

Cognitive Psychology: Investigation of Interpersonal Relationships with Self-Awareness

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1. Abstract

Is there a correlation between feelings, thoughts, and public self-expression - such as appearance and behavior - with self-awareness, the ability to perceive another's perspective, and satisfaction with interpersonal relationships?

The aim of the present study was to investigate these relationships, the "need to belong", as described by [1], as well as the relationship between self-awareness and positive relationships and a sense of belonging.

1.1. Method: 61 adults participated and we used scales as: the [2], which measures three different aspects of self-awareness, the "Taking the Perspective of the Other" scale, which is a sub-scale of the Individual Reactivity Index (Davis, 1980), the "Positive Relationships with Others" scale, which is the Psychological Well-Being Cliques (Ryff & Keyes, 1995), and the Revised UCLA Loneliness scale [3].

1.2. Conclusions: According to the results of the present research, self-awareness is correlated with the satisfaction one gets from one's interpersonal relationships, the ability to take the other's perspective is not correlated with the satisfaction one gets from one's interpersonal relationships, as it was not correlated with positive relationships with others nor the scale of equality in relation. It was also found that there were no gender differences in self-awareness and the ability to take the other's perspective, but women seemed to have more positive relationships and felt less loneliness than men.

2. Self-Awareness

The concept of self-awareness has been the subject of scientific

research in the field of psychology and neuroscience. Within these two disciplines, self-awareness has been defined in many different ways: as the tendency of the individual to focus on himself or the environment [4], as the tendency to focus on the internal or external aspects of oneself [2], as the tendency to feel strongly aware of oneself in situations where other people are present [5] and as the ability to perceive spiritual situations as one's own [6]. Based on the theoretical model of [2], self-awareness is divided into private and public. The private is about paying attention to the innermost aspects of oneself such as thoughts, motives and emotions, while public self-awareness is about focusing on aspects of the self that are visible to others, such as behavior and appearance. Public self-awareness refers to the general self-awareness as a social object, which is influenced by others and is related to the idea that self-awareness comes when one becomes aware of the other's perspective [2]. Public self-awareness is related to public identity, while it is not related at all to personal identity. Public identity includes the social roles played by an individual and his or her social relationships [7]. Fenigstein (1997) [8] considers that the power of the concept of self-awareness stems from the fact that self-focused attention has unique, significant and varied psychological effects on the individual. These effects stem from a systemic focus on the private or public aspects of the self [8].

3. Interpersonal Relationships

Interactions and relationships with other people are central to most people's daily lives. In our daily interactions with other people, we enter into meaningful relationships with family members, friends, and others (Miell & Dallos, 2009). In formal relationships there is

no particular emotional involvement between the interactors but the exchange of information and services predominates. Interpersonal relationships are characterized by the exchange of emotions, and although various definitions have been given for what constitutes an interpersonal relationship, they all emphasize emotional attachment, interdependence, and meeting the needs of the interactors. Interpersonal relationships differ in the nature of the emotions exchanged, in the type of emotions that prevail, in the degree of intensity of emotions and in the degree of commitment of members to the relationship.

3.1. Importance of Interpersonal Relationships

Interpersonal relationships play a crucial role in covering the psychological needs, such as the sharing of feelings and concerns, the need for care, and the need for confirmation. The quality of interpersonal relationships affects your life satisfaction and the more satisfied you are with your relationships, the happier and healthier you are. The importance of interpersonal relationships is shown by the fact that people who are lonely and isolated are more prone to negative emotions, such as depression, and are more likely to have problems of an organic or psychological nature [9] (Ryff, 1989). The lack of satisfactory interpersonal relationships leads to a subjective sense of loneliness. Weiss (1973) [10] states that there are two types of loneliness: (a) emotional loneliness and (b) social loneliness. Emotional loneliness is caused by a lack of a close emotional bond. On the other hand, social inequality is caused by the lack of connections within a wider social network. From the above it becomes clear that interpersonal relationships play a crucial role in happiness, mental balance and in general in the psychological well-being of the individual [9].

3.2. Satisfaction from Interpersonal Relationships

Given the importance of interpersonal relationships for the mental and physical health of individuals, you realize that a great role for the personal development of adults is to feel satisfied with their interpersonal relationships. However, looking at the international literature, one will realize that there is no commonly accepted definition of what constitutes relationship satisfaction. To measure the satisfaction of sexual / partner relationships, scales such as (a) the Marital Adjustment Test (Locke, 1951) have been used, which measures the satisfaction of sexual relations based on the degree of agreement of the partners on issues related to the relationship and degree of happiness in the relationship [11] and (b) The Locke-Wallace Marriage Adjustment Test (Locke-Wallace, 1959) which measures interpersonal satisfaction and includes a proposal for general marital happiness, eight proposals that measure areas of potential disagreement and six proposals that measure how conflicts are resolved, as well as the interaction and communication between partners [12]. To measure the quality of friendships, scales such as the Friendship Characteristics Scale (Bukowski, Hoza & Boivin, 1994) have been used, which measures: (1) com-

panionship, (2) conflict, (3) help, (4) security and (5) proximity [13]. Finally, scales have been used to assess family relationships, such as Prociano and Heller (1983)- Family Support Social Scale, which measures the perceived quality of family relationships [14].

3.3. Assuming the Perspective of the Other

Taking the other person's perspective is a process in which one tries to understand another person's inner states and thoughts, mentally placing oneself in the other's situation [15]. Taking the other's perspective is also recognized as a cognitive part of the theory of mind [16]. The term theory of mind denotes the ability of the individual to attribute to himself and others mental states and in its broadest sense denotes the ability of one person to understand the different mental perspective of another [16]. Other researchers consider that taking the other's perspective is a cognitive part of empathy, in which it has been defined as one's tendency or ability to understand the psychological perspective of others [17]. Empathy is a multidimensional structure that refers to one person's reactions to another's observed emotional experiences [17].

Taking on the other's perspective has been positively correlated with interpersonal functionality, extroversion and self-esteem. Thus, individuals who have a high degree of ability to take the other's perspective report more social self-sufficiency, extroversion, sensitivity to others, and higher self-esteem than those who have it to a low degree (Davis, 1983). The assumption of the other's perspective has been studied in the context of interpersonal relationships, especially erotic ones, and research in adults has shown that assuming the perspective of the other is related to the satisfaction that people derive from these relationships.

3.4. Gender Differences

There are no statistically significant gender differences in self-awareness [18]. However, other research has shown that women are superior to men in overall, private and public self-awareness [19] (Panayiotou & Kokkinos, 2006). Women generally appear to rank higher on the scale of positive relationships with others than men [20]. Finally, with regard to loneliness, men report feeling more lonely than women [3].

3.5. Objectives of the Present Research

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between self-awareness and taking the other's perspective, with the satisfaction that one derives from one's interpersonal relationships. We also interested in studying self-awareness and the ability to assume the other's perspective in interpersonal relationships in general positive relationships with others and with the sense of loneliness. In the research participated 61 adults with an average age of 35years. The research questions were formulated as follows:

3.6. Self-awareness

- What is the relationship between self-awareness (total, private and public) and positive relationships with others

and a sense of worthlessness (relationship satisfaction)?

- What differences are observed in satisfaction from interpersonal relationships
Among people who have low, and high overall self-awareness?
- What differences are observed in satisfaction from interpersonal relationships
Among people who have low, and high private self-awareness?
- What differences are observed in the satisfaction of the relationships between people who have low, and high public self-awareness?
- What differences are observed in satisfaction from interpersonal relationships
Between participants with high private self-awareness and those with high public self-awareness?

3.7. Ability to take on the other's perspective

- What is the relationship between the ability to take the other's perspective both with positive relationships with others and with a sense of worthlessness (relationship satisfaction)?
- What differences are observed in satisfaction from interpersonal relationships
Among people who have a low, low and high ability to take the other's perspective?

Transgender differences:

- Are there transgender differences in the performance of participants in the variables of self-awareness (total, private and public), the ability to take the other's perspective, positive relationships with others and a sense of solidarity?

4. Method

The study involved 61 adults by random sampling, 41.2% of the sample were men and 58.8% were women. The satisfaction of the interpersonal relationships of the participants was assessed based on: (a) the positive relationships they enter into with others and (b) the feeling of loneliness. Positive relationships with others were assessed on the basis of the scale of Positive Relationships with Others, which is one of the Scales of Psychological Welfare [9, 20]. A high score on the positive relationship scale means that a person feels satisfied with their relationships with others. This relationships characterized by trust, warmth, intimacy, devotion and empathy. On the contrary, a low rating on the scale indicates that one has few close and trusting relationships, relationships characterized by emotional coldness, lack of intimacy and interest in others. In addition, a low score indicates that one feels isolated

and unprotected from interpersonal relationships [9]. As reported by Russel et al. (1980) [3] a high score on the scale indicates that one is not satisfied with one's interpersonal relationships. On the contrary, a low rating on the scale indicates that one derives satisfaction from these relationships. Therefore, in the present research, "satisfaction from interpersonal relationships" was assessed based on both the conclusion of positive relationships with others and the sense of loneliness that one feels from these relationships. A questionnaire was used which included:

4.1. Demographic Questionnaire

The questionnaire included 9 questions related to gender, date of birth, marital status and socio-economic level of the participants (level of education and professional status).

4.2. Self-Awareness Ladder

The Self-Awareness Cluster of [2], measures three different aspects of self-awareness: (a) private self-awareness, (b) public self-awareness, and (c) social anxiety. Likert scale (where 0 = does not characterize at all and 4 = characterizes me very much). Cronbach's α internal consistency index has been found to be for the overall scale $\alpha = .80$, for private self-awareness it is $\alpha = .79$ and for public self-awareness it is $\alpha = .84$.

4.3. Assumption of the Perspective of the Other

The "Assumption of another's Perspective" scale, which is a sub-indicator of the Individual Reactivity Index (Davis, 1980), was used to measure the ability to take the other's perspective. It includes 7 sentences that measure the tendency to understand the psychological perspective of another person. The questions are answered based on a 5-point Likert scale (where 0 = not at all and 4 = too much). Cronbach's α internal consistency index has been found to be $\alpha = .73$ [17] (Davis, 1983).

4.4. Positive Relationships with Others

To measure positive relationships with others, the Positive Relationships with Others scale was used, which is one of the Criteria of Psychological Well-Being [20]. It contains 14 sentences, of which 7 are about positive interactions with other people and the other 7 describe negative interactions with others. These last 7 sentences are inversely graded so that a high overall score indicates more positive relationships with others. Participants' answers were based on a 6-point Likert scale (where 1 = strongly disagree and 6 = strongly agree). Cronbach's α internal consistency index has been found to be $\alpha = .91$ [9].

4.5. Revised UCLA Loneliness Ladder

The UCLA Revised Loneliness Scale [3], consisting of 20 proposals, was used to measure loneliness. Equal sentences are positively expressed and reflect satisfaction from interpersonal relationships. The other Equalities are negatively expressed and reflect dissatisfaction with interpersonal relationships. In the present study the

internal consistency index was $\alpha = .89$.

5. Results

5.1. Performance in Self-Consciousness as a Whole

The mean of the sample in self-awareness was 2.80 (SD = .38, range .93 - 3.67). Based on the score of the subjects in self-awareness, three groups were created: a low-performance group (13.8%), a low-performance group (72.4%) and a high-performance group (13.8%). Thus, we used the Mann-Whitney parametric test for two independent samples. The selection of this test was made after the regularity test that we performed for the self-consciousness variable and which showed that our data is not normally distributed. It was found that men scored higher in self-awareness than women, however, this difference was not statistically significant, $U = 653.5, p > .05$.

5.2. Private Self-Awareness

To calculate private self-awareness, we added the 9 questions about private self-awareness and we divide them by the number 9. In this way, the variable private self-consciousness was created 3.67. Based on the score of the subjects in the private self-consciousness, three groups were created: a low-performance group (15.1%), a low-performance group (68.9%) and a high-performance group (16%). depending on gender. Thus, we used the statistical criterion t for independent samples, since the data were normally distributed in the specific variable. The study showed that men performed higher than women in private self-awareness, a range that was not statistically significant, $t(117) = .397, p > .05$.

5.3. Public Self-awareness

To calculate public self-awareness we added the 6 questions about public self-awareness and we divide them by the number 6. The average of the sample in public self-awareness was 2.96 (SD = .47, range .83 - 4.00). Based on the scores of subjects in public self-awareness, three groups were created: a low-performance group (15.3%), a low-performance group (69.5%) and a high-performance group (15.3%). in public self-consciousness depending on gender. We used the Mann-Whitney parametric test for two independent samples, as the regularity test showed that the data on public self-awareness were not normally distributed. The study showed that women scored higher in public self-awareness than men, however, this difference was not statistically significant, $U = 838.0, p > .05$. Then we wanted to see if there was a difference in the performance of participants private and public self-awareness. For this reason we performed the Wilcoxon test for dependent samples. The control showed that the performance of the participants in the public self-awareness was significantly higher than their performance in the private, range which was statistically significant, $W = -4.999, p < .001$.

5.3.1. Performance in the Ability to Take on the Perspective of the Other

To measure the other person's ability to take perspective, we added 7 questions of the scale of assuming the perspective of the other and we divided them by the number 7. In this way the variable assumption of the perspective of the other was created. The average performance in the Variable assumption of the other perspective was 2.51 (SD = .58, range .86 - 4.00). Based on the participants' performance, the sample was divided into three groups: low performance group (17.2%), low performance group (66.4%) and high performance group (16.4%). ability to take the other's perspective on the other in terms of gender. After performing the regularity check, we used the statistical criterion t for independent samples. The results showed that women scored higher in the ability to take the other's perspective than men, however, the difference was not statistically significant, $t(120) = -1.800, p > .05$.

5.3.2. Performance in Positive Relationships with Others

To calculate the positive relations with the others, we added the 14 questions of the positive relations and divided them by the number 14. Thus, the variable positive relations with the others was created. The mean of the sample in this variable was 4.46 (SD = .81, range 2.21 - 6.00). Then we examined whether there were differences in the positive relations with the others in terms of gender. After performing the regularity test, we used the statistical criterion t for two independent samples. The results showed that women scored higher in positive relationships with others, however, the range was marginally statistically significant, $t(117) = -1.970, p = .051$.

5.3.3. Performance in Loneliness

To calculate the's value, we added the 20 questions of its scale and we divided by 20. The mean of the sample in loneliness was 1.90 (SD = .45, range 1.05 - 3.30). Then we examined whether there were differences in loneliness according to gender. We used the Mann-Whitney parametric test for two independent samples. The test showed that men had significantly higher performance in loneliness than women, $U = 532.5, p < .05$.

5.3.4. Correlations Between Research Variables

After analyzing the performance and the effect of gender on the performance of the participants, a series of correlations were made with the Pearson statistical index and where necessary with the Spearman rho index. Initially, the types of self-awareness (private and public) were related to each other, but also to the overall self-awareness. Then, self-awareness (total, private and public) was correlated with positive relationships with others and loneliness. Self-awareness was followed by the correlations of assuming the other's perspective - positive relationships with others - and loneliness.

5.3.5. Relationships in performance between total, private and public self-awareness

The analyzes were performed with the Spearman rho index. As

for the relationship Between private and public self-awareness the results showed that there was a weak positive correlation between performance in private and performance in public self-awareness, $\rho = .19, p < .05$. Total self-awareness was positively correlated with both private ($p = .85, p < .01$) and public self-awareness, ($\rho = .62, p < .01$).

5.3.6. Correlations of Total, Private and Public Self-awareness - Positive Relationships with others

A series of correlations were then performed to examine whether performance in total self-awareness, private and public, was correlated with performance in positive relationships with others. The results showed that overall self-awareness was significantly correlated with others. This correlation was positive, $\rho = .22, p < .05$, the more self-awareness increases, the more positive relationships with others increased. However, when examining the effect of public self-awareness, through partial correlation, it was found that the correlation between overall self-awareness and positive relationships was not statistically significant. This means that in the relationship between the two variables (total self-awareness and positive relationships) public self-awareness was a mediating factor, which was positively correlated with the positive relationships with the others, ($\rho = .20, p < .05$). In contrast, private self-consciousness was not correlated with positive relationships with others, $r = .43, p > .05$.

5.3.7. Correlations of Total, Private and Public Self-awareness on the Scale of Loneliness

Analyzes showed that overall self-awareness was not associated with loneliness. Although a weak tendency for negative correlation was observed ($p = -.08, p > .05$), this was not statistically significant. The same trend was observed for public self-awareness, but again, its correlation with loneliness was not statistically significant, $\rho = -.09, p > .05$. Finally, the correlation between private self-consciousness and loneliness was also important, ($\rho = .14, p > .05$).

5.3.8. Correlations of Taking the other's Perspective with Positive Relationships and Loneliness

Initially, analyzes were made to investigate the relationship between the ability to take the other's perspective and the positive relationships with the others. The results showed that the two variables were not significantly correlated, $r = -.05, p > .05$. The same was found for the correlation between taking the other's perspective and loneliness, ($\rho = -.09, p > .05$).

5.3.9. Differences in Positive Relationships with others and Loneliness Based on the Groups of High, Medium and Low Performance of Self-awareness (Total, Private and Public) and the Ability to Take the other's Perspective.

As we saw above, the variable of self-awareness (total, private and public) and the satisfaction of the other's perspective received

three values based on the scores of the subjects. Thus, three groups were created: (a) a low-performance group (a standard deviation below average and above), (b) a low-performance group (a standard deviation below the average to a standard deviation above average) and (c) high performance group (standard deviation above average and beyond).

5.3.10. Differences in Positive Relationships with Others and in Loneliness Based on the Three Groups of Self-awareness (Total, Private and Public)

The group with the high performance in the overall self-awareness had higher performance in the scale of positive relations with the others in relation to the group of low performance ($U = 65.0, p < .05$) and with the group of low performance, $U = 376.5, p < .05$. This means that participants with high self-awareness report that they engage in positive relationships to a greater degree than participants with low and low self-awareness. No differences were found between the low and low performance groups in overall self-awareness, $U = 523.5, p > .05$. After applying the ANOVA statistical criterion, it was found that there were no differences between the three performance groups in relationships with others ($F(2,113) = 1,016, p > .05$) and the feeling of loneliness, $F(2,101) = .123, p > .05$.

In contrast, the high performance group in public self-awareness scored higher on the positive relations scale compared to the low public self-awareness group ($U = 78.0, p < .05$) and the performance group, $p < .16, p < .16, .05$. This means that participants with high public self-awareness report that they engage in positive relationships to a greater degree than participants with low public self-awareness. No differences were found between the low and low performance groups in public self-awareness, $U = 333.5, p > .05$. Following the application of the non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis criterion, it was found that the effect of the performance groups of total self-awareness on loneliness was not statistically significant, $p > .05$. The same was found for the performance groups of private self-consciousness, $H = .489, p > .05$. However, the high public self-awareness group reported less loneliness compared to the group of low public self-awareness ($U = 51.0, p < .05$) and in the group Immediate performance in public self-awareness, $U = 238.5, p < .01$., findings that were statistically significant.

5.3.11. Differences in Positive Relationships and Loneliness Between High Private Self-Consciousness and High Public Self-Consciousness

The analysis also examined the differences between the group of high private self-awareness and the group of high public self-awareness in the positive relations with others and the group. In terms of the positive relations with others, the group relation to the high performance group in public self-awareness, $t(27) = -1.002, p > .05$. However, the two groups differed in terms of the loneliness variable. Specifically, participants with high private

self-awareness scored higher on the loneliness scale than participants with high public self-awareness, a finding that was statistically significant $U = 28.5, p < .05$.

5.3.12. Differences in positive relationships with others and loneliness based on the three performance groups of taking on the other's perspective

Following the application of the ANOVA statistical criterion, it was found that the performance groups in assuming the perspective of the other had no effect on the positive relationships with the others, $F(2,116) = 1.215, p > .05$. Moreover, after the application of the non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis criterion, it was found that the performance groups had no effect on the perception of the other's perspective, nor on the sense of loneliness, $H = .943, p > .05$. This means that the results were not statistically significant.

5.3.13. Self-awareness (Total, Private and Public) and Satisfaction from Interpersonal Relationships

Overall self-awareness was positively correlated with positive relationships with others. This means that the higher a person's self-awareness, the more positive relationships he or she has with others. There was no correlation between private self-awareness and positive relationships. Also, total self-awareness is not related to the feeling of loneliness. The same was found for both private and public self-awareness.

5.3.14. Assumption of the Other's Perspective and Satisfaction from Interpersonal Relationships

The assumption of the other's perspective was not associated with positive relationships neither the others nor the feeling of loneliness. That is, the assumption of the other's perspective was not correlated with any of the variables related to satisfaction with the relationship.

5.3.15. Transgender Differences in Self-awareness, in Assuming the other's Perspective, in Positive Relationships with Others and in Loneliness

Self-awareness (total, private and public) did not differ between the men and women in the sample. This finding is consistent with other research [18, 2]. However, it is interesting to note that there has been: (a) a tendency for men to report greater overall and private self-awareness than women, a finding that contrasts with other studies showing that women outperform men [21, 19] and (b) the tendency for women to report higher public self-awareness than men, a finding that is consistent with [22] Rozema (1999) research. Regarding the ability to take the other's perspective, no statistically significant difference was found between men and women. It is worth noting that there has been a tendency for women to report higher rates of taking the other's perspective, which is in agreement with previous research [17, 11, 21]. In addition, women were found to report less loneliness than men, a finding that was statistically significant and contrasted with research by

Russell, Peplau and Cutrona (1980) who found that there were no transgender differences in loneliness.

6. Conclusions

Public self-awareness is related to the satisfaction one gets from interpersonal relationships, which is due to the fact that participants with high public awareness reported that they (a) have more positive relationships with others than with public self-awareness and (b) that they feel less lonely compared to those with low or moderate public self-awareness and comparatively with those who report having a high private self-awareness. On the other hand, it was found that the ability to take the other's perspective is not correlated with the satisfaction one gets from one's interpersonal relationships, as it was not correlated either with the scale of positive relationships with others or with the scale of loneliness. Finally, in terms of gender differences, it was found that men and women did not differ in terms of self-awareness (total, private and public) and in terms of the ability to take the other's perspective, however, women reported that they entered into more positive relationships with others and feel less loneliness than men.

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