

IMPACT OF EQUANIMITY ON FLOURISHING AND INTERPERSONAL
CONFLICTS AMONG ADULTS: ROLE OF PRO-SOCIAL
BEHAVIOURS



ASIA HUSSAIN

Roll no. (01-275202-025)

A thesis submitted in the fulfilment of the
requirements for the award of the degree of
MS Clinical Psychology

Department of Clinical Psychology
BAHRIA UNIVERSITY ISLAMABAD

AUGUST 2022

Approval for Examination

Scholar's Name: Asia Hussain

Registration No. 01-275202-025

Programme of Study: Masters of Clinical Psychology

Thesis Title: Impact of equanimity on flourishing and interpersonal conflicts among adults:
Role of pro-social behaviors

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DEDICATION

To my beloved parents

All the milestones that I have accomplished in my life are the results of your prayers and

constant support,

Thankyou Ami Abu.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All praise to Allah Almighty for blessing me with the resources and abilities to pursue my education and to endure the challenges in the process. Then I want to express my gratefulness to my dear parents for their efforts and love and my beloved Rafia Baji & Azhar bhai for their continuous support.

I am thankful to my esteemed supervisor, Dr. Shazia Yusuf, for her guidance and support. I am thankful to all my teachers at Bahria University as well as at the college and schools I received my education from. My sincere thanks extends to all my fellows, colleagues, roommate and all others who provided assistance at various occasions. I am thankful to everyone who helped me during the process, including the participants of the study for participating in the study.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of equanimity on flourishing and interpersonal conflicts while exploring the moderating role of pro social behaviors. Sample of the study consisted of 300 adult participants (male =150, females= 150). Participant's responses were taken on questionnaire consisting of demographic sheet, Equanimity Scale 16 (Rogers et al., 2020), Flourishing Scale (Diener, 2009), Interpersonal Conflicts scale (Callaghan 2014), Pro-sociality Scale (Caprara et al., 2005). Major hypotheses of the study were as follow: 1. There will be positive correlation between equanimity and human flourishing among adults. 2. There will be negative correlation between equanimity and interpersonal conflicts among adults. Results of the study indicated that equanimity is positively correlated with flourishing and pro-sociality. Further, equanimity predicted negative correlation with interpersonal conflicts among adults. Moderation analysis revealed that pro-sociality does not significantly moderate the relationship neither between equanimity and flourishing nor between equanimity and interpersonal conflicts. Additionally, results revealed that values of equanimity and flourishing are higher in older adults and in males. Results of the current study can be used by all, general population, employees and researchers. Further it can contribute in the development of positive psychological interventions.

Key words: *Equanimity, flourishing, interpersonal conflicts, pro social behavior*

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Adulthood is divided into three stages young adults (18-35), middle adults (36-55) and older adults (55 and older) overall comprising of age range from 18 years and above (Petry, 2002). There are studies conducted which discussed about the emotional, cultural and social aspects of different stages of adulthood. A study conducted in USA which used over 50 years of data in their analysis by synthesizing 3 longitudinal studies on aging found that people are motivated to find meaning in their lives (Vaillant, 2002). Adulthood is long phase of life so there is a wide variety of circumstances surrounding it. As an adult the person have to take responsibilities of his career, marriage and social relations on its own. The most important thing regarding adulthood is that this is a stage in which person gets mature physically and intellectually as well as a full range of duties and social rights are employed (Scibilia et al., 2009). However, as adulthood is a very long phase so it is divided into 3 stages; young adults, middle adults and older adults.

One's social development begins to diverge from that of a teenager in early adulthood. Shift from college to university and then from university to begin a career generally happen during this stage. Previously in adolescence people use to rely more on family for social interactions. However, as an adult one must now carve out a place for

himself in a new environment, whether that's a classroom at a university or a new job. They must establish relationships on their own because this is also the time when permanent relationships are created so social engagement is essential at this stage. Thus early adulthood is a period of achieving financial and personal freedom. People are looking forward in their life and have to make important decisions. Many adults in this age could not bear the pressure of responsibilities and break in face of transition. Their stress and anxiousness make them aggressive and frustrated. This state aggravate their interpersonal conflicts and hinder the process of growth. Thus learning to stay calm and compose can really help them manage their all interpersonal conflicts and make a path towards flourishing (Wood, 2017).

Marriage the establishment of one's own family, a dependable friend group or the creation of a local town are examples of social development that might be regarded fully formed in middle adulthood. Thus here again having a steady form of social interaction and managing all interpersonal conflicts is essential because it satisfies the desire to remain part of community (Papalia et al., 2017).

Usually in early and middle adulthood, people pursuit for meaning in family and work (Markus et al., 2004). These domains are similar to the responsibilities that Erikson referred to as “intimacy verses isolation” and “generativity verses stagnation”. As mentioned earlier, in early adult hood adults frequently use their work as a way to define who they are. However, work is more closely correlated with job satisfaction than pay is (Iyengar et al., 2006). As work includes interaction with other people, which is although interesting but a challenging phase. It offers chances for progress and a degree of

independence (Mohr & Zoghi, 2006). Thus it is very necessary to have good interpersonal relationships at work as well as in family.

In late adulthood people are in a stage which Erik Erikson explained as a crisis of “integrity versus despair”. Basically, in this stage people reflect on their lives and attempt to reconcile the impact they had on the world. People who believe they had done something for world with their services live their senile period with a sense of integrity. While people who feel that they had not given their best and could not do well in their life develop a sense of despair. Thus in this stage also, some very important factors of positive aging are supposed to be meaning in life, social support and connectedness. And these concepts are core components of flourishing (Ryff, 2018).

According to the socio emotional selectivity theory, as people age the number of friends and sources of social support decline yet stay close in comparison to earlier years (Carstensen, 1992). Good interpersonal relationships in adulthood have been found to lead towards flourishing (Ryff & Singer, 2009).

1.1.1 Equanimity

Equanimity is a state in which one loses all feeling of self, actively pursues spiritual development and maintains peace and composure in the face of death and other difficulties in life while being acutely aware of one's own needs as well as those of others and the environment (Bakencamp, 2005). Despite having roots in religious literature and ancient Eastern texts, the idea has gotten little attention in psychology up to this point and there is still a dearth of empirical study aimed at operationalizing it (Jijina & Biswas, 2021).

Social Psychology is uniquely working to evaluate the role of mindfulness and meditation in promoting virtuous outcomes (Condon, 2017). Equanimity, a wonderful construct refers to calmness and composure. It can be observed as neutral emotional expression or even mindedness towards any hedonic or affective experience (Juneau et al., 2020). Various definitions of equanimity has been proposed by Buddhist scholars as well as by psychology. The term “equanimity” is mainly understood in two ways. First, it denotes to “unbiased feeling”, i.e. a mental conception in which person goes through an experience as an observer and does not label it as pleasant or unpleasant. In second meaning which is also consistent with current study, equanimity is described as a trait which is difficult to attain and is attained by thought processes and practice. It comprises of “experiential acceptance” and “non-reactivity”. This is a state of mind which is independent of any biasness, judgments, preferences or emotional agitation. In this state a person goes through every experience without judging it i.e. experiential acceptance and does not react to any unpleasant stimulus (Bodhi, 2005).

Researches tell us that equanimity is the product of mindfulness or meditation (Eberth et al., 2019). People who have attained equanimity do feel emotions but don't get overwhelmed by them instead know to manage them. They have their own perspective, a cognitive insight, values and goals which make them refrain from indulging into any useless conflicts and competitions. They exert their all energies for the welfare of humanity. It gives a direction of relation between equanimity and pro-social behaviors (Ding et al., 2018).

In equanimity a person must have a deep sense of acceptance for everyone. So such a state of composure and selflessness make them do best in every relation. The cultivation of equanimity as a personality trait develops self-awareness and allows for a

blameless and neutral view of the event. This serenity and peace foster an environment within oneself where optimism and positivity can flourish (Tyrer et al., 2014). And these good interpersonal relationships and pro social behaviors will lead that person to flourishing. According to prior research, flourishing is positively correlated with personal growth, fulfilling relationships with others and a sense of purpose in life (Telef, 2011).

Attaining equanimity as the preliminary basic element creates awareness of self and enables for a blameless viewpoint of any event. This serenity and tranquility create an inner haven where optimism and positivity can be cultivated and cherished (Tyrer et al., 2014).

Many ancient philosophies and contemplative practices placed emphasis on the development of equanimity. Buddhism places a strong focus on equanimity as a neutral balanced mental experience that is neither pleasurable nor unpleasant and does not necessitate escalating or calming down existing mental processes (Bodhi, 2000). Equanimity is regarded as one of the important spiritual aims in the ancient yoga systems like Ashtanga Yoga (Bhavanani, 2011). Although the concept of equanimity has origins in ancient philosophies and religions, psychological literature has only recently begun to pay attention to it (Jijina & Biswas, 2021).

The cognitive and affective aspects of equanimity produce marvelous results such as increased grief tolerance, hedonic detachment and reduced reactivity. It makes a person feel like as one observes one's thought processes from the outside (Ayduk & Kross, 2010). Psychological self-distancing, decentering, cognitive-diffusion, re-perceiving or metacognitive insight have all been terms used to describe this process

(Beck, 1997; Bishop et al., 2004; Safran & Segal, 1990; Shapiro et al., 2006). For instance, decentering is the act of viewing one's thoughts and feelings as transient experiences rather than as accurate representations of reality or essential elements of the self (Safran & Segal, 1990). The capacity to see one's own thoughts or views as perceptions of reality rather than as reality itself was similarly termed as distance (Beck, 1997). And it is said that in order to create lasting therapeutic change this capacity is a crucial prerequisite. Changing one's perspective of and relationship to thought rather than attempting to modify the content of thought itself might be viewed as psychological self-distancing overall (Hayes et al., 1999). This change of viewpoint about one's experience is a crucial component of psychological development and growth throughout life and is not exclusive to psychotherapy or mindfulness practice (Kegan, 1982). This similar concept is described with a new term known as “meta-awareness” (Chin & Schooler, 2010). This process of changing meaning of thought enables the persons to separate or decouple the directly experienced self from the narrative self. And this practice of reflection ensures stability of identity across period (Northoff et al., 2010). When there is no meta-awareness then the persistent cognitive processes of self-projection to hypothetical realities or narrative self tend to exacerbate emotional response e.g. in the form of prolonged fight and flight response, rumination or other cognitive distortions and become pathological (William, 2010).

Literature has suggested that channeling emotional energies and harmonizing conflicting matters is key to have significant committed lives. And what existentialism proposed was that being able to devise significance in difficult phases give clearest proof that quest for the meaning in life resides in the core of human spirit. Attaining equanimity

as the initial basic element creates awareness of self and enables for an unblemished worldview of any event. This transparency and peace develop an intrapersonal refuge where positivity and hope can be nurtured and appreciated (Tyrer et al., 2014).

In a nut shell, equanimity is the ability to frame and reframe meaning in stressful situations while maintaining a deep sense of calm (Astin & Keen, 2006).

1.1.2 Inter personal conflicts

Interpersonal conflicts are found everywhere at home, at work or any other environment. It might be due to issues related with personality or inadequate social skills. But these interpersonal conflicts effect a person in every aspect of life thus hindering their growth. Thus psychologists need to devise such mechanisms which help to reduce conflicts in the interpersonal relationships.

The term of “conflict” can be applied on many situations with its variety of forms like political, religious, organizational, ethnic, racial and different types occurring between two groups, within a group, between two individuals and within an individual etc. Conflict can occur in different places like war field, organizations and homes (Hartwick & Barki, 2004). Interpersonal conflict refers to the depiction of incompatibility, disparity or difference between two or more interacting individuals (Rahim, 2001). Conflict is a natural phenomenon and is unavoidable. It is not possible to eliminate it permanently and its outcome is mostly negative (Peter, 2006).

A good definition of interpersonal conflict must include all of its definitional characteristics. Inter personal conflict is generally described as an incident that occurs

between inter-dependent properties as they go through negative emotional reactions to professed agreements and interference with the accomplishment of their objectives (Barki & Hartwick, 2004).

Equanimity makes a person capable to understand the whole situation with reasoning and without reacting. In essence, a person who has attained equanimity take nothing personally and does not get caught up in the useless conflicts. A person with equanimity can "stand in the midst" of a dispute or crisis in a focused, grounded and balanced way. Thus such person has the ability to stand up in the face of conflict and crisis such as those brought on by blame, failure, grief or dishonor (Jagirdaar, 2018). Pro-social behaviors may be used to solve disagreements and mending potential damage caused by conflict to sustain positive relationships (Alonge & Olugbenga, 2020).

1.1.3 Flourishing

Flourishing is characterized as having significant amounts of both eudemonic and hedonic well-being. Hedonic well-being is composed of subjective well-being which is made up of the elements of happiness, life satisfaction and a healthy balance of positive and negative emotions (Diener, 1984). While eudemonic well-being is made up of psychological and social well-being and includes a wide range of elements like purpose, meaning and positive relationships as well as personal development.

Flourishing is generally conceptualized as a state in which all facets of a person's life are going well. It might refer to a state which can be referred to as thorough human well-being and that is a much broader concept than psychological well-being. There are different definitions or conceptions of flourishing discussed. However, regardless of the slight

differences in dimensions of understandings, basically flourishing is indicated by happiness and life satisfaction, physical and mental health, a sense of purpose and meaning in one's life, strong moral character and close social ties (Vanderweele, 2017). Flourishing has been described as a construct which constitutes different components like enhancing strengths, psychological well-being, resilience, growth and generativity (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005). As a trait, flourishing is more on the incremental side because it emerges gradually over time as the person changes and matures through various stages of life (Howell, 2009).

Human flourishing is significant because it fosters personal development and overall wellbeing. It provides the moral foundation for what it means to be a human. It is basically the person's ability to grow as a human being facing every thick and thin in life. Flourishing in life is a profoundly individual adventure that each person experiences and values differently. How one flourish in life is led by the holistic understanding that factors like discovering personal meaning through relationships, courage, leisure time, goals, developing creativity, love and connections are elements leading towards happiness and flourishing (Ackerman, 2018).

Flourishing in life involves living a fulfilling life, achieving goals, pursuing passions, and taking pride in accomplishments during the highs and lows of life. The expansion of the idea of flourishing which goes beyond an individualistic sense of self calls for a study of various Eastern and Western religions and traditions that place an emphasis on a holistic viewpoint. In order to walk on this path of flourishing, it is suggested one have to exert consistent and conscious effort for removing toxic attachment with wishes, desires, possessions and false beliefs. Western psychology has extensively studied person's affection

with wishes, ideologies, persons and emotions and found that secure attachment is a positively correlated with mental well-being (Granqvist et al., 2010).

Buddhist teachings hold that as everything in the world is transient and undergoing constant change including joys, circumstances and relationships with loved ones and attachment may be a cause of suffering. People devote time and effort to maintain these ties throughout attachment, despite their dynamic selves and continuously changing surroundings. According to this worldview, attachment that is not accompanied by an acceptance of its transience ultimately results in pain because there will be occasions when attachments become unjustifiable owing to circumstances that people can't control (Cassidy et al., 2013).

A more eudemonic perspective of happiness that places greater emphasis on life purpose and engagement with the outside world has begun to emerge in modern psychology, expanding the study of flourishing beyond simply happiness and positive self-perception (Ryff & Singer, 2008). The transpersonal component of personal wellbeing research, which includes the examination of how compassion and loving kindness contribute to long-lasting enjoyment, supports scientific inquiry of personal wellbeing (Fredrickson et al., 2008). There is a debate regarding appropriate means to achieve the ideal state of peace and flourishing. The rapidly growing field of mindfulness practice research is predicated on the idea that internal cultivation of non-judgmental awareness and compassion is preferable than externally attempting to create favorable settings for tranquility (Shapiro et al., 2009). This ideal state of calmness in which person feel happiness is often termed “equanimity”.

1.1.4 Pro social behaviors

Pro-social behavior is defined as “behavior motivated by the primary desire to benefit others” (Carlo & Randall, 2001). It is frequently carried out at a cost to the helper and motivated by internalized values (such as kindness) or other-oriented sympathy (Hardy & Carlo, 2007). Thus pro social behaviors are basically described as deliberate activities with the intention of profiting other (Eisenberg et al., 2006). This sort of behavior is observationally and experimentally connected to an assortment of positive cognitive, socio emotional and psychological outcomes. Research suggests that pro-social decisions could be the result of a cost-benefit analysis meaning that an individual makes a pro-social decision because it is advantageous to either the individual or society (Penner et al., 2005). These types of decisions would also be made when the benefits, such as gaining compliments exceed the perceived costs. They will also be made when the decision to behave in a pro-social manner decreases the cost to the individual, such as reducing guilty feelings (Killian, 2019).

Individuals who are involved in more social and volunteering activities have shown to have more ‘positive affect’, the emotional component of well-being (Kahana et al., 2013). While flourishing itself is said to result in pro-social behaviors vice versa so there is a hypothesized bidirectional pathway of influence. People who live in a eudemonic way are more likely to exhibit pro-social behaviors thus benefiting themselves and also the community (Rayan et al., 2008).

In conclusion, equanimity is concept which is very ancient in its core but not yet explored enough in recent contexts. A life of pure and genuine accomplishment is made possible by equanimity which frees one from the emotional reactivity and likes and dislikes

based on the ego. The beauty of equanimity is that it allows one to live one's life in all areas such that he might feel a greater sense of wellbeing, independent of external events, circumstances, crises or disputes (Vajda, 2016).

1.2 Rationale

1.2.1 Literature gap

For ensuring optimal functioning it is important to foster flourishing across life stages. In this regard, it is important to understand the variables associated with flourishing (Padhy et al., 2021). It is important to note that research on the construct of flourishing is still in its nascent phase and need further exploration (Satici, 2013). More researches on the development of relationship and relatedness between flourishing and pro-social behaviors to introduce interventions are needed (Wissing et al., 2019). Thus the rationale of this study is to empirically highlight the role and significance of equanimity in increasing psychological flourishing among adults in the collectivistic culture of Pakistan. The current study was conducted on the basis of recognition that by reducing common mental and behavioral issues, flourishing can be increased (Huppert, 2009).

Although equanimity is a widely practiced phenomenon in daily life but studies on equanimity and its practical implications are limited (Wongpakaran et al., 2021). It has been highlighted by the literature that previously all researches has studied equanimity as a consequence of meditation thus future studies should explore equanimity as a distinct concept from meditation (Desbordes et al., 2015). In fact the advantages associated with mindfulness based therapies might more truly be result

of cultivating equanimity. Thus to define its significance, scope and effectiveness for mental health and human happiness, equanimity has to be better integrated into cognitive science research (Mckay, 2019). Thus this research was intend to investigate the impact of equanimity on flourishing and interpersonal conflicts while exploring the role of pro social behaviors.

1.2.2 Contextual gap

Most of the researches conducted on equanimity had either taken this concept from western philosophy or Buddhist philosophy where it is attained through practicing contemplative practices (Biswas & Jijina 2022; Eberth et al., 2019; Weber, 2020). But in Pakistani culture equanimity is practiced on the cognitive notion that everything happening is meant to be and stems from ultimate wisdom of God. Thus this study will then explore the impact of equanimity in this context.

1.3 Problem Statement

Interpersonal conflicts have become a very common problem in every setting. This study will investigate whether cultivating equanimity has any impact in reducing interpersonal conflicts and paving path towards flourishing. And what is the role of pro social behaviors in it?

1.4 Research Questions:

1. Is there any relationship between equanimity and flourishing among adults?
2. Does equanimity reduces interpersonal conflicts among adults?
3. Is there any moderating role played by pro social behaviors between equanimity

and interpersonal conflicts?

4. Is there any moderating role played by pro social behaviors between equanimity and flourishing?

5. Is there any role of gender, age, family type and socio economic status on flourishing?

1.5 Objectives

(1) To investigate the relationship between equanimity, interpersonal conflicts and human flourishing among adults.

(2) To investigate the role of pro social behaviors for the relationship of equanimity and interpersonal conflicts among adults.

(3) To investigate the role of pro-social behaviors in the relationship between equanimity and flourishing among adults.

(4) To investigate the role of gender, age, education, professional experience, marital status, family type and socioeconomic status in accounting variability in the scores of human flourishing measure among adults.

1.6 Hypotheses

1. There will be positive correlation between equanimity and human flourishing among adults.

2. There will be a negative relationship between equanimity and interpersonal conflicts among adults.

3. Pro social behaviors will moderate the relationship between equanimity and

interpersonal conflicts among adults.

4. Pro social behaviors will negatively moderate the relationship between equanimity and flourishing among adults.

5. There will be gender differences in equanimity, inter personal conflicts, flourishing and pro social behaviors.

6. There will be differences in equanimity, inter personal conflicts, flourishing and pro social behaviors between family types.

7. There will be differences in equanimity, inter personal-conflicts, flourishing and pro social behaviors among different age groups.

1.7 Significance of the study

Flourishing is very important not only for the growth of an individual but holistically for the wellbeing of humanity. At the moment, chasing happiness, wealth and minimizing distress are prioritized. Therefore a change of perspective toward comprehensive well-being is recommended (Burman & Chaudhary, 2014). This study was conducted to explore equanimity, flourishing and inter personal conflicts, and their correlation. Role of pro social behaviors and impact of demographic variables is also explored.

The significance of this study basically lies in adding knowledge about equanimity and flourishing in indigenous literature. Results of this study are useful for general population, organizational managers and employees and as well as for researchers and scholars. Study on equanimity will make people know and learn about it as it provides a base of stability to positive psychology on which the whole structure is standing (Jijina &

Biswas, 2021). So, when the continuous strive towards happiness flops then the cultivation of equanimity may be the inner resource one can go towards to flourish. Further, the results of this study will also contribute towards the development of positive psychological interventions beyond clinic (Peterson et al., 2016).

Also prevalence of interpersonal conflicts is increasing day by day. So, by investigating the patterns of mechanisms in under study variables, it can be devised that there is a positive relationship between equanimity and reduced interpersonal conflicts and thus flourishing. The presence of empirical evidence about such wonderful and useful impacts of equanimity will definitely motivate people to learn and adopt such healthy patterns and pave the path towards better interpersonal relationships and flourishing.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Equanimity

2.1.1 Decoupling model of equanimity

In this model, equanimity is explained as decoupling of desire of wanting or not wanting with respect to pleasurable tone of current or predicted event. Higher levels of serenity do not base desire on an experience's hedonistic undertone. In two dimensions, decoupling occurs. First, wanting is unrelated to pleasant experiences i.e. a person does not want to have or keep having a pleasant experience just because it is enjoyable. Similarly, not wanting is unrelated to unpleasant experiences i.e. a person does not want to avoid or stop having a negative experience just because it is unpleasant. In reality things like values, long-term objectives and pro-social behaviors influence desire (Hayes et al., 2012).

In other, more prevalent intermediate levels of equanimity, the degree of hedonic-based desire fluctuates according to equanimity. In other words, when serenity increases, hedonic-based desire decreases and vice versa (Hadash et al., 2017).

It is crucial to realize that equanimity and mindfulness are quite different things. According to the definition of equanimity, it is "a state of mind unaffected by biases and preferences" (Bodhi, 2000). In other words, a person experiences their mental states objectively without repression, denial or condemnation. As a result, a degree of objectivity is attained, enabling a person to confront unpleasant thoughts head-on without denying, suppressing or avoiding them. Similar to this, one is able to attend to pleasant thoughts when they occur without becoming overexcited, striving to prolong them or developing an addiction to them (Weber, 2017).

2.1.2 Equanimity and psychoanalytic theory of Freud

Although the concept of equanimity is not apparently discussed in psychoanalytical theory but it can be found as an imbedded and crucial concept. Psychoanalytic approach emphasizes on two things; first it is important that patients should see emotions with a neutral attitude i.e. without judging them and second the psychotherapist should welcome and encourage the client's free associations by paying full attention (Freud, 1901). In a nut shell, Psychoanalysis focuses on recognizing and accepting emotions. Sigmund Freud advised his proponents to tell their patients to record all internal observations, feelings, ideas and recollections; whether they are too disagreeable or nonsensical, without excluding any one of them. The fundamental argument in favor of this strategy was that without taking therapy, an individual's unwanted thoughts or feelings are either suppressed into the unconscious or projected onto another person. These defense mechanisms of "hiding" emotionally taxing situations have an effect on a person's psychological health in a very destructive manner.

In accordance with above notion, the refusal to accept real suffering is the basis of all mental sickness (Jung, 1933). The development and maintenance of numerous types of psychological issues are attributed to "experiential avoidance," which can be understood as unhealthy attempts to escape and avoid emotions, thoughts, memories and other private experiences. This conclusion is supported by years of research in psychology (Hayes et al., 1996).

Despite the fact that the first psychoanalysts did not advocate achieving composure through structured meditation activities, the idea that in order to be healthy it is necessary to hold every kind of emotion in awareness with an approach of acceptance. While psychoanalysis concentrated on the process of bringing unconscious emotions into awareness, more recent innovations in psychotherapy expressly instruct patients to work on their awareness with regard to their inner experience in general (Desbordes et al., 2015).

Equanimity is still not discussed explicitly in modern therapies like Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) and Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), but it is inferred in the form of a particular set of attitudes on how to relate to experience. These attitudes can include acceptance, non-judgment, non-aversion and non-attachment. During therapy, these can be taught in the form of contemplative techniques. A change in these attitudes causes a shift in perspective, allowing one to observe their own mental processes as if they were watching them from outside. This perspective shift allows for greater understanding of their own inner thought processes and behavioral patterns (Beck et al., 1997). Other names for this process include cognitive diffusion, re-perceiving, de-reification, psychological self-distancing, decentering and metacognitive insight (Bishop et al., 2004; Chambers et al., 2009; Shapiro

et al., 2006).

The ability to change one's perspective on their experience is not exclusively a function of psychotherapy or mindfulness practice but rather a lifelong extension of "the watching self" or "meta-awareness," two concepts that are fundamental to psychological development and progress (Desbordes et al., 2015).

2.1.3 Equanimity and Flourishing

Moreover attaining state of equanimity enables a person to pay attention to his current experience or moment as it is occurring and perceiving the experience with particular orientation. This kind of attention offers a non-elaborative observation and awareness of thoughts, feelings or sensations from instant to instant. In turn, this encourages individuals to fully experience events without going to either extreme of excessive obsession with the experience or repression of the experience (Keng et al., 2011). This phenomenological prominence is regarded as a crucial sign of success. In light of its wide-ranging effects and connections, it is possible to argue that individuals with higher degrees of equanimity are more protected against psychopathologies and hence have a greater feeling of wellbeing (Akin & Akin, 2015). Here, it gives a direction that attaining equanimity leads to psychological growth i.e. flourishing.

VanderWeele et al., (2021) conducted a study in which they firstly measured inner peace in sample from U.S and then in a sample from China and then compared them. A significant and interesting thing which they stated in their findings was that a person who is flourishing would flourish more proficiently if he has attained a trait of equanimity.

People who are flourishing feel both unpleasant emotions, such as wrath, fear and

impatience and positive emotions, such as optimism and thankfulness. But compared to individuals who were passive or depressed, they have more adaptive coping mechanisms (Faulk et al., 2000).

Literature has suggested that living meaningful and dedicated lives requires channeling emotional energies and balancing conflicting elements. Existentialism also proposed that being able to devise meaning in times of difficulty gives clear proof that search for the meaning in life resides in the core of human spirit. In a nut shell equanimity is the ability to frame and reframe meaning in the face of stress while maintaining a sense of deep calm (Astin & Keen, 2006).

2.2 Flourishing

Having a whole range of human functioning including wellness, performance, growth and resilience is referred to as flourishing (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005). Major social-psychological functioning traits like relatedness, optimism, feeling competent, accepting oneself, having satisfying connections, making other people happy and earning other people's respect are all characteristics of flourishing (Diener et al., 2010). A person is called to be flourishing when he is happy with his status and functions effectively (Memon & Yusoff, 2022). It is also said that flourishing constitutes both psychological and social well-being and prosperity (Diener et al., 2010).

Since last few years there has been a rapid surge of social scientific interest in exploring associated factors with human flourishing and well-being with 14,000 publications mentioning one aspect subjective well-being in a single year (Diener et al., 2017). Literature found on flourishing is based on varied study populations and different operationalization of

flourishing which makes it hard to compare their results. Firstly Keyes (2002) used the term flourishing among psychologists to define high levels of psychological growth. Keyes (2002) conducted a study using a representative sample of adult Americans and categorized adults free of psychopathologies into three categories as either flourishing, moderately mentally healthy or languishing.

Following the work of Keyes, Huppert (2009) conducted the first cross national epidemiological study on flourishing. That study did not adopted operational definition of flourishing provided by Keyes rather operationalized and tested their own theoretical and conceptual frame work. They theorized that when it is said that flourishing is feeling good about oneself, this feeling good does not merely indicate happiness and life satisfaction but also involves feelings as engagement, interest, self-reliance and affection.

Developing one's potential, having some control over one's life, having a feeling of purpose (such as working towards important goals) and having satisfying relationships were all considered to be characteristics of flourishing. They explored social, genetic, personality, neurobiological and other demographic factors. The most significant and relevant finding to current study was that flourishing is associated with flexible thinking and pro social behaviors (Huppert et al., 2009). After this there came studies conducted by Diener and colleagues and Flourishing Scale was developed. The PERMA profiler, an acronym based on Seligman's idea that well-being is measured by high levels of positive emotions, engagement, positive relationships, meaning and accomplishments, is the most recent operationalization of flourishing (Seligman, 2011).

One of the most famous and largest studies on flourishing was conducted by Huppert & So (2011) in which they used a sample of 43000 participants in 22 European countries. They created a conceptual framework and discovered ten thriving dimensions centered on three variables. An individual is flourishing when 1st factor of positive emotions is present along with at least four out of five factors of 2nd dimension which include emotional stability, vitality, optimism, resilience, self-esteem and at least three out of four factors from 3rd dimension which comprising engagement in life, competence, meaning and positive relationships. According to the findings of study the prevalence of flourishing varied significantly between Northern, Eastern and Southern Western European countries. For example highest prevalence of flourishers were found in Denmark which was 40.6%, then second highest were in Switzerland i.e. 30.2 % and at the end were Slovakia, Russia and Portugal 9.9, 9.4 and 9.3 % flourishers respectively (Huppert & So, 2011).

The thorough method for attaining and researching flourishing has been offered by Keyes. The people who have high degrees of emotional, social and psychological well-being are considered flourishers in Keyes' definition. The latter two dimensions fall within the eudemonic realm while the former dimension belongs to the hedonic domain. The reverse of flourishing is languishing and those who are neither flourishing nor languishing are considered to have moderate mental health (Keyes, 2002). A study found an association between flourishing, improved mental and physical health and more resiliency against the challenges and vulnerabilities in life (Bergsma et al., 2011).

Instead of only "feeling well," flourishing is characterized by "doing and living well" (Seligman, 2011). Therefore, it is a type of positive mental health rather than simply

the absence of mental illness. Flourishers are mentally healthy, full of emotional vigor and operate well in both their personal and professional lives (Satici et al., 2013). People who are thriving believe that their lives are going well, are aware of their potential in various areas of life and make an effort to succeed, thrive or contribute significantly (Huppert & So, 2009).

Flourishing has been studied and correlated with constructs like resilience, productivity, emotional and psychological wellbeing, autonomy, self- acceptance, self-compassion etc. Current study aims to establish correlation of flourishing with equanimity. VanderWeele (2021) explored pathways leading towards flourishing and found that family, place of employment, education and place of worship all have significant roles in determining various facets of human flourishing.

For example, a study indicated that flourishing was found more in older people and those with better education (Keyes et al., 2002). Some of the researches from literature suggest that socio demographics, such as female in gender, higher income at personal or national level, higher education, being married and being employed are positively correlated with flourishing (Diener et al., 1995). The strongest correlation between flourishing and personality qualities appears to exist. It has been discovered that flourishing is connected with high levels of extraversion and conscientiousness and low levels of neuroticism.

Popular culture promotes an approach of focusing on self only to flourish, however there is strong evidence that pro-social behaviors consistently make individuals happy

and lead to flourishing (Keyes et al., 2002).

2.3 Pro social behaviors

Pro social behavior usually described as voluntary behavior aimed to benefit any other person/s. It may include different behaviors like helping, sharing or comforting, as well as behaviors performed for various reasons (Eisenberg et al., 2006).

Pro sociality can be observed in a variety of contexts, involving family, colleagues, friends and unknown persons. Pro sociality is basically an umbrella term comprising different forms of behaviors like altruism, helping, honesty, loyalty and sacrifice (Bhogal & Farrelly, 2019). This signifies that how diverse is the concept of pro-sociality and why it is important to explore it empirically. Various studies have explored the factors which act as antecedents for pro social behavior. Quain et al. (2016) divided these factors into categories as cultural factors, economic factors, gender factors, psychological factors and situational factors. They found that these factors act as motivation in different ways to perform pro social behaviors. They may also include egoistic reason or other oriented reasons e.g. moral values or sympathy.

2.3.1 Pro-social behaviors and equanimity

Another study proposed that people may show an increase in pro-social behaviors if they regulate their emotions like anger, sadness or anxiety etc. It implies that if people have capability to not get overwhelmed by these emotions then they are more intend to do pro social behaviors. However, there is a lower likelihood that they will be pro-social if they are unable to regulate these unpleasant emotions (Eisenberg, 1997).

As equanimity is a neutral state of mind thus it is considered as a foundation to connect from a point of genuine affection instead of any biased subjection. Thus it could be argued that attaining equanimity can act as a basis for self-compassion and compassion for others as well. This approach of equanimity toward one's own fleeting experience and later toward others can be broken down into two parts. First, through having an attitude of acceptance for one's own perception of reality or by paying attention to the experience with mindfulness. Here a person implies equanimity in a way that allows situations to come and go without giving any emotive response. Then paradoxically this attitude is applied while dealing with others which demonstrates a more sympathetic perspective on reality (Weber, 2017).

Equanimity results in generating love, care and compassion for the self and others. In mindfulness, this idea is apparently confined to a concept of open acceptance. Equanimity increases probability of performing pro social acts.

2.3.2 Pro-social behaviors and Flourishing

As far as relationship of pro social behavior with flourishing is concerned, there is a study which provides clear theoretical bases that performing pro social behaviors increases meaning in life (Costin & Vignoles, 2020). Pro social behaviors are beneficial for others and in a wider aspect for society, thus doing pro social acts may result in increased social approval. Increase in social approval then can in turn increase one's sense of purpose and meaning in life because one can believe that his survival is beneficial to others and society.

In accordance with this, pro social behaviors can lead to meaning and purpose (Schwartz, 2012). In a nut shell if a person feels that his existence is made beneficial and meaningful by impacting other's life positively then performing pro social acts become an influential way to heighten one's sense of meaning in life.

In light of above literature mentioned, it can be inferred that studies are being conducted to explore pathways through which pro-sociality and flourishing are interlinked. An interesting fact found was that meaning in life has been interlinked with being a "giver" (Baumeister et al., 2013).

A study conducted in Washington to investigate the impact of pro-social spending for others on happiness in life, which is a component of flourishing. They collected data from a sample of Americans and found that pro-social spending increases the positive mental states like flourishing (Dunn et al., 2008). Another study conducted in California investigated impact of pro-sociality on flourishing by dividing employees into three groups as "givers", "receivers" and "observers". Givers were experimentally prompted to perform pro-social acts. These pro-social acts were directed to those who were in need rather generally in circle. Results indicated that givers were highest in score of well-being (Chancellor et al., 2016).

Additionally, experimental research have offered circumstantial evidence that taking pro-social behaviors results in an increase in one's feeling of life's purpose, which is a core feature of flourishing (Martela & Ryan, 2016).

Much of the above mentioned work on the relationship between pro sociality and flourishing has been conducted using cross sectional or experimental designs. However,

there has been a recent study conducted using naturalistic design to explore how pro-sociality is linked with meaning in life (Martela et al., 2018). Nelson et al., (2016) contrasted the happiness boosting effects of pro social behavior and self-oriented kindness behavior in a longitudinal experiment of 6 weeks with. Results stated that pro social behaviors produce significant increases in flourishing as compared to self-focused and neutral behaviors.

Pro-social behavior is correlated with many beneficial outcomes including improved psychological growth and well-being (Ryan & Weinstein, 2010). Pro-sociality increases person's sense of happiness and meaning in life i.e. core characters of flourishing (Dakin et al., 2022). Dakin et al. (2022) conducted a study on sample taken from New Zealand which revealed that change in a person's pro social behaviors was remarkably correlated with both happiness and meaning in life thus leading towards flourishing.

2.4 Inter personal conflicts

Cui et al. (2016) described interpersonal conflict as the result of interactions between interdependent individuals who perceive conflict, divergent interests, compatibility issues and the potential as outside interference. Inter personal conflict is basically a disagreement among parties because of ego, transaction and open play game. He identified interpersonal conflicts as, open self-conflict, hidden self-conflict, blind self-conflict, discovered self-conflict and undiscovered self-conflict. Interpersonal conflict is disagreement, difference of interest, incompatibility of goals, negative emotions and interferences in goal achievement (Zeb, 2019).

2.4.1 Interpersonal conflicts and Equanimity

An indigenous study conducted to investigate the positive mental states across different groups of professionals. It was a cross sectional study and data was collected from professionals using purposive sampling technique. Results of this study indicated that higher levels of positive mental health safeguard from the consequences of negative stressors in both personal and work interactions (Batoool & Hanif, 2019).

Whenever there is a situation of disagreement, disinterest or misinterpretation, the relaxed presence due to equanimity decreases the risk of panic, catastrophizing and aggression by others. It also make others calm. Thus the stability and centrality of equanimity can deescalate emotional tension during interpersonal conflicts. Equanimity includes practicing remaining calm in the presence of upsetting stimuli in addition to developing an even-tempered response to all experience (Carmody & Baer, 2009). Equanimity can change both the nature and intensity of responses which is where the idea lends itself to emotional control (Gross & Thompson, 2007). Therefore, research on calmness separate from mindfulness is essential for developing adaptive processes that could support neurocognitive, psychological, physiological and behavioral mechanisms.

2.4.2 Interpersonal conflicts and Pro-social behaviors

Conflict, an incompatible relation between individuals is inevitable, as people face conflict with those they live in groups with and interact with. This type of events also encourage social cognition development and social competence. Reconciling

after conflict maintains bonds between individuals and one may use this behavior for achieving variety of goals. For instance, pro-social behaviors can be used to resolve individuals' disagreements, repairing potential harm caused by conflict to maintain positive peer relationships. Thus it can be hypothesized that pro-social behaviors can reduce interpersonal conflicts, as anti-social behavior promotes interpersonal conflicts in the organization (Alouge & Olugbenga, 2020).

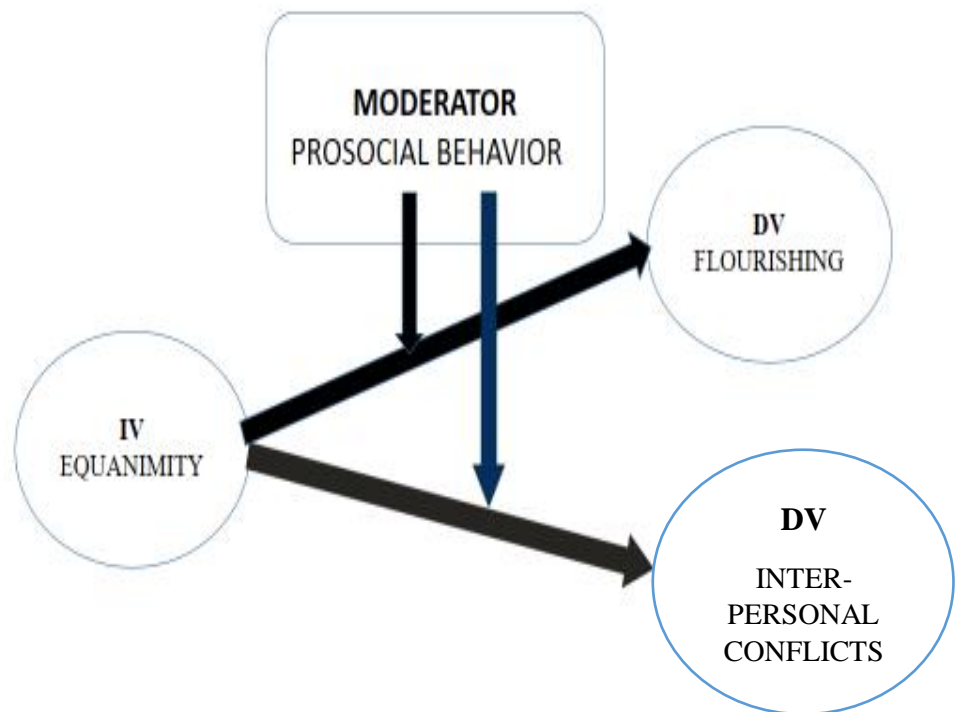
Concluding the literature written above, equanimity is concept which is very ancient in its core but not yet explored enough in recent contexts. Equanimity allows a person to live a life of genuine achievement free from the emotional reactivity and ego-based likes and dislikes trap. The beauty of equanimity is that it allows one to live one's life in all areas such that he might feel a greater sense of wellbeing, independent of external events, circumstances, crises or disputes (Vajda, 2016).

2.5 Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework explains the relationship of equanimity with flourishing, interpersonal conflicts and role of pro-social behaviors. Relationship of study variables is explained in the figure 2.1. Model explains that equanimity is correlated with flourishing and interpersonal conflicts. Further model tells that relationship of equanimity with interpersonal conflicts and flourishing is moderated by pro-social behaviors. Increase in equanimity may lead to increase in flourishing and pro social behaviors will strengthen the relation. While increase in equanimity may lead to decreased interpersonal conflicts and pro-social behaviors will strengthen this relationship.

Figure 2.1

Conceptual model explaining relation of Equanimity, flourishing and pro-social behaviors



2.6 Operational definitions

2.6.1 Equanimity

A trait of even mindedness and intentional acceptance towards all happenings and people irrespective of the effective valence (pleasant, unpleasant or neutral) or source (Rogers, Shires & Cayoun, 2020).

2.6.2 Flourishing

Flourishing is operationalized on the basis of the PERMA-Profiler, an acronym representing Seligman's theory that wellbeing requires high levels of positive emotions, engagement, positive relationships, meaning and accomplishments (Seligman, 2011).

2.6.3 Interpersonal conflicts

A representation of incompatibility, disagreement or difference between two or more interacting individuals (Rahim, 2001).

2.6.4 Pro social behavior

Pro social behavior is defined as voluntary behavior intended to benefit another (Eisenberg et al., 2006).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research approach

This study has followed deductive approach as it is based on the knowledge deduced from theories.

3.2 Research strategy

The study was basically quantitative in nature and correlational research design was employed to explore impact of equanimity on flourishing and interpersonal conflicts along with investigating role of pro social behaviors.

3.3 Instruments

3.3.1 Demographic data sheet

Demographic questionnaire was used which included demographic questions mainly inquiring about participant's age, gender, education, marital status, no of children, no of siblings, professional experience, family income, family system, religion and any diagnosed physical or psychological disease.

3.3.2 Equanimity Scale 16

Equanimity Scale 16 is a 16-item measure developed by Rogers et al., (2020). Twenty self-report questionnaires measuring mindfulness and related dimensions were used to create the items for this instrument. These were selected because some of their items had a conceptual connection with equanimity.

In order to evaluate the developed scale's validity and gather demographic data on 223 adults from the general population (age range: 18–75; 66.8% females; 33.2% males) questionnaires of the scale were employed. To evaluate test-retest reliability, the same questionnaires were subsequently delivered again. Results indicated good internal consistency ($r = .88$), test-retest reliability ($n = 73$; $r = .87$, $p .001$) and convergent and divergent validity.

Two subscales were identified by exploratory factor analysis for the items that explained 48.02 percent of the variation. Two overlapping components that describe experiential acceptance and non-reactivity were identified via item analysis. Prior to analyses, the items that made up the 'Non Reactivity' subscale were reverse scored to produce the overall scale score. Thus higher score on scale indicates higher level of equanimity attained and vice versa (Rogers et al., 2020).

3.3.3 Flourishing Scale

The Flourishing Scale, developed by Diener, is a brief evaluation of the respondent's perception of their own achievement in important domains like relationships, self-esteem, purpose and optimism. It has only eight items. This scale

is basically constructed on the basis of humanistic and eudemonic well-being theories.

This scale is one-dimensional and provides single psychological well-being score. When respondents score highly on the scale that means they have a positive view of themselves in key areas of functioning and the opposite is also true (Diener et al. 2010). Ramandi et al. (2020) examined reliability of scale and found that the values of the Cronbach's alpha coefficient (0.81) and test-retest (0.82) were satisfactory. According to the findings of the study by Diener et al. (2010) in the USA, which was conducted with a one-month interval, the test-retest reliability was 0.70 with a two-week gap.

According to research on various age groups from various nations, Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from 0.80 to 0.91 which is over 0.7 and within the acceptable range. The exploratory factor analysis results revealed that the Flourishing Scale is a one-dimensional structure and scores on each item are added to get compute score of whole scale (Ramadani et al., 2020).

3.3.4 Interpersonal Conflict scale

This Interpersonal Conflict Scale is basically a sub scale of FIAT-Q scale developed by Callaghan et al (2014). It contains 21 items which assess for conflict in interpersonal relationships. Different studies reported that scale has satisfactory test re-test reliability ($r= 0.72$) and convergent validity (Callaghan, 2014; Martinez, 2019). This is 6 likert scale vacillating from strongly disagree=1 to strongly agree =6. Item number 3,5,14 and 17 are to be reverse scored (Callaghan

et al., 2014).

3.3.5 Pro Sociality scale

Pro-sociality Scale is a 16-item Likert scale developed by Caprara and colleagues (2005). Answers range from "nearly never true to almost always true" on a five-point scale. "Nearly never true" was assigned the value "1" "sometimes true" was assigned the value "2" "sometimes true" was assigned the value "3" "often true" was assigned the value "4" and "almost always true" was assigned the value "5". The scale was created in Italy and measures many pro-social behaviors including empathy and sympathetic responses as well as sharing, helping and caring behaviors.

The Pro-sociality Scale which was developed as a measure to evaluate individual differences in adult's tendencies to behave in other's best interests generally was founded on Eisenberg's idea of pro-social behaviors. It has been shown to be effective in numerous research across various countries. According to previous research the scale had theoretically predicted connections with a variety of other constructs thus presenting a good construct validity (Bandura et al., 1999; Pastorelli et al., 2015; Vilar et al., 2020).

The scale has been validated in Italy using both the item response theory approach and traditional test theory (Caprara et al., 2005). It demonstrated appropriate psychometric characteristics and construct validity. Scale is one-dimensional as revealed by exploratory factor analysis and final score is determined

by summing the scores for each item. A study conducted by Eisenberg et al., (2021) found that Cronbach alpha for pro-sociality scale is 0.94.

3.4 Sampling and Population

Adulthood is divided into three stages namely young adults (18 – 35 years), middle adults (36-55 years) and older adults (56 years and older) overall comprising of age range from 18 years and above (Petry, 2002). The sampling technique used for data collection was purposive sampling technique as data was collected on basis of specific inclusion and exclusion criteria. Sample size of the study was calculated using G-power. G power version 3.1.9.4 was used in a previous power analysis to establish the minimal sample size needed to test the study hypotheses. According to the results a sample size of 300 is needed to detect a medium effect at a significant level of 0.05.

Inclusion criteria: Adults (18years and above). Both males and females literates were included.

Exclusion criteria: People with any diagnosed physical or psychological disorders were excluded.

3.5 Data collection and data analysis

Scales selected to measure the variables of the study were used after obtaining permissions from the authors of the scales. Data was collected by giving questionnaires to participants physically. Informed consent explaining purpose of survey was attached with questionnaires which participants signed before responding to questionnaire.

Afterwards analysis was done on total sample size of 300 with 150 males and 150 females.

The analysis was done using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. First of all reliability of scales was checked and then frequencies, description and correlation were found. Regression, t-test and ANOVA were done. Moderation analysis was done using process macro. Each analysis was done to target the hypothesis of study.

3.6 Research ethics

The Institute's Review Board (IRB) reviewed the study for potential human rights violations and ethical concerns and granted approval for conducting study. Permission to use scales was taken from the respective authors. Moreover, consent from the participants of study was taken from participants. Each participant signed a consent form and data was collected with their permission. Lastly participant's data was not misused.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter will discuss the results of analysis of the study. Chapter presents the tables of demographic characters of study's participants, psychometric properties of scales used for study and correlations among scales.

Moreover the regression analysis tables present the effect of independent variable(s). The moderation analysis table indicates the moderating effect of pro social behaviors on flourishing and inter personal conflicts. Moving forward t-test tables reveal the mean differences based on gender and family system. Whereas, ANOVA tables reveal the differences among frequency of education, marital status and family income.

Table 4.1*Socio demographic characteristics of participants (N=300)*

Characteristics	N	%	M	SD
Age			34.43	15.39
Young adulthood	146	48.7		
Middle adulthood	81	27		
Older adulthood	73	24		
Gender				
Men	150	50		
Women	150	50		
Education				
Matric	9	3		
Intermediate	31	10		
Undergraduate/graduate	186	62		
Post graduate	68	22		
PhD	6	2		
Family system				
Joint	111	37		
Nuclear	189	63		
Marital status				
Single	147	49		
Married	141	47		
Widowed	12	4		

Note. *n* = frequency. *M* = Mean. *SD* = Standard Deviation

Table 4.2*Psychometric properties of Scales and Subscales (n = 300)*

Scales & sub scales	K	M	SD	min	max	Cronbach's α
Equanimity	16	52.14	11.17	16	80	.83
Experiential acceptance	8	27.51	6.83	8	40	.83
Non-reactivity	8	24.63	7.76	8	40	.86
Interpersonal conflicts	21	71.99	18.08	21	126	.86
Flourishing	8	42.37	11.65	08	56	.93
Pro-sociality	16	64.56	12.86	16	82	.93

Note. K = no of items, M = mean, SD = standard deviation and α = Coefficient of reliability.

Table 4.2 shows psychometric properties of the scales that are used in the study. The Cronbach's α value of (.83) for equanimity indicates a high internal consistency of scale. Similarly the two subscales of equanimity, Experiential acceptance and non-reactivity had cronbach's α value of .83 and .86 respectively, also indicates good internal consistency. The Cronbach's α value (.86) for Interpersonal conflicts indicates high internal consistency. The Cronbach's α value for Flourishing is .93 which shows very high internal consistency of scale. The last Cronbach's α value is for Pro-sociality i.e. .93 which indicates high internal consistency.

Table 4.3
Correlations of study variables (n = 300)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Equanimity	-					
2. Experiential acceptance	.72**	-				
3. Non- reactivity	.79**	.16**	-			
4. Interpersonal conflicts	-.45**	-.45**	-.11**	-		
5. Flourishing	.48**	.62**	.14**	-.41**	-	
6. Pro-sociality	.45**	.52**	.18**	-.32**	.67**	-

Note. *n* = No. of participants. *M* = Mean. *SD* = Standard Deviation.

Table 4.3 shows that equanimity is negatively correlated with interpersonal conflicts. However, the equanimity has a significant positive relationship with flourishing. Whereas, Flourishing has a negative relationship with interpersonal conflicts. Pro-sociality is positively correlated with equanimity and flourishing, and negatively correlated with interpersonal conflicts.

Table 4.4

Regression coefficients of experiential acceptance and non -reactivity on flourishing (n=300).

Variables	B	SE	B	t	P	95%CI	
						LL	UL
Constant	12.00	2.57		4.66	.00	[6.941,17.06]	
Experiential acceptance	1.04	.079	.61	13.34	.00	[.894,1.203]	
Non-reactivity	.06	.06	.04	.89	.37	[-.074,.198]	
R=.62 R ² = .38 ΔR ² =9.15							

Note. CI = Confidence Interval; LL= lower limit; UL= upper limit.

*** $p < .001$. ** $p < .01$. * $p < .05$.

Table 4.4 shows the effect of experiential acceptance and non-reactivity on flourishing. The findings revealed that experiential acceptance predicts the flourishing in adults by ($\beta=.61$, $p<.001$) whereas, non-reactivity has non-significant effect on flourishing ($\beta=.04$, $p>.05$).

Table 4.5

Regression coefficients of experiential acceptance and non-reactivity on interpersonal conflicts (n=300).

Variables	B	SE	β	t	p	95%CI
Constant	107.18	4.52		23.68	.00	[98.27,116.08]
Experiential acceptance	-1.10	.199	-.41	-5.5	.00	[-1.49,-.70]
Equanimity	-.094	.122	-.05	-.77	.44	[-.33,.14]

R=.46,R²=.21, ΔR^2 = .20

Note. CI = Confidence Interval; LL= lower limit; UL= upper limit.

*** $p < .001$. ** $p < .01$. * $p < .05$.

Table 4.5 shows the effect of experiential acceptance and non-reactivity on interpersonal conflicts. The findings revealed that experiential acceptance negatively predicts the interpersonal conflicts in adults by ($\beta = -.41$, $p < .001$) whereas equanimity as a whole has non-significant effect on interpersonal conflicts ($\beta = .04$, $p > .05$).

Table 4.6

Moderation analysis of pro sociality in the relationship between equanimity and interpersonal conflicts (n=300).

Variables	ΔR^2	B	p	95% CI	
				LL	UL
Constant		115.49	.00	88.31	142.68
Equanimity		-.48	.10	-1.06	.09
Pro sociality		-.32	.14	-.75	.11
Equanimity X pro-sociality	.0001	.00	.86	-.007	.00

Note. CI = Confidence Interval; LL= lower limit; UL= upper limit.

Table 4.6 shows the model 1 moderation analysis to reveal the relationship between equanimity and interpersonal conflicts moderated by pro-social behaviors. Results show that pro-social behaviors do not significantly moderate the relationship between equanimity and interpersonal conflicts, $p > .05$. The finding leads to the rejection of 4th hypotheses.

Table 4.7
Moderation analysis of pro sociality in the relationship between equanimity and flourishing (n=300).

Variables	ΔR^2	<i>B</i>	<i>p</i>	95% <i>CI</i>	
				<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
Constant		-5.42	.43	-19.07	8.23
Equanimity		.28	.05	-.01	.57
Pro sociality		.55	.00	.33	.77
Equanimity X pro-sociality	.0002	-.0007	.73	-.00	.00

Note. CI = Confidence Interval; LL= lower limit; UL= upper limit.

Table 4.7 shows the model 1 moderation analysis to reveal the relationship between equanimity and flourishing moderated by pro-social behaviors. Results show that pro-social behaviors do not significantly moderate the relationship between equanimity and interpersonal conflicts, $p > .05$. The finding leads to the rejection of 3rd hypothesis of study.

Table 4.8*Mean comparison of Men and Women on study variables (n=300).*

Variables	Males		Females		<i>t</i> (300)	<i>p</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	(N=150)		(N=150)				
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Equanimity	52.66	10.70	51.62	11.64	.81	.41	
Experiential acceptance	28.43	6.58	26.58	6.97	2.35	.19	
Non-reactivity	24.23	7.78	25.03	7.74	-.89	.37	
Interpersonal conflicts	69.69	17.89	74.29	18.03	-2.21	.02	.25
Flourishing	42.24	11.83	42.51	11.51	-.20	.83	
Pro-social behaviors	64.54	12.91	64.59	12.84	-.03	.97	

*** $p < .001$. ** $p < .01$. * $p < .05$.

Table 4.8 shows that there is significant gender difference in interpersonal conflicts only. Women have higher score on interpersonal conflicts as compared to men. The Cohen's *d* value for interpersonal conflicts is .25 which indicates a small effect size. Moreover, the finding reveals non-significant mean differences in equanimity, experiential acceptance, non-reactivity, flourishing and pro-social behaviors.

Table 4.9*Mean comparison of Joint and Nuclear family type on study variables (n=300).*

Variables	Joint		Nuclear		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	(N=111)		(N=189)			
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Equanimity	52.61	10.63	51.86	11.50	.55	.57
Experiential acceptance	28.35	6.91	27.01	6.75	1.63	.10
Non-reactivity	24.26	7.64	24.85	7.85	-.63	.52
Interpersonal conflicts	69.50	17.13	73.45	18.50	-1.83	.06
Flourishing	43.51	11.61	41.70	11.66	1.29	.19
Pro-social behaviors	64.75	13.40	64.45	12.56	.19	.84

Note: Table 4.9 reveals that there are no significant mean differences in study variables between joint and nuclear family system.

Table 10*Mean comparison of age groups on study variables*

Variable	<i>Young adults</i> (N=146)		<i>Middle adults</i> (N=81)		<i>Older adults</i> (N=73)		F (4,295)	p	η^2	Post-hoc test
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>				
Equanimity	48.82	9.92	50.01	8.04	61.13	11.79	.55***	.00	.21	Y<M<O
Experiential - acceptance	24.88	5.69	27.95	7.07	32.27	5.97	3.00***	.00	.19	Y<M<O
Non- reactivity	23.94	6.92	22.06	7.14	28.86	8.41	.93***	.00	.10	M<Y<O
Interpersonal- conflicts	77.01	15.10	73.41	15.71	60.36	20.82	1.50***	.00	.14	Y>M>O
Flourishing	39.43	10.84	43.04	12.83	47.52	9.97	3.63***	.00	.07	Y<M<O
Pro-social behaviors	62.33	12.21	64.45	14.12	69.15	11.52	2.24***	.001	.04	Y<M<O

Note: Standard deviation and F values for study variables. Results indicates significant difference across age groups. The eta values of equanimity (.21); experiential acceptance (.19); non-reactivity (.10); interpersonal conflicts (.14); flourishing (.07) and pro-sociality (.04) indicate a small effect size.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Discussion

The study was carried out to explore the impact of equanimity on interpersonal conflicts and flourishing while investigating the role of pro social behaviors. Study was basically aimed to focus on the positive effects of equanimity. Validated psychometric scales were used to collect data from sample. The scales used were Equanimity Scale 16 (Rogers et al., 2020), Interpersonal conflicts (Callaghan et al 2014), Flourishing (Diener et al., 2010) and Pro-sociality (Caprara et al., 2005).

Table 4.2 in the result section indicates the psychometric properties for the scales through alpha reliability coefficient. The alpha coefficient was .83 for equanimity scale, .86 for interpersonal conflicts, .93 for flourishing scale and .93 for pro-sociality scale. These reliability values are close to the original reliability values of the scale. The original reliability of equanimity scale 16 is .88 (Rogers et al., 2020), flourishing scale is 0.70 (Diener's et al., 2010), interpersonal conflicts 0.72 (Callaghan et al., 2014) and .94 (Eisenberg et al., 2021).

Findings of table 4.3 in result section are consistent with 1st hypothesis of the study. Table indicated that there is significant positive correlation between equanimity and flourishing. Equanimity scale consisted of two subscales, experiential acceptance and

non-reactivity. Experiential acceptance has showed strong positive correlation (.62) with flourishing while non-reactivity has shown weak positive correlation (.14) with flourishing. This result is also consistent with literature. As literature has suggested that channeling emotional energies and harmonizing conflicting elements is key to have meaningful committed lives. Equanimity is the ability to frame and reframe meaning in stressful situations while maintaining a deep sense of calm (Astin & Keen, 2006).

Further table indicates that there is a significant negative correlation (-.45) between equanimity and interpersonal conflicts. Result correlates with the literature as Carmody and Baer (2009) stated that the relaxed presence due to equanimity decreases the risk of panic, catastrophizing and aggression by others. It also make others calm. Thus the stability and centrality of equanimity can deescalate emotional tension during interpersonal conflicts. Equanimity entails practicing remaining calm in the face of stressful situations in addition to developing an even-tempered response to all experiences. Interpersonal conflicts also indicated significant negative correlation with flourishing (-.41) and pro social behaviors (-.32). Findings also suggested significant positive correlation (.45) between equanimity and pro social behaviors. As Eisenberg's (1997) work proposed that one may show an increase in pro-social behavior if they acknowledge their negative emotions and do not get overwhelm by them.

Furthermore 2nd hypothesis of the study was that equanimity will negatively predict interpersonal conflicts among adults. The results of the current study shows that the predictor equanimity brings 21 % variance (where $R^2 = .21$) in the interpersonal conflicts. Hence this hypothesis of the study proves to be correct. This result is also consistent with literature. An indigenous cross sectional study conducted to investigate the positive

mental states across different groups of professionals indicated that greater levels of positive mental health safeguard from the consequences of negative stressors in both personal and work interactions (Batool & Hanif, 2019).

Third hypothesis of the current study stated that pro social behaviors will negatively moderate the relationship between interpersonal conflicts and equanimity. In contrast to expectations findings from the table 4.6 of result section indicates that pro social behavior does not significantly moderate the relationship between equanimity and inter personal conflicts that proves this hypothesis incorrect. It means that pro social behaviors do not put any significant effect on the strength of relationship between equanimity and interpersonal conflicts. As $p > .05$ whereas $R^2 = .0001$.

Fourth hypothesis of the study stated that pro social behaviors will positively moderate the relationship between equanimity and flourishing. Findings from the table 4.7 of result section reveals that pro social behaviors do not significantly moderate the relationship between equanimity and flourishing. As $p > .05$ where $R^2 = .0002$.

Thus Results indicated that pro-social behaviors are not acting as moderator neither between equanimity and interpersonal conflicts nor between equanimity and flourishing. This might be due to the reason that population of the study comprised a huge group i.e. young adults, middle adults and older adults. As discussed in background of study that there are number of varying circumstances surrounding these stages of adulthood. Also other varying demographic characteristics impact the scores. So it can be assumed that there can be many intervening factors involved due to which moderation did not proved significant.

Fifth hypothesis of the study stated that there will be differences in equanimity, inter personal conflicts, flourishing and pro social behaviors on the bases of gender. Table 4.8 in the result section shows gender comparison on study variables. Table reveals presence of significant differences in interpersonal conflicts of men and women. Women scored greater on interpersonal conflicts as compared to men. While recent study conducted in U.K has stated that men and women experience interpersonal conflicts equally but men score high on expression of anger. They have rationalized their finding on the basis that over expression of anger might have instantaneous negative results on the social bonds. Thus women tend to avoid conflicts (Trnka, 2013). Results of current study are not consistent with results of above mentioned study. It might be due the reason that women in U.K are more expressive and vocal. While Asian women are more emotionally suppressive (Sun & Lau, 2018). Thus that suppression of emotion increases their frustration level and reduces tolerance level leading to increased interpersonal conflicts. There was no significant differences found in equanimity, flourishing and interpersonal conflicts on account of gender.

Sixth hypothesis of the study states that there will be significant differences in study variables on account of family type. Table 4.9 from results section reveals that there are no significant mean differences in study variables between joint and nuclear family system. Result is consistent with the literature as the study conducted by Lodhi et al (2021) in Pakistan stated that there are no significant differences found between joint and nuclear family type. However, equanimity, experiential acceptance, flourishing and pro-social behaviors indicated higher scores for joint family system as compared to nuclear family system. These findings are also consistent with literature as another research

conducted in Pakistan also stated that adults living in joint family system reports higher level of social well-being that is an indicator of flourishing (Naz et al., 2014).

Last hypothesis of the study stated that there will be significant differences in equanimity, interpersonal conflicts, flourishing and pro social behaviors on account of age. One way analysis of variance was run to test this hypothesis. Results indicated that there are significant differences in study variables on basis of age groups. Table 4.10 in result section tells that eta value for equanimity is (.21); experiential acceptance (.19); non reactivity (.10); interpersonal conflicts (.14); flourishing (.07) and pro-sociality (.04) which indicate small effect size.

Current study reveal that older adults show highest levels of equanimity while young adults show lowest levels. Further it was found that inter personal conflicts are found greater in middle adults then in young adults and then found least in older adults.

Results also revealed that levels of flourishing and pro-sociality are highest in older adults then in middle adults and then lowest in young adults. These results seem very interesting and correlated. From these findings it can be inferred that older adults have high levels of equanimity, have less inter personal conflicts and are most flourishing.

5.2 Implications of study

Literature stated that nowadays a focus on materialism, seeking happiness and relieving misery through short-term fixes is prevalent. Therefore a change of perspective toward comprehensive well-being is recommended. (Burman & Chaudhary, 2014). Results of the current study can be used by all, general population, employees and researchers. As

the results of the study states a positive correlation between equanimity and flourishing, it can motivate general population to learn and practice equanimity. Cultivation of equanimity will help both general population and employees especially in reducing their interpersonal conflicts. Researchers can also use the results of this study to further explore equanimity and its impact. Thus, when the constant efforts for happiness and inculcating meaning in life fails, then developing equanimity may be the internal resource one can turn towards to flourish. Findings of this study will help to add knowledge about equanimity and flourishing in indigenous literature.

As results of this study proved that equanimity negatively predicts interpersonal conflicts. So, it can be used in interventions for managing interpersonal conflicts. Further, the results of this study can contribute towards the development of positive psychological interventions. Presence of empirical evidence about such useful impacts of equanimity will definitely motivate people to learn and adopt such healthy patterns and pave the path towards better interpersonal relationships and flourishing.

5.3 Limitations of study and future directions

The current study has certain drawbacks. The use of self-report questionnaires to measure equanimity, which is a subjective metric is the main drawback of this study. As a result, it cannot examine causal relationships; it can only reveal connections between measures. Additionally, it's important to consider the biases that may be present in surveys that offer many scales for measuring various domains because they may produce inaccurate correlations (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

As anticipated by the literature, present research provides correlation between

equanimity, flourishing and better inter personal conflicts. This consistency between the results of studies highlights the potential casual impact of equanimity on better interpersonal relations and flourishing. Thus, future researches should perform experimental studies on equanimity to frame cause and effect relationships. And for exploring the moderating role of pro social behaviors, it is suggested to study these variables on a specific group of population with almost same characteristics. Also as the results of current study tells that equanimity and flourishing both are found highest in older adults, future researches should explore the factors which are responsible for higher levels of these variables in older adults.

5.4 Conclusion

Results of current study found that equanimity predicts reduced interpersonal conflicts and is also positively associated with flourishing and pro social behaviors. Thus results demonstrates potential benefits which can be attained by practicing equanimity. Present paper is actually a small contribution for opening more avenues of research into the cultivation and development of equanimity.

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APPENDIX A

Consent Form

Respected Madam/Sir

I **Asia Hussain** (Student of MS Clinical Psychology from Bahria University Islamabad), going to conduct research as partial fulfillment of my degree. For this purpose, I need to collect data from adults. I assure you that the obtained information will be kept confidential and will only be used for research purpose. Thus, I would like you to become part of this study. In this regard I need your consent to obtain desired information from you.

I shall be thankful for your kind cooperation.

Please sign this form if you agree to participate.

Participant's signature-----

APPENDIX B**Demographic data sheet**

Please answer all of the following questions as they describe to you.

This information is required only for research purpose.

Age-----

Gender-----

Education-----

Marital status-----

No of Children-----

No of siblings-----

Professional Experience-----

Family Income-----

Family system: Joint Nuclear

Religion-----

Any diagnosed physical disease-----

Any diagnosed psychological disorder-----

APPENDIX C

Equanimity Scale 16

Please select appropriate responses based on how much you agree with each statement.

	Strongly disagree	Mildly disagree	Neutral	Mildly agree	Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5
1. When I have distressing thoughts or images, I am able just to notice them without reacting.					
2. I approach each experience by trying to accept it, no matter whether it is pleasant or unpleasant.					
3. When I experience distressing thoughts and images, I am able to accept the experience					
4. I can pay attention to what is happening in my body without disliking or wanting more of the feeling or sensation.					
5. When I notice my feelings, I have to act on them immediately.					
6. If I notice an unpleasant body sensation, I tend to worry about it.					
7. When I feel physical discomfort, I can't relax because I am never sure it will pass					
8. I perceive my feelings and emotions without having to react to them.					

9. I remain present with sensations and feelings even when they are unpleasant.					
10. I notice that I need to react to whatever pops into my head.					
11. When I have distressing thoughts or images, I “step back” and am aware of the thought or image without getting taken over by it.					
12. I can’t keep my mind calm and clear, especially when I feel upset or physically uncomfortable.					
13. I endeavor to cultivate calm and peace within me, even when everything appears to be constantly changing.					
14. I am impatient and can’t stop my reactivity when faced with other people’s emotions and actions.					
15. I am not able to tolerate discomfort.					
16. I am not able to prevent my reaction when someone is unpleasant.					

APPENDIX D

Interpersonal Conflict scale

This questionnaire will ask you to respond to a number of statements. You are asked to read each statement carefully, and then think about whether the statement applies to you or does not apply to you. Then circle the number that best describes how much you agree with the statement.

		Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Mildly disagree	Mildly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
		1	2	3	4	5	6
1	I have problems with conflict in my relationships.						
2	I feel uncomfortable when I experience disagreement with another person.						
3	I am aware when there is conflict with me and another person.						
4	When another person is angry with me, I do not understand the problem between us						
5	I feel that there are times when it is beneficial to express disagreement in a relationship.						
6	I get into conflict with others over things that do not seem to matter to them.						
7	People tell me that I want to discuss conflict at inconvenient or inappropriate times.						
8	I will engage in conflict with another person without considering who they are.						
9	I avoid conflict at all costs.						

10	In order to avoid conflict, I try to anticipate what the other person wants me to do						
11	I withdraw in the face of conflict, regardless of the circumstances						
12	After I voice a disagreement with another person, I immediately apologize for bringing up the issue.						
13	I am successful at resolving conflict with others						
14	When I have a disagreement with another person, I explain repeatedly why I think I am right.						
15	I approach solutions to conflict directly, clearly communicating what can be done to resolve our differences.						
16	I express anger indirectly, for example, by not speaking to the other person.						
17	People say I am not willing to compromise when there is a conflict						
18	When I am arguing with someone, the argument goes on for a long time						
19	During an argument, I feel more connected and close to the other person.						
20	When I am arguing with someone, the argument becomes more intense as time goes on.						
21	I deliberately upset the other person during an argument.						

APPENDIX E

Flourishing Scale

Below are 8 statements with which you may agree or disagree. Using the 1–7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by indicating that response for each statement.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Mildly disagree	Neutral	Mildly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I lead a purposeful and meaningful life							
My social relationships are supportive and rewarding							
I am engaged and interested in my daily activities							
I actively contribute to the happiness and well-being of others							
I am competent and capable in the activities that are important to me							
I am a good person and live a good life							
I am optimistic about my future							
People respect me.							

APPENDIX F

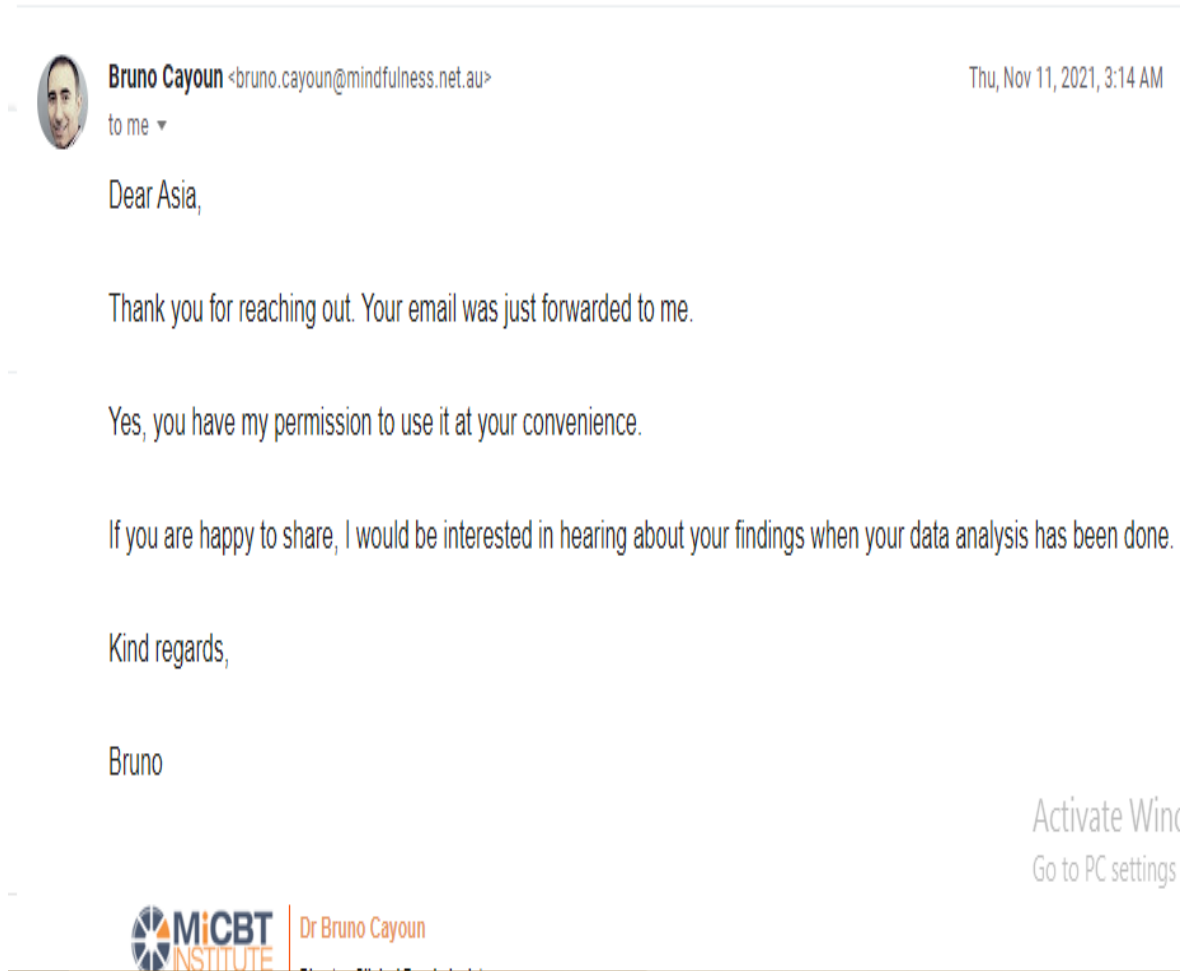
Pro-sociality scale

The following statements describe a large number of common situations. Read each phrase carefully and fill in the number that reflects your first reaction.

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Always
	1	2	3	4	5
1. I am pleased to help my friends/colleagues in their activities					
2. I share the things that I have with my friends					
3. I try to help others					
4. I am available for volunteer activities to help those who are in need.					
5. I am empathic with those who are in need					
6. I help immediately those who are in need					
7. I do what I can to help others avoid getting into trouble.					
8. I intensely feel what others feel					
9. I am willing to make my knowledge and abilities available to others					
10. I try to console those who are sad.					
11. I easily lend money or other things					
12. I easily put myself in the shoes of those who are in discomfort					
13. I try to be close to and take care of those who are in need					
14. I easily share with friends any good opportunity that comes to me					
15. I spend time with those friends who feel lonely					
16. I immediately sense my friends' discomfort even when it is not directly communicated to me.					

APPENDIX G

Permission letters to use scales





Glenn Callaghan <glenn.callaghan@sjsu.edu>

to me ▾

Nov 16, 2021, 10:59 AM ☆ ↶ ⋮

Hi Asia,

Thank you for asking for permission to do research on the FIAT-Q. You have my full permission to do so.

Here is a link to the publication and various forms of the measure. It is also called the FIAT-Q and the short form.

<http://www.sjsu.edu/people/glenn.callaghan/FIAT/>

The scoring is discussed in the article, it is really straightforward. There are no cut scores for the FIAT-Q or subscales. Higher scores indicate more problems in overall interpersonal relations and in the classes as defined.

If you translate the measure into another language, would you mind sending me a copy of the translated measure?

Best of luck with your research,

Dr. Callahan



--

Glenn M. Callaghan, PhD (he/him/his)

Professor of Psychology

Department of Psychology

San Jose State University

San Jose, CA 95192-0120

voice: 408.924.5610

Activate Windows

Go to PC settings to activate Windows



Diener, Edward F <ediener@illinois.edu>

Fri, Nov 19, 2021, 7:02 AM

to me ▾

Permission granted

From: asia7 hussain <aasihussain370@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, November 19, 2021 12:28 PM

To: Diener, Edward F <ediener@illinois.edu>

Subject: to seek permission to use scale



 Reply

 Forward

Activate Windows

To seek permission for using scale Inbox x



asia7 hussain

Fri, Nov 19, 2021,

Greetings! I am Asia Hussain, student of MS (CP) 3 at Bahria University Islamabad , Pakistan. I am working on my thesis project under the supe



Gian Vittorio Caprara <gianvittorio.caprara@uniroma1.it>

Fri, Nov 19, 2021, 2:50 AM

to me ▾

Dear Student,

I am glad to accord the permission to use the prosocialness scale we have developed

Sincerely,

GVCaprara

Inviato da iPhone

> Il giorno 19 nov 2021, alle ore 06:23, asia7 hussain <aasihussain370@gmail.com> ha scritto:

>

>



Impact of equanimity on flourishing and interpersonal conflicts among adults: Role of pro-social behaviors

ORIGINALITY REPORT



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