

The bright and dark sides of sensory processing sensitivity and its relationship to wisdom and area-specific life satisfaction

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The aim of the present mixed-methods study was to examine the relationship between sensory processing sensitivity (SPS), wisdom, and satisfaction across various domains of life. Additionally, the study explored aspects of SPS that highly sensitive individuals perceive as positive and negative in different life domains. The Highly Sensitive Person Scale, the Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale and the Life Satisfaction Questionnaire were administered to 184 participants aged 19 to 69. As expected, significant negative correlations were found between SPS Traits and satisfaction with health, work, friendship, free time, own home and own person. Furthermore, SPS was associated with higher affective wisdom, a new finding in this area of research. The moderating effect of wisdom on the relationship between SPS and life satisfaction was not significant. Using Qualitative Content Analysis, responses from N = 55 highly sensitive participants to open-ended questions about positive and negative aspects of SPS in various life domains were categorized. The frequency of positive aspects in the life domains was found to be similar to the frequency of negative aspects, indicating a balanced perception. Previously unexplored positive aspects of SPS were reported, showing that highly sensitive persons perceive strengths in their SPS that can enhance their life satisfaction. A focus on strengths of SPS in future research could enrich interventions and contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of this personality trait.

Are you currently an Early Career Researcher?

Yes, I am within 6 years of receiving my Ph.D.

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