding the Universality of Human Suffering”, the Pearson bivariate correlation statistically test was applied. In table 4 can be seen the results confirming the fourth hypothesis at the threshold $p <.01$.

Table 4 – Correlation matrix between the variables Distress tolerance and Self-esteem

	Cognitive Empathy – Perspective-taking	Understanding the Universality of Human Suffering
Cognitive Empathy – Perspective-taking	1	$r=.420$
Understanding the Universality of Human Suffering	$r=.420$	1

Testing the fifth hypothesis “We assume that Self-esteem predict Cognitive empathy/emotional contagion“, the simple regression model was applied. In table 5 can be see the R and R Square values for the prediction model. For testing the fifth hypothesis, the variable self-esteem was calculated as the sum of all ten items of the questionnaire.

Table 5 – Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.409 ^a	.168	.133	3.296

a. Predictors: (Constant), Self-esteem

b. Dependent Variable: Cognitive empathy/emotional contagion

In the table 6 can be seen the Constant, the Unstandardized Coefficients and the Standardized Coefficients of the linear regression model.

Table 6 – Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	28.275	3.750		7.540	.000
	Self-esteem	-.242	.110	-.409	-2.199	.038

a. Dependent Variable: Cognitive empathy/emotional contagion

Hence, the hypotheses regarding the dimension observing of the mindfulness as predictor for the self-esteem has been confirmed at the significance $p=.029<.05$. The regression equation according the presented model is the following:

$$\text{Cognitive empathy/emotional contagion} = 28.275 - .242 * \text{Self-esteem}$$

Testing the sixths hypothesis regarding the “We assume that Self-esteem predict Positive relations (WB)”, the R and R Square values can be seen in the table 7.

Table 7– Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.698 ^a	.487	.466	4.509

a. Predictors: (Constant), Self-esteem

b. Dependent Variable: Positive relations (WB)

According the standardized coefficients for the regression model, the regression equation is the following:

Positive relations (WB) = 8.571-.718* Self-esteem

Hence, the hypothesis has been confirmed for the statistically significant threshold $p < .01$.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Testing the research hypotheses with the specific statistical tests were confirmed at the thresholds of $p < .01$ and $p < .05$. As previous studies have shown, Empathy correlates with the Self-esteem, Positive relationships and the personality traits of the Light triad. As the Light Triad instrument was projected, Empathy is an important dimension of it.

Analysing Self-esteem, according to the linear regression model inversely predicted positive relationships as a facet of well-being ($p < .01$). Furthermore, according to the confirmed statistically hypothesis Self-esteem predicted emotional contagion as dimension of the Cognitive empathy ($p < .05$).

The hypotheses regarding the bivariate correlations between the variables: Cognitive empathy, Distress tolerance, Positive relationship (WB), Understanding the Universality of Human Suffering and Self-esteem were confirmed ($p < .05$). Human rights were studied for decades (Donnelly, 2007; Andorno & Baffone, 2014).

However, a basic point in future research is Understanding the Universality of Human Suffering as a feature of people's personality. The Light Triad dimensions can be studied in relation to many other variables such as: social support, understanding people's perception of life, work and many others.

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