

SELF-ESTEEM, LOCUS OF CONTROL AND PERSONALITY TRAITS AS PREDICTORS OF SENSITIVITY TO INJUSTICE

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Abstract: The study analyzes the problem whether locus of control and self-esteem can explain the unique variance in predicting sensitivity to injustice not explained by personality traits and whether personality traits interact with self-esteem and locus of control when predicting sensitivity to injustice. The research was conducted on the Slovak sample of 254 undergraduate students (71 males, 183 females) - mean age 21.3 (range 17-27). Sensitivity to injustice was measured by the Sensitivity to Injustice Questionnaire. To measure self-esteem Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale was used and personality traits were measured by the NEO-FFI. Rotter's Internality-Externality Scale was used to measure the locus of control. The correlation analysis showed that personality traits, locus of control and self-esteem correlate with sensitivity to injustice. Hierarchical regression analyses revealed that the personality traits explain 30% of cognitive level of sensitivity to injustice variance. Adding locus of control and self-esteem to the predictors increased the variance explained by the model by 4%. The Big five traits explained 10% of the emotional level of sensitivity to injustice variance, locus of control and self-esteem explained additional 5%. Moreover, interaction analysis shows that internal locus of control acts as a buffer against the increase of unjust events perceived by a person with high neuroticism and antagonism.

Key words: sensitivity to injustice, big five personality traits, locus of control, self-esteem

Situations of social injustice are a part of everyday life and perception of injustice are key elements in everyday social interactions. This perception of injustice occurs usually after the requirements and demands of others have been disrupted. Therefore, several social psychologists have proposed that people may not only differ in their tolerance vs. sensitivity to physical stimuli, frustration, ambiguity, reward, and punishment, but also in their tolerance vs. sensitivity to moral norm violation and injustice (e.g., Dar, Resh, 2001; Lovaš, Wolt, 2002, etc.). The tendency to perceive a person's behavior as unjust or

self as an object of unjust treatment by other people has been denoted as sensitivity to injustice (Lovaš, 1995). Sensitivity to injustice was defined as a tendency to perceive other people's behavior toward self as unjust and to react to this event as to injustice. People differ greatly in how sensitively they react when faced with a potential injustice and their disposition to perceive a given procedure or distribution as unjust is consistent. While some do not take notice at all, others react with extreme anger and attack to help a victim or to rebuke an offender. People also differ in how injustice-sensitive they are

either as victims or as observers. Whereas observer sensitivity is positively related to cooperative behavior, victim sensitivity promotes antisocial and egoistic behavior (Gollwitzer et al., 2009; see also Rothmund, Gollwitzer, 2008; Schloesser, 2008). These differences are stable across time and generalize across a wide range of cases of injustice (Schmitt et al., 2009; Lovaš, 1995; Schmitt, Dörfel, 1999). Put differently, sensitivity to injustice is assumed to be a *cognitive style* - the consistent way individuals think, perceive and remember information, or their preferred approach to perceive and react in situation of social injustice.

Previous findings have confirmed the relationship between the frequency of unjust events and the frequency of intensive anger (Lovaš, 1995). Moreover, anxious and angry persons described higher occurrence of unfair behavior and also a correspondingly higher frequency of anger as a reaction to injustice (Lovaš, Pirhačová, 1996). The negative affective states are caused by events considered unjust. This unfair behavior is reflected in the emotional sphere of personality and such kind of situations considered to be unjust generate especially anger, irritation, enmity, resistance and antipathy (Pirhačová, 1997). The results of the research conducted by Lovaš and Wolt (2002) on a sample of 128 secondary school students imply that students who are more aggressive, egocentric, suspicious, mistrustful, immersed in their own thoughts and introspective, harboring feelings of misunderstanding and unfair treatment, are more sensitive to injustice. Subsequently, Ďuroška and Lovaš (2002) investigated connection of sensitivity to injustice in interpersonal relations and interpersonal behavioral traits according to structural model of J.S.

Wiggins. The results proved a higher measure of sensitivity to injustice (the frequency of perceived unjust events) in submissive and introvert individuals. The perception of frequency of occurrence of situations evoking injustice increased statistically significantly also with prominence of manifestations of arrogance.

These findings have confirmed that personality is important for understanding of social-cognitive processes which are used in situations of social injustice, because people perceive social situations congruent with their characteristics (Snyder, Gangestad, 1982). Personality is often defined as structured individual differences organized to assist a person and his/her adaptation to the environment. One widely accepted approach to conceptualizing and measuring personality traits is the Big Five (McCrae, Costa, 1997). Extensive structural analyses of the natural language of trait descriptors (e.g., Goldberg, 1992; McCrae, Costa, 1985, etc.) consistently have revealed five broad factors: neuroticism (vs. emotional stability), extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness to experience (imagination, intellect, or culture). Personality traits as genetically determined system of cognitive processes that decide how situations are perceived and consequently reacted to, may predominantly affect sensitivity to injustice. On theoretical grounds, two factors of the Big Five, which may account for sensitivity to injustice, are neuroticism and antagonism (the opposite pole of agreeableness). The agreeableness (Ruisel, Halama, 2007) describes people who are directed toward interpersonal relationships and the needs of others. The facets of agreeableness include trust, straightforwardness, altruism, compliance, modesty, and tender-mindedness. The opposite pole of agree-

ableness is antagonism. Those high in antagonism tend to mistrust and have a low regard for others, and, in turn, they act in ways designed to exclude or snub those who are perceived as disliked or inferior. The neuroticism (Ruisel, Halama, 2007) is characterized by those who have a tendency to experience negative affectivity and psychological distress. The facets of neuroticism include anxiety, angry hostility, depression, self-consciousness, and impulsiveness. Neurotic individuals are ineffective in their attempts to cope with stress and are prone to engage in irrational thought. By contrast, those who are low in neuroticism are more emotionally stable and calm and adapt well to stressful situations. Previous findings have demonstrated that high agreeable persons respond to interpersonal conflict more constructively (Graziano, Jensen-Campbell, Hair, 1996; Jensen-Campbell, Graziano, 2001), and work harder to suppress negative emotions during social interaction (Tobin et al., 2000) in part because they are able to control frustration caused by other people. Moreover, agreeableness is also believed to be a factor of personality that reflects an individual's motivation to maintain harmonious interpersonal relations, and to minimize interpersonal conflicts (Jensen-Campbell, Graziano, 2001). Results obtained by Schmitt and Mohiyeddini (1996) suggest that individuals high in sensitivity to injustice reacted with stronger resentment to a natural deprivation of a desired outcome than subjects low in justice sensitivity. Subsequently, Schmitt et al. (2005) confirmed the correlation between sensitivity to injustice and neuroticism according to the five factor model of personality traits. The authors suggest that individuals with high level of sensitivity to injustice are emotionally vulnerable

and this vulnerability makes them monitor their environment for threats. This interpretation is consistent with results of the research conducted by Žitný (2007; see also Bekk, Baumert, Spoerrle, 2008) who investigated mutual relationships between the personality structure with the Big Five model, irrational beliefs in thinking and sensitivity to injustice. The results showed that irrational beliefs in thinking and personality traits (neuroticism, antagonism - the opposite pole of agreeableness) are in positive relationship with sensitivity to injustice. Based on these findings, individuals with high sensitivity to injustice are more vulnerable to injustice and need higher justice standards in order to feel safe and therefore, an injustice-sensitive individual will probably invest more effort in restoring justice than an insensitive individual even if both evaluate a given situation as equally unfair.

Individuals who differ in sensitivity to injustice also differ in what they think ought to be done and in what they believe is actually being done in terms of justice, therefore another equally important mechanism of social-cognitive processes which are used in situations of social injustice may be personality variables: locus of control and self-esteem. These constructs are considered as socially learned and self-developed life attitudes. Internal locus of control is defined as the perception that events are contingent on one's own behavior or one's own permanent characteristics, while external control is characterized by the feeling that outcomes are more a result of fate, luck, chance, or control of powerful others or are unpredictable due to the complexity of situations (Rotter, 1990).

Individuals with an internal locus of control typically engage in proactive and adap-

tive behaviors (e.g., Rothbaum, Weisz, Snyder, 1982). Self-esteem is a broadly defined personality variable referring to the degree to which an individual values and accepts him or herself. The most broad and frequently cited definition of self-esteem within psychology is Rosenberg's (1965), who described it as a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the self (Gray-Little, Williams, Hancock, 1997). Low self-esteem has been associated with a host of negative life outcomes, including substance abuse, delinquency, unhappiness and depression. High self-esteem has been associated with positive characteristics such as initiative, strong coping skills, persistence in the face of challenges, happiness, and longevity (Baumeister et al., 2003; Halama, 2008). Low self-esteem is associated with greater amounts of perceived daily hassles and chronic stressors, even after correcting for environmental factors, occupation, age, and gender. Conversely, high self-esteem tends to be strongly associated with internal locus of control, or the confident perception that one's outcomes are determined by one's actions (DeLongis, Folkman, Lazarus, 1988; Whisman, Kwon, 1993). Also, these personality variables predicted the ability to habituate to repeated psychosocial stress, with subjects with low levels of self-esteem and low internal locus of control showing continuous high cortisol stress responses (Kirschbaum, Bartussek, Strasburger, 1992).

It has been found that there exists some relationship between locus of control, self-esteem (constructs with social basis) and personality traits (biological basis). Judge, Erez, Bono, and Thoresen (2002) completed a meta-analysis of the relationship between the traits, using studies from the ten psy-

chology journals most likely to include trait pairs. Their analysis of 127 articles revealed the following estimated, population level correlations between the traits. They found that among the Big Five traits, neuroticism (Schmitt et al., 2005) is the most closely related to locus of control ($r = 0.40$) and self-esteem ($r = 0.64$).

The present study aims to test the hypothesis that there are relationships between personality traits, locus of control, self-esteem and two components of sensitivity to injustice: cognitive level and emotional level. There are also theoretical reasons to investigate whether locus of control and self-esteem can explain the unique variance in predicting sensitivity to injustice, that is, whether these variables can explain residual variance not explained by personality traits. Also, we deal with the question, whether personality traits interact with self-esteem and locus of control when predicting sensitivity to injustice.

SAMPLE

The research was conducted on the Slovak sample of 254 undergraduate students enrolled in 96 different fields of study like psychology, social, educational, technical or medical sciences etc. (20% psychology students) from all around Slovakia: 71 of them were male (28%) and 183 female, their mean age was 21.3 years ($SD = 1.76$, range 17-27). The sample was drawn using a snowball technique by e-mail requests to participate in the research. By participating in the study, students did not earn any money or gain any credit. Using a student sample was considered advantageous because it permitted homogeneity.

MEASURES

Lovaš (1995) developed the *Sensitivity to Injustice Questionnaire* (SVN) for measuring sensitivity to injustice with two indicators: the frequency of perceived unjust events and the frequency of occurrence of anger when treated unfairly. The subjects referred to both the parameters studied (occurrence of the situation and occurrence of intensive anger in it) in 16 situations, which are basic types of injustice in interpersonal relationships. This measure assesses two components of sensitivity to injustice: the sensitivity toward injustice at the cognitive level (frequency of unjust events – attentiveness), with 16 items start with “*How often does it happen ...*”; and at the emotional level (frequency of intensive anger as a reaction to injustice), with the same 16 items starting with “*I’m seriously angry if ...*”. The internal consistency of the *Sensitivity to Injustice Questionnaire* in our study was $\alpha = 0.88$.

To measure self-esteem we administered the *Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale* (RSES; Rosenberg in Blatný, Osecká, 1994; Osecká, Blatný, 1997), the most widely used and well-validated measure of global self-esteem. This measure has 10 items and assesses general feelings of self-worth and self-acceptance, with items such as “*On the whole, I am satisfied with myself*”. Previous research has demonstrated good psychometric characteristics of the Slovak version of RSES (Halama, 2008; Halama, Bieščad, 2006). The Cronbach coefficient alphas in our study was $\alpha = 0.89$.

We also administered the *Rotter’s Internality-Externality Scale* (I-E; Rotter in Ruisel, 1981) measuring the level of internal vs. external locus of control. This measure

includes subscales for internal locus of control; e.g.: “*I can determine many things that are happening in my life*” (the raw score is lower) and external locus of control; e.g.: “*Many events in my life happen by chance*” (the raw score is higher). The internal consistency of the *Rotter’s Internality-Externality Scale* in our study was $\alpha = 0.79$.

To measure personality, we used the *NEO Five Factor Inventory* (NEO-FFI; Costa, McCrae in Ruisel, Halama, 2007). NEO-FFI is the short version of the Revised NEO Personality Inventory, a 240-item measure of the Five Factor Model. This measure is a 60-item (12 items per factor or domain) self-report inventory of putatively normal personality traits, which enjoys substantial validation across samples and method of assessment. In brief, the five scores offered by the inventory are *neuroticism* (emotional instability level); *extraversion* (sociability and energy level); *openness* (intellectual curiosity and aesthetic sensitivity level); *agreeableness* (level of interpersonal trends towards coming close to or rejecting others) and *conscientiousness* (level of self-control and self-determination). Each item in the NEO-FFI is placed on a five-step scale with bipolar verbal anchors and participants are asked to choose the point on the scale closest to the way they feel themselves. The following Cronbach coefficient alphas were observed in our study: neuroticism $\alpha = 0.86$, extraversion $\alpha = 0.80$, openness $\alpha = 0.69$, agreeableness $\alpha = 0.70$, and conscientiousness $\alpha = 0.85$.

RESULTS

The Pearson correlation analysis was performed to examine the relationships between personality traits, locus of control, self-es-

teem and two components of sensitivity to injustice: cognitive level and emotional level. Results of this analysis can be found in Table 1. As we can see, there are two personality traits which correlate with cognitive level of sensitivity to injustice, namely neuroticism and agreeableness. Emotional level of sensitivity to injustice has only negative correlation with agreeableness. Both self-esteem and locus of control correlate with cognitive level of sensitivity to injustice.

To examine whether locus of control and self-esteem can explain unique variance in predicting sensitivity to injustice, we conducted two hierarchical regression analyses. The first regression analysis used cognitive level of sensitivity to injustice as the dependent variable; the second one used emotional level. Both regression analyses consisted of two steps. When predicting cognitive level of sensitivity to injustice, five personality traits were entered in Step 1. Locus of control and self-esteem were added to predicting variables in Step 2. When predicting emotional level of sensitivity to injustice, the

steps were the same. Tolerance levels were satisfactorily high; none of them approached level 0.2 (they ranged from 0.410 to 0.817), so we could conclude that multicollinearity was not a problem in our analyses.

The results of the first regression analysis with cognitive level of sensitivity to injustice as a dependent variable are presented in Table 2. As seen in the table, the first model explained 30% of variance, and there are two traits: Neuroticism and Agreeableness which significantly predicted cognitive level of sensitivity to injustice. Adding locus of control and self-esteem to the predictors increased the variance explained by the model by 4% and this change was statistically significant.

The second hierarchical regression analysis used emotional level of sensitivity to injustice as criterion. Table 3 presents the results of this analysis. The first model explained 10% of variance, and only Neuroticism was a significant predictor of emotional level. Adding locus of control and self-esteem increased R-square by 5% and this change was statistically significant.

Table 1. Correlations between personality traits, locus of control, self-esteem and two components of sensitivity to injustice: cognitive level and emotional level

N = 254		Cog	Emo	N	E	O	A	C	SE	LOC
(Cog)	SVN – Cognitive level	1.00								
(Emo)	SVN – Emotional level	0.34**	1.00							
(N)	Neuroticism	0.47**	0.16**	1.00						
(E)	Extraversion	- 0.23**	- 0.08**	- 0.43**	1.00					
(O)	Openness	0.07**	0.03**	- 0.08**	0.11**	1.00				
(A)	Agreeableness	- 0.39**	- 0.30**	- 0.28**	0.30**	0.01**	1.00			
(C)	Conscientiousness	- 0.18**	- 0.04**	- 0.30**	0.17**	- 0.02**	0.16**	1.00		
(SE)	Self-Esteem	- 0.43**	0.02**	- 0.75**	0.46**	0.08**	0.19**	0.32**	1.00	
(LOC)	Locus of Control	0.32**	0.18**	0.37**	- 0.23**	- 0.06**	- 0.19**	- 0.29**	- 0.34**	1.00
	Mean	29.3	41.9	34.7	42.9	43.4	44.1	43.4	31.4	71.0
	(SD)	(6.10)	(8.48)	(9.05)	(7.74)	(7.15)	(6.37)	(8.51)	(6.14)	(6.45)
	Range	18-53	18-62	16-57	21-57	23-59	23-57	15-60	12-40	46-87

* $p \leq 0.05$; ** $p \leq 0.01$

Table 2. Hierarchical multiple regression results for criterion: SVN – Cognitive level

N = 254		Dependent variable: SVN – Cognitive level					
Predictor variable:		B	SE B	β	R ²	ΔR^2	ΔF
Step 1	$F(5,248) = 21.710^{**}$				0.30		
<i>Constant</i>		28.36	4.54				
Neuroticism		0.27	0.05	0.40 ^{**}			
Extraversion		0.01	0.05	0.15 ^{**}			
Openness		0.08	0.05	0.10 ^{**}			
Agreeableness		- 0.27	0.05	- 0.28 ^{**}			
Conscientiousness		- 0.01	0.04	- 0.19 ^{**}			
Step 2	$F(7,246) = 17.925^{**}$				0.34	0.04	6.189 ^{**}
<i>Constant</i>		26.54	7.06				
Neuroticism		0.16	0.05	0.23 ^{**}			
Extraversion		0.05	0.05	0.06 ^{**}			
Openness		0.09	0.05	0.11 ^{**}			
Agreeableness		- 0.27	0.05	- 0.29 ^{**}			
Conscientiousness		0.02	0.04	0.03 ^{**}			
Self-Esteem		- 0.20	0.08	- 0.20 ^{**}			
Locus of Control		0.13	0.05	0.13 ^{**}			

* $p \leq 0.05$; ** $p \leq 0.01$

Table 3. Hierarchical multiple regression results for criterion: SVN – Emotional level

N = 254		Dependent variable: SVN – Emotional level					
Predictor variable:		B	SE B	β	R ²	ΔR^2	ΔF
Step 1	$F(5,248) = 5.273^{**}$				0.10		
<i>Constant</i>		50.23	7.20				
Neuroticism		0.10	0.07	0.10 ^{**}			
Extraversion		0.04	0.08	0.03 ^{**}			
Openness		0.05	0.07	0.04 ^{**}			
Agreeableness		- 0.38	0.09	- 0.28 ^{**}			
Conscientiousness		0.03	0.06	0.03 ^{**}			
Step 2	$F(7,246) = 6.182^{**}$				0.15	0.05	7.737 ^{**}
<i>Constant</i>		18.10	11.12				
Neuroticism		0.25	0.09	0.27 ^{**}			
Extraversion		- 0.01	0.08	- 0.01 ^{**}			
Openness		0.05	0.07	0.04 ^{**}			
Agreeableness		- 0.34	0.08	- 0.25 ^{**}			
Conscientiousness		0.02	0.06	0.02 ^{**}			
Self-Esteem		0.43	0.13	0.31 ^{**}			
Locus of Control		0.19	0.09	0.15 ^{**}			

* $p \leq 0.05$; ** $p \leq 0.01$

In the third step, we focused on the question whether personality traits and social-cognitive constructs (self-esteem, locus of control) interact mutually in prediction of sensitivity to injustice. A method of multiple regression analysis was used to address this question (Aiken, West, 1991). Series of multiple regressions testing two-way interaction were conducted, using cognitive and emotional level of sensitivity to injustice separately as dependent variables. The predictors were combinations of individual personality traits (neuroticism, extraversion, open-

ness, agreeableness, conscientiousness) with self-esteem and locus of control. The analysis showed only two significant interactions, both concerning cognitive level of sensitivity to injustice. In the first case, neuroticism interacts with locus of control (Table 4). As seen from Figure 1, people with high neuroticism, when they have external locus of control, tend to perceive higher frequency of unjust events than people with high neuroticism but internal locus of control; however this is not true at low level of neuroticism. Interaction also occurred between

Table 4. Multiple regression analysis testing interaction between neuroticism and locus of control in predicting cognitive level of sensitivity to injustice

N = 254		Dependent variable: SVN – Cognitive level					
Predictor variable:		B	SE B	β	t	sig.	R ²
Step 1							0.24
	Neuroticism	2.50	0.36	0.41	6.936	0.000	
	Locus of control	1.00	0.36	0.16	2.774	0.006	
Step 2							0.27
	Neuroticism	2.34	0.36	0.38	6.487	0.000	
	Locus of control	1.18	0.36	0.19	3.261	0.001	
	Neuroticism x Locus of control	0.90	0.33	0.15	2.727	0.007	

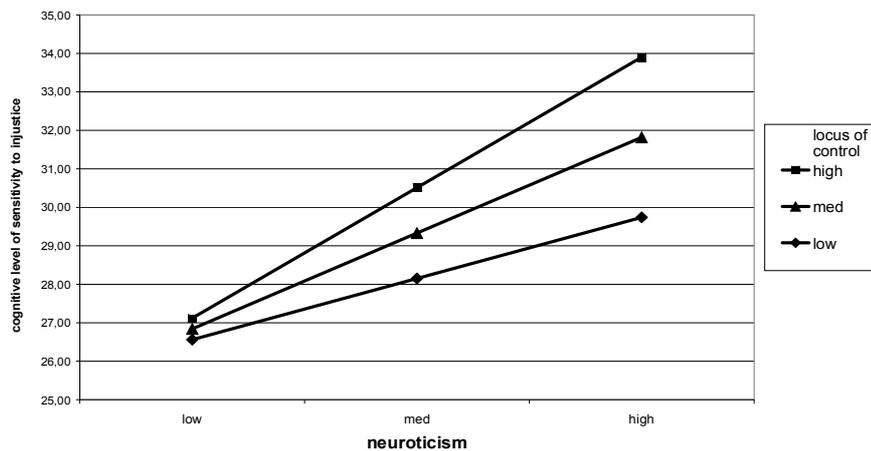


Figure 1. Interaction between neuroticism and locus of control in predicting cognitive level of sensitivity to injustice

agreeableness and locus of control (Table 5, Figure 2). In this case, people with low agreeableness, when they have external locus of control, tend to perceive higher frequency of unjust events than people with internal locus, but at the high level of agreeableness this difference diminishes.

DISCUSSION

We hypothesized that there are relationships between personality traits, locus of control, self-esteem and two components of

sensitivity to injustice: cognitive level and emotional level. In line with this assumption, we discovered several correlations which were recognized in previous studies. From all the variables, only openness was not in relationship with cognitive level of sensitivity to injustice. Consistently with previous research (e.g., Jensen-Campbell et al., 2003; Schmitt et al., 2005; Žitný, 2007; Graziano, Jensen-Campbell, Hair, 1996; Jensen-Campbell, Graziano, 2001), the sensitivity to injustice was most closely related to high neuroticism and low agreeableness. This

Table 5. Multiple regression analysis testing interaction between agreeableness and locus of control in predicting cognitive level of sensitivity to injustice

N = 254		Dependent variable: SVN – Cognitive level					
Predictor variable:		B	SE B	β	t	sig.	R ²
Step 1							0.46
	Agreeableness	- 2.09	0.35	- 0.34	- 6.009	0.000	
	Locus of control	1.52	0.35	0.25	4.373	0.000	
Step 2							0.48
	Agreeableness	- 1.97	0.36	- 0.32	- 5.651	0.000	
	Locus of control	1.80	0.35	0.30	4.971	0.000	
	Agreeableness x Locus of control	- 0.86	0.35	- 0.15	- 2.481	0.014	

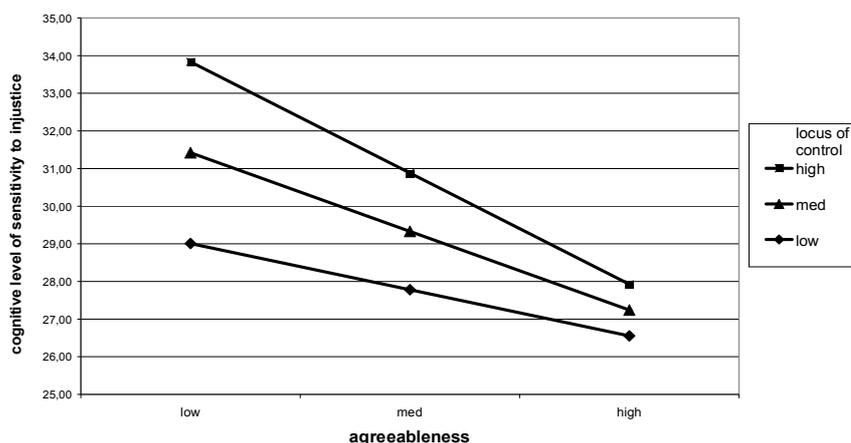


Figure 2. Interaction between agreeableness and locus of control in predicting cognitive level of sensitivity to injustice

finding may possibly be explained by the fact that neurotic and antagonistic individuals are ineffective in their attempts to cope with negative emotions during social interaction and they are not able to control frustration caused by other people, tend to mistrust and have a low regard for others. Based on previous research and these findings, we can reason that individuals high in neuroticism and antagonism are more vulnerable to injustice and need higher justice standards in order to feel safe. Therefore, injustice-sensitive individuals with high level of sensitivity to injustice are emotionally susceptible and this tendency makes them monitor their social surroundings for injustice, so they will probably invest more effort in restoring justice than insensitive individuals, even if all evaluate a given situation as equally unfair. The results of correlation analysis also showed that sensitivity to injustice correlated with low self-esteem and external locus of control. Thus, our findings are in accordance with previous studies (DeLongis, Folkman, Lazarus, 1988; Whisman, Kwon, 1993; Kirschbaum, Bartussek, Strasburger, 1992) and in line with these findings it could be argued that low self-esteem individuals, not trusting the self and others and with external locus of control, are more prone to perceive threat due to their perception of social situations as uncontrollable by them.

In our research, three trait predictors contribute significantly and with highest influence to predicting cognitive and emotional level of sensitivity to injustice – namely neuroticism, agreeableness and openness. Based on these findings and previous research, individuals with low agreeableness tend to mistrust and have a low regard for others, and, in turn, they act in ways designed to exclude or snub those who are

perceived as disliked or inferior, they respond to interpersonal conflict less constructively (Graziano, Jensen-Campbell, Hair, 1996; Jensen-Campbell, Graziano, 2001), and can not suppress negative emotions during social interaction (Tobin et al., 2000) in part because they are not able to control frustration caused by other people. In combination with high neuroticism these people express more negative emotions, emotional instability and stress reaction and, therefore, become more vulnerable. This vulnerability makes them monitor their environment for specific social-interactional threats and they often react with intense anger when their requirements and demands have been disrupted. Somewhat unexpected is the openness as a predictor, because correlational analysis did not show any relationships between openness and two components of sensitivity to injustice. This means that people, who are open to experience in combination with high neuroticism and low agreeableness, are the most sensitive ones to situations of social injustice. It seems likely that the significance of these personality traits for sensitivity to injustice lies in the association with specific social-interactional and emotional self-regulatory processes which operate in a dynamic and coordinated way with other intrapersonal and interpersonal systems to affect perception and reaction in situations of social injustice that warrant attention in future research.

More complicated results were found regarding the level of self-esteem. Correlational analysis showed that self-esteem correlated negatively with cognitive level and was not related to emotional level of sensitivity to injustice. However, the results of regression analysis revealed that when predicting high emotional level of sensitivity to injustice, one

of the significant predictors is high self-esteem. Thus, on the one hand, high cognitive level of sensitivity to injustice was found for low self-esteem individuals, but on the other hand, they referred inversely low frequency of anger as a reaction to injustice, if other predictors are held constant. Given the present findings in context with previous research, it seems that people high in self-esteem perceive fewer unjust events, because they are more willing to choose their own strategies than other people, and they are more responsive to situational cues indicating when to persist and when to move on to a more promising alternative (Baumeister et al., 2003). However, they react with intensive anger when faced with an injustice. People with low self-esteem only described higher occurrence of unfair behavior because low self-esteem is associated with victimization (Baumeister et al., 2003) and for low self-esteem individuals it is characteristic to lack initiative to react with anger in situations of social injustice. The results of regression analysis for locus of control are in accordance with previous findings (e.g., Kirschbaum, Bartussek, Strasburger, 1992).

A unique contribution of the present results to the research literature lies the finding of the hierarchical regression analysis that locus of control and self-esteem, socially learned and self-developed life attitudes, explain the unique variance of cognitive and emotional level of sensitivity to injustice, which has not been explained by the big five traits. In the case of cognitive level, it adds 4% of additional variance explained, and in the case of emotional level, it adds 5% of the variance explained. Moreover, interaction analysis shows that locus of control interacts with neuroticism and agreeableness in prediction of cognitive level of sensitivity to

injustice. In both cases, external locus of control intensifies the impact of neuroticism and antagonism on the number of unjust events perceived by a person. Vice versa, internal locus of control acts as a buffer against the increase of unjust events perceived by a person with high neuroticism and antagonism. One of the possible explanations could come out of the relation of external locus of control with learned helplessness (Hiroto, 1974). People with external locus of control seem to have cognitive bias toward the perception of a situation as being impossible to control. Together with higher anxiety related to high neuroticism, it could increase the sensitivity toward the perception of a situation as being dangerous and threatening, which could subsequently lead to higher perception of the situation as unjust. In case of low agreeableness, which includes antagonistic beliefs and behavior, the perception of small or no control over the situation could lead to higher expectancy of antagonistic behavior from other people, which results in the perception of a situation as unjust. On the other hand, the perception of control and mastering over the situation related to internal locus of control can eliminate the effect of high anxiety and expectancy of antagonistic behavior from other people.

CONCLUSION

The results support the theoretical formulations concerning underlying psychological mechanisms of social-cognitive processes which are used in situations of social injustice. The patterns of results found in the present study clarify the dynamics underlying the cognitive and psychological processes that may translate sensitivity to

injustice into emotional and behavioral reactions to injustice. Taken together, people's beliefs and characteristics shape their actions in many important ways, and these actions in turn shape their social reality and the social realities of the people around them, which consequently affect the tendency to perceive a person's behavior as unjust, or self as an object of unjust treatment by other people, because people perceive social situations congruent with their characteristics (Snyder, Gangestad, 1982). Based on this notion and previous findings, we are of the opinion that some people feel treated unfairly in ambiguous situations as a function of personality traits (neuroticism, antagonism and openness), self-esteem and locus of control. Little is known, however, about the ways how these factors influence the sensitivity to injustice. Identifying the role of these factors in detail deserves closer attention in future research. Hopefully, future research can confirm and extend these results using more diverse predictor and criterion measures.

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SEBAHODNOTENIE, LOKALIZÁCIA KONTROLY SPRÁVANIA
A OSOBNOSTNÉ ČRTY
AKO PREDIKTORY SENZITIVITY VOČI NESPRAVODLIVOSTI

P. Ž i t n ý, P. H a l a m a

Súhrn: Štúdia skúma problém, či lokalizácia kontroly správania a sebahodnotenie dokážu vysvetliť reziduálny rozptyl v predikcii senzitivity voči nespravodlivosti, ktorý nie je vysvetliteľný vplyvom osobnostných črt a či sú osobnostné črty v interakcii so sebahodnotením a lokalizáciou kontroly správania pri predikcii senzitivity voči nespravodlivosti. Výskum bol vykonaný na slovenskom súbore 254 pregraduálnych študentoch (71 mužov, 183 žien) – priemerný vek 21,3 (rozpätie 17-27). Senzitivita voči nespravodlivosti bola meraná Dotazníkom senzitivity voči nespravodlivosti. Na meranie sebahodnotenia bola použitá Rosenbergova škála sebahodnotenia a osobnostné črty boli merané dotazníkom NEO-FFI. Rotterova škála internality-externality bola použitá pre meranie lokalizácie kontroly správania. Korelačná analýza ukázala, že osobnostné črty, lokalizácia kontroly správania a sebahodnotenie signifikantne korelujú so senzitivitou voči nespravodlivosti. Hierarchická regresná analýza odhalila, že osobnostné črty vysvetľujú 30% rozptylu kognitívnej zložky senzitivity voči nespravodlivosti. Pridanie lokalizácie kontroly správania a sebahodnotenia k prediktormo zvyšilo rozptyl vysvetlený modelom o 4%. Päť veľkých črt vysvetľuje 10% rozptylu emočnej zložky senzitivity voči nespravodlivosti, lokalizácia kontroly správania a sebahodnotenie vysvetľuje ďalších 5%. Okrem toho, interakčná analýza ukázala, že interná lokalizácia kontroly správania pôsobí ako nárazník voči zvyšovaniu nespravodlivých situácií vnímaných osobou s vysokou emočnou labilitou a antagonizmom.