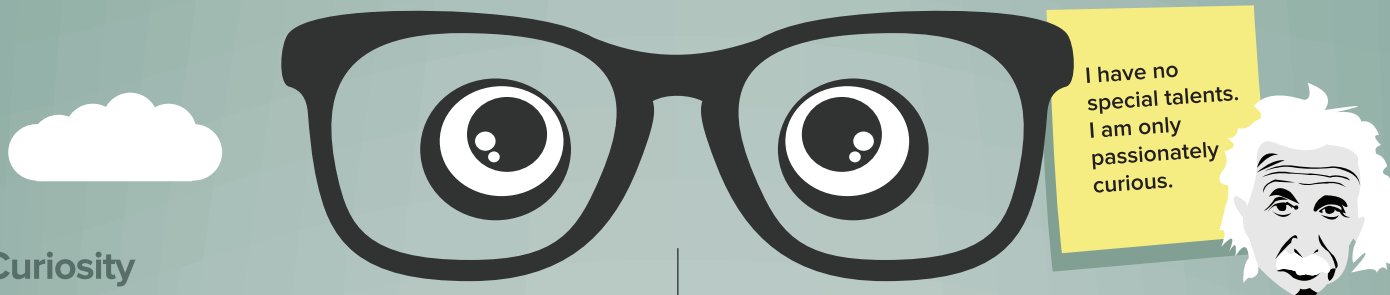


Curiosity and flourishing: the role of positive and negative affect

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Curiosity

Taking an interest in all of ongoing experience (Peterson, 2008); the central ingredient to creating a fulfilling life (Kashdan, 2009)

Flourishing

Living within an optimal range of human functioning, one that connotes goodness, generativity, growth and resilience (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005)

Positive / negative affect

The extent to which an individual experiences positive / negative moods (Watson, 2002)

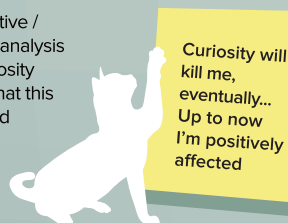
The aim of the study was to assess the mediating role of positive and negative affect in the relationship between curiosity and flourishing.

Method

318 college students from University of Zagreb (100 males and 215 females) participated in the study. The students ranged in age from 18 to 26 ($M = 20.49$, $SD = 1.51$).

Three questionnaires were administered: Curiosity and Exploration Inventory - CEI-II (Kashdan, et al. 2009), Positive and Negative Affect Schedule - PANAS (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988) and Flourishing Scale - FS (Diener, et al. 2009).

To test the relationship between curiosity, positive / negative affect and flourishing, two mediation analysis were performed. It was hypothesized that curiosity would be positively linked to flourishing, and that this relationship would be mediated by positive and negative affect.



Results

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for the curiosity scales, satisfaction of basic psychological needs, and wellbeing

	N	min	max	M	SD	Cronbach α
Curiosity Stretching - CEI_S	318	2.0	5.0	3.53	0.64	0.786
Curiosity Embracing - CEI_E	318	1.6	5.0	3.45	0.66	0.686
Basic Needs Satisfaction in General - BNSG	318	2.2	4.9	3.91	0.43	0.851
Positive Affect - PA	316	1.5	5.0	3.63	0.56	0.860
Negative Affect - NA	316	1.0	4.0	1.96	0.56	0.839
Life Satisfaction - SWLS	318	1.4	5.0	3.70	0.67	0.755
Flourishing - FS	318	2.1	5.0	4.09	0.52	0.827

Only stretching dimension of curiosity (motivation to seek out knowledge and new experiences) had direct effect on flourishing, so embracing dimension (general willingness to embrace the novel, uncertain, and unpredictable nature of everyday life) was excluded from the further analysis.

Mediation analyses with bootstrapping method revealed that curiosity has both direct and indirect effects on flourishing and is partially mediated with positive and negative affect (Figures 1 & 2).

Higher scores on curiosity scale are related to more positive affect and in turn to higher levels of flourishing. Also, higher scores on curiosity scale lead to less negative affect which is negatively related to flourishing.

Figure 1: Mediating effects of negative affect in the relationship between curiosity and flourishing

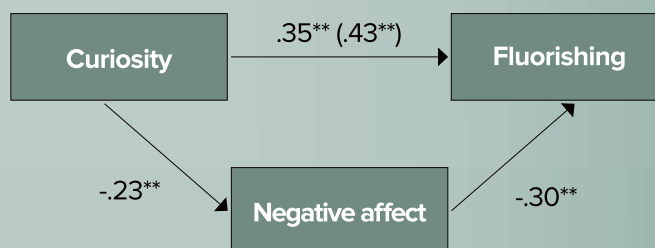
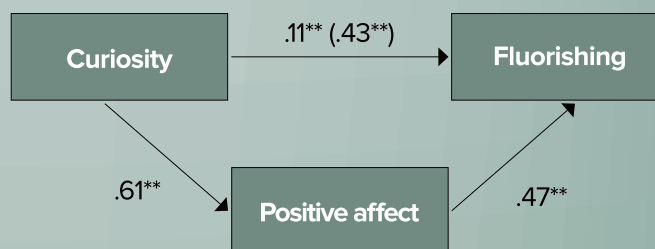


Figure 2: Mediating effects of positive affect in the relationship between curiosity and flourishing



Conclusion

Encouraging curiosity (in education) will lead to less negative & more positive affect and in turn to higher level of flourishing.

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