

Seasonal Cycles in Loneliness, Self-Esteem and Positive and Negative Affect

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Seasonal changes throughout the year are characterized by many factors such as temperature change and different daylight duration. Such changes have been shown to affect a wide variety of psychological phenomena such as decision-making and prosocial behavior. Some of the previous research has shown that people experience more negative emotions during Winter and Spring, also known as Seasonal Affective Disorder. However, the topic of seasonality is still not explored that much. The aim of this preregistered study was to extend prior research on seasonal variation in important psychological variables. Specifically, we examined seasonal changes in Loneliness, Self-Esteem, and Positive and Negative Affect by taking data from the PASST study. PASST is a longitudinal study with data collected at four assessment points per year (January/Winter, April/Spring, July/Summer, October/Fall) over a period of three years. In our analyses, we focused on both between- and within-person shifts. Between-person differences were examined using ANOVA using individuals who entered the study at different periods of the year. Within-person differences, that is, seasonal changes over a year for a person, were examined using repeated measures ANOVA. Overall, the sample consisted of 3919 participants (74.4% female and 25.1% male) for the between-person analysis and also for the within-person analysis. The results for the between-person perspective showed that there are not any differences in the constructs under scrutiny at different seasons. The within-person perspective, however, showed a very small, but significant effect for Loneliness (highest loneliness in Winter) and Negative Affect (Highest score in Winter and Fall).

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No

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