Partner Personality is Associated with Relationship Satisfaction and Satisfaction with Life

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INTRODUCTION

- Personality traits are consistent predictors of both relationship and life satisfaction (Watson, Hubbard, & Wiese, 2000)
- The association of traits with life and relationship satisfaction is not limited to the individual but extends to one's romantic partner as well
- Past research suggests that partner effects exist for each of the Big Five traits on both relationship and life satisfaction (Dyrenforth et al., 2010)
- It remains unclear if actor and partner effects differ by gender

METHODS

- A sample of heterosexual dating couples with at least one member of the couple attending a Southern California university were used in this study
- One member of the couple was recruited and participated as a part of a course requirement
- As a stipulation of participation, individuals were required to provide an email address for their partner to participate in the study
- Partners then emailed information to enable them to complete the study.
- Data collection was performed online using Qualtrics software
- A total sample of 80 heterosexual couples provided information about the self and partner
- Because the sample consisted of heterosexual couples, males and females were analyzed separately, therefore self report and partner self-report information was gathered for 80 females and 80 males

MEASURES

Both members of the couple completed the following measures:

- The 44-item Big Five Inventory (John and Srivastava, 1999)
- The 14 item Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Busby et al., 1995)
- The five item Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener et al., 1985)

RESULTS

Self and Partner Personality Correlates with Male Relationship and Life Satisfaction

Trait	Relationship Satisfaction	Satisfaction with Life
Self Extraversion	0.17	-0.12
Self Agreeableness	0.39**	0.17
Self Conscientiousness	0.20†	0.03
Self Openness	-0.15	-0.21†
Self Neuroticism	-0.13	-0.14
Partner Extraversion	-0.02	0.15
Partner Agreeableness	0.15	-0.08
Partner Conscientious	0.22*	0.37**
Partner Openness	-0.06	-0.13
Partner Neuroticism	-0.07	-0.15

** p <.01
* p <0.5
† p <.1

RESULTS

Self and Partner Personality Correlates with Female Relationship and Life Satisfaction

Trait	Relationship Satisfaction	Satisfaction with Life
Self Extraversion	-0.06	0.10
Self Agreeableness	0.22*	0.15
Self Conscientiousness	0.23*	0.21†
Self Openness	0.05	0.13
Self Neuroticism	-0.19†	-0.36**
Partner Extraversion	-0.02	-0.16
Partner Agreeableness	0.18†	-0.05
Partner Conscientious	0.15	-0.15
Partner Openness	0.04	-0.05
Partner Neuroticism	-0.10	0.21†

** p<.01
* p<0.5
† p<.1

CONCLUSION

- Male relationship satisfaciton and life satisfaction were associated with their partner's Conscientiousness
- Neuroticism was a significant predictor of life satisfaction in females, but neuroticism was not a strong predictor of relationship or life satisfaction in males.
- There are gender differences in which self and partner traits predict life and relationship satisfaction

CONTACT & SUPPORT

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