

The Affective Profile Model: ill-being and well-being

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Avhandling för avläggande av filosofie doktorsexamen i psykologi, som med vederbörligt tillstånd av samhällsvetenskapliga fakulteten vid Göteborgs universitet kommer att offentligens försvaras fredagen den 8 maj 2015, kl. 10.00, Sal F1, Psykologiska institutionen, Haraldsgatan 1, Göteborg.

Fakultetsopponent: Professor C. Robert Cloninger, Department of Psychiatry, Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, USA.

This thesis consists of a summary and the following four papers, which are referred to by their roman numerals:

- I. Karlsson, E., & Archer, T. (2007) Relationship between Personality Characteristics and Affect: Gender and Affective Personality. *Individual Differences Research*, 5, 44-58.
- II. Schütz, E., Garcia, D., & Archer, T. (2014) Affective state, stress and Type A-personality as a function of gender and affective profiles. *International Journal of Research Studies in Psychology*, 3(1), 51-64. doi:10.5861/ijrsp.2013.450
- III. Schütz, E., Sailer, U., Nima, A. A., Rosenberg, P., Andersson-Arntén, A-C., Archer, T., & Garcia, D. (2013). The affective profiles in the USA: happiness, depression, life satisfaction, and happiness-increasing strategies. *PeerJ* 1:e156. doi: 10.7717/peerj.156
- IV. Schütz, E., Archer, T., & Garcia, D. (2013) Character profiles and adolescents' self-reported affect. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 54(7), 841-844. doi:10.1016/j.paid.2012.12.020



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Abstract

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Positive and negative affect have emerged as significant independent dimensions in studies of affective structure. Seeing affect as composed of two systems that can be categorized in high and low enables the possibility of four different combinations (i.e. affective profiles), “Self-fulfilling” (high positive affect, low negative affect), “Low affective” (low positive affect, low negative affect), “High affective” (high positive affect, high negative affect) and “Self-destructive” (low positive affect, high negative affect). The affective profiles offer a unique approach by taking into account how positive affect and negative affect interact. The aim of the present thesis was to validate the affective profiles as health profiles through investigating the role of affectivity and its relation to various personal attributes (personality characteristics and character profiles) and markers of ill- and well-being, such as somatic and psychological stress, stress and energy, depression, happiness, life satisfaction, happiness-increasing strategies, coping and Type A-personality in the light of the affective profiles and gender. This thesis comprises 4 different studies based on self-report of 2637 adolescents and adults from Sweden and the United States of America. The self-fulfilling individuals compared to all the other affective profiles, expressed a higher level of responsibility, emotional stability, better personal relations, vigor, more cognitive coping, more physical coping, more social coping, emotional coping, and total coping (Study I) as well as significantly higher level of energy (Study I and II), significantly higher scores on happiness-increasing strategies (Study III), significantly lowest level of stress and Type A-personality (Study II), in the context of character profiles, relating to agentic (self-directedness), communal (cooperation) and spiritual (self-transcendence) values, self-directedness was positive related to the self-fulfilling profile, only when cooperativeness was high (Study IV). The self-destructive individuals, compared to all the other affective profiles, expressed significantly more stress, as well as psychological and somatic stress (Study I), significantly higher levels of depression and lower level of happiness and life satisfaction as well as lower scores in all happiness-increasing strategies with the exception for mental control, which is an ambivalent strategy of rumination and repression of negative events (Study III). The high affective and low affective individuals showed a mix of this pattern. There were also significant marked gender differences pertaining to personal attributes and markers of ill- and well-being. The female participants expressed a significantly higher level of responsibility, vigor, more psychological stress, more emotional coping (Study I), higher level of stress, Type A-personality (Study II), higher level of negative affect (Study II and III), higher level of happiness, social affiliation, instrumental goal pursuit, religion, passive leisure, direct attempts (Study III). The results suggest that the pursuit of happiness through agentic, communal, and spiritual values leads to a self-fulfilling experience defined as frequently experiencing positive emotions and infrequently experiencing negative emotions. In conclusion psychological health is a complex state and the results from this thesis points in the direction that it seems to be the various combinations of positive and negative affect offered in the affective profiles (namely the interaction of both dimensions of positive and negative affect) that offers the widest and detailed health profile. The results suggests, that high positive affect seems to be a more important component than both high and low negative affect for having continuous good health, happiness and well-being (i.e. being a protector against damaging influences such as stress, anxiety, depression, type A-personality, coping styles on health). An understanding of personality development, conscious strategies (i.e. growth in self-awareness) could offer a positive health profile model in providing a systematic way to promote and combine state of physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being. Further, while agency and communion (cooperation) seems to lead to happiness and health, spiritual values might be necessary for becoming a self-fulfilled individual that lives in harmony with the changing world.

Keywords: affective profile, affect, ill-being, well-being, character