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 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 & 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trait</th>
<th>Relationship Satisfaction</th>
<th>Satisfaction with Life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self Extraversion</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Agreeableness</td>
<td>0.39**</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Conscientiousness</td>
<td>0.20†</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Openness</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>-0.21†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Neuroticism</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Extraversion</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Agreeableness</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Conscientiousness</td>
<td>0.22*</td>
<td>0.37**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Openness</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Neuroticism</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<0.05
† p<0.1
** p<0.01

CONCLUSION

• Male relationship satisfaction 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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References


