

The Relationship between Neuroticism and Self-Esteem

Guo Yuxuan

Faculty of Social Sciences University of Macau Macau, China

ABSTRACT. *This paper studies the relationship between self-esteem and neuroticism of adolescents and young adulthood through RSE score and EPQ-R N score. The subjects were 99 young people aged 16 to 36 from China and the United States. By calculating the correlation coefficient r value with SPSS, it is concluded that people high score in neuroticism tend to have low score self-esteem, and the correlation between them is -0.587 . Therefore, when helping people who are more likely to have strong emotional reactions or even irrational behaviors, we can consider trying to help each other improve their self-esteem so that it may help them reduce their neuroticism level.*

KEYWORDS: *Correlation study, Neuroticism, Self-esteem*

1. Introduction

1.1 Importance of Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is a psychological term which people often mention. Self-esteem plays an important role in a person's growth. The existence of self-esteem helps people pursue a better personal image and a better life. Too high or too low self-esteem will bring different degrees of problems. Too high self-esteem may make people difficult to survive in the face of setbacks or shocks. Too low self-esteem will make people difficult to maintain a positive attitude towards life. People in different regions have certain cross-cultural differences in self-esteem scale tests [1]. The level of self-esteem is not very stable, and it will be affected by many factors, one of the most important factors is personality.

1.2 The Big Five

The big five include openness, conscientiousness, extroversion, agreeableness and neuroticism. Neuroticism includes anger, depression, frailty and other negative emotional characteristics. A high degree of neuroticism often indicates that a person's ability to maintain emotional stability is weak. These traits have connection to one's cognition of himself. The degree of self-esteem can also reflect the individual's expectation and cognition to a certain extent.

In a previous long-term survey, the research shows that self-esteem changes rapidly in adolescence and youth, and in each age group, different personality traits have different effects on self-esteem [2]. In Anusic and Schimmack's study [3], they studied stability and change of self-esteem and personality factors, which showed that self-esteem is indeed related to personality factors. Self-esteem plays a mediating role in the relationship between neuroticism and depression symptoms [4].

2. Goal and Hypothesis

Therefore, we hope to further understand the correlation between specific personality traits and self-esteem. We specifically chose the neuroticism in the big five personality as our research object to explore the relationship between it and self-esteem. Compared with the previous research, we narrowed down the scope of the research object more specifically in the young adulthood and adolescence. Our hypothesis is that there is a correlation between self-esteem and neuroticism, people with higher neuroticism score have lower self-esteem score. More specifically, we think that there is a negative correlation between neuroticism and self-esteem scores.

3. Methods

We have two variables in the study and the first variable in our study is self-esteem score, the other is neuroticism score. We use Rosenberg's self-esteem scale [5] to measure self-esteem score. There are ten questions in the form. 4 points for strongly agreement, agreement scored 3 points, 2 points for disagreement and 1 point for strongly disagreement. Finally, we count the total score of each person. Neuroticism was measured by the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire short version N scale [6]. Twelve questions in EPQN were selected to measure the neuroticism of the subjects. The subjects answered yes for 1 point, no for 0 point, and finally counted the total score.

3.1 Subject

Participants ranged in age from 16 to 36, mainly from the United States and China, with native English speakers (United States) and native Chinese speakers (China).

Table 1 Basic Information of Subjects (n=99).

	Number	Average Age
Participants	99	26.2
Male	29	27.8
Female	70	25.4

3.2 Procedure

We use the method of online questionnaire to obtain data and get 99 valid responses in total. The subjects were asked to answer an anonymous questionnaire, which included basic personal information, EPQ short version neuroticism scale and RSE. The time required to complete the questionnaire is about 100 seconds. Participants can click the link or scan QR code to enter the questionnaire on Google form or Wenjuanxing (Chinese questionnaire platform). The questionnaire will be completed after 24 questions.

4. Results

The statistical results showed that there was a negative correlation between neuroticism scale and self-esteem scale. $R=-0.587$. The significance value is smaller than alpha. We success to reject the null hypothesis. In the self-esteem scale, the mean score is 5.46, and the standard deviation is 3.45. In the neuroticism scale, the mean score is 28.90, and the standard deviation is 4.80.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Self-esteem	99	.00	12.00	5.4646	3.45027
Neuroticism	99	17.00	40.00	28.8990	4.80326

Table 3 The Linear Regression of Neuroticism and Self-Esteem

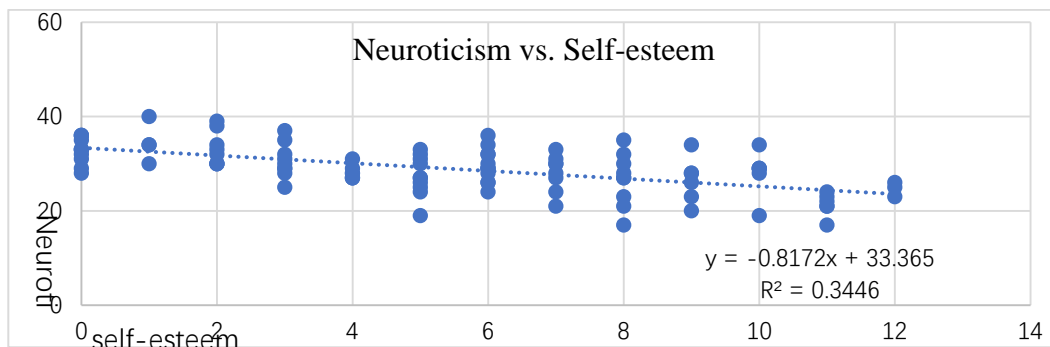


Table 4 Correlation of Self-Esteem Score and Neuroticism Score

		Self-esteem	Neuroticism
Self-esteem	Pearson Correlation	1	-.587
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	99	99
Neuroticism	Pearson Correlation	-.587	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	99	99

5. Conclusion

Therefore, our conclusion is that the degree of neuroticism is related to the degree of self-esteem. People high in neuroticism tend to have low self-esteem, and the correlation between them is -0.587.

(1) Limitation. Our research has some limitations. First of all, our sample size is small (N=99), and our gender distribution is not very ideal (Male=29, Female=70), which may lead to biased results due to gender differences. Secondly, our questionnaire is aimed at people's self-awareness, which may lead the subjects to answer the questionnaire according to their ideal state when filling in the questionnaire, rather than according to their actual state, or not answer the questions honestly, which may have an impact on the final results.

(2) Future Directions. In the future research, the degree of bias of gender and age can be reduced as much as possible. Our research scope is adolescents and youth. In future research, we can respectively study whether there are the same or similar conclusions for different age groups. And whether there is or how much difference between these two variables among people of different cultural backgrounds.

References

- [1] Boucher, H. C., Peng, K., Shi, J., Wang, L (2009). Culture and Implicit Self-esteem: Chinese Are “Good” and “Bad” at the Same Time. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, no.40, pp.24-45.
- [2] Erol, R., & Orth, U (2011). Self-Esteem Development from Age 14 to 30 Years: A Longitudinal Study. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, vol.101, no.3, pp.607-619.
- [3] Anusic, I., Schimmack, U (2016). Stability and Change of Personality Traits, Self-Esteem, and Well-Being: Introducing the Meta-Analytic Stability and Change Model of Retest Correlations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, vol.110, no.5, pp.766-781.
- [4] Shi, M., Liu, L., Yang, Y., Wang (2015). The mediating role of self-esteem in the relationship between big five personality traits and depressive symptoms among Chinese undergraduate medical students. *Personality and Individual Differences*, no.83, pp.55-59.
- [5] Rosenberg, M. (1965). *Society and the adolescent self-image*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- [6] Eysenck, S., Eysenck, H., & Barrett, P (1985). A Revised Version of the Psychoticism Scale. *Person. Individ. Diff*, vol.6, no.1, pp.21-29.