

Introduction

- Posttraumatic Growth (PTG):** The process and positive psychological changes experienced after the struggle with stressful life events (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996). **Western cultures** typically report higher PTG than eastern cultures. (Taku et al., 2009)
- Narcissism:** Subclinical personality traits that maintain underlying insecurities with a grandiose identity (Jones & Paulhus, 2014). **Individualistic cultures** typically report higher levels of narcissism than collectivistic cultures (Rohmann, Neumann, Herner, & Bierhoff, 2012).

Theoretical Links Between Narcissism and PTG:

- Extraversion** is the most strongly correlated personality trait with PTG and each of its five domains of growth (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996). Similarly, **grandiose narcissism** is most associated with **extraversion**. (Miller et al., 2011).
- Individuals engaged in **self-enhancement** when prompted to reflect on who they are now and who they were prior to a stressful event (McFarland & Alvaro, 2000). **Narcissism** utilizes **self-enhancement** to maintain grandiose self-perceptions by inflating agentic characteristics of arrogance and extraversion (Grijalva & Zhang, 2016).

Purpose and Hypothesis

- Purpose:** To examine the relationships between narcissism and PTG at the item level of the Posttraumatic Growth Inventory-X.
- Hypothesis:** In a sample of American and Japanese participants:
 - (1) Different domains of PTG will be positively correlated with narcissism in American and Japanese participants. (2) More positive, small to moderate correlations will be found between narcissism and PTG in the American sample than in the Japanese sample.

Method

Inclusion Criteria: (a) completed Posttraumatic Growth Inventory-X and Narcissism items of the Short Dark Triad (b) reported a most impactful event (c) born and raised in their respective countries.

Procedure and Measures:

- Paper and pencil survey
- Posttraumatic Growth Inventory-X (Tedeschi et al., 2017): 25-item scale (0=not at all to 5=very great degree; Cronbach's alpha=.96 American and .94 Japanese)
- SD3 Narcissism (Jones & Paulhus, 2014): 9-item scale (1=disagree strongly to 5=agree strongly; Cronbach's alpha=.68 American and .77 Japanese)
 - "I know that I am special because everyone keeps telling me so."*

A Cross-Cultural Study of Narcissism and Posttraumatic Growth

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Demographics

Participants: American ($N=168$) and Japanese ($N=115$)

Age:

- American $M=19.98$ ($SD=3.09$)
- Japanese $M=20.85$ ($SD=3.78$)

Gender:

- American (80% female)
- Japanese (70.3% female)

Religion	Frequencies			
	n	%	n	%
Christianity	124	72.90	0	0
Buddhism	0	0	28	23.70
Shinto	0	0	1	.30
Judaism	23	13.50	85	72.0
Islamic	3	1.80	2	1.70
Non-Religious	14	8.20	0	0
Other	6	3.50	2	1.70
Total	170	100	118	100

Results

Table 2.

	American	Japanese	
PTG	$M=67.38, SD=28.25$	$M=41.09, SD=24.27$	$t(272)=8.22, p<.001$
Narcissism	$M=26.83, SD=5.20$	$M=19.81, SD=5.63$	$t(284)=10.86, p<.001$

Domain I: Relating to Others
 Domain II: New Possibilities
 Domain III: Personal Strength
 Domain IV: Spiritual Change
 Domain V: Appreciation of Life

Overall Correlations
 between Narcissism and
 PTGI-X in American
 participants
 $r(163)=.20, p=.011$

Overall Correlations
 between Narcissism and
 PTGI-X in Japanese
 participants
 $r(114)=.38, p<.001$

Table 3. Correlations at the item-level between narcissism and PTG

PTGI Item	United States		Japan	
	r	p	r	p
1. I changed my priorities about what is important in life. (V)	-.081	.812, n.s.	.279	<.002
2. I have a greater appreciation for the value of my own life. (V)	.117	.134, n.s.	.145	.117, n.s.
3. I developed new interests. (II)	.063	.063, n.s.	.290	<.002
4. I have a greater feeling of self-reliance. (III)	.150	.052, n.s.	.407	<.002
5. I have a better understanding of spiritual matters. (IV)	.193	.012, n.s.	.260	<.01
6. I more clearly see that I can count on people in times of trouble. (I)	.066	.393, n.s.	.157	.089, n.s.
7. I established a new path for my life. (II)	.049	.531, n.s.	.149	.108, n.s.
8. I have a greater sense of closeness with others. (I)	.172	.026, n.s.	.209	.023, n.s.
9. I am more willing to express my emotions. (I)	.137	.076, n.s.	.280	<.002
10. I know better I can handle difficulties. (III)	.192	.013, n.s.	.194	.036, n.s.
11. I am able to do better things with my life. (II)	.193	.012, n.s.	.228	.018, n.s.
12. I am better able to accept the ways things work out. (III)	.151	.050, n.s.	.109	.242, n.s.
13. I can better appreciate each day. (V)	.096	.215, n.s.	.153	.098, n.s.
14. New opportunities are available which wouldn't have been otherwise. (II)	.086	.268, n.s.	.215	.019, n.s.
15. I have more compassion for others. (I)	.126	.103, n.s.	.135	.146, n.s.
16. I put more effort into my relationships. (I)	.069	.375, n.s.	.170	.066, n.s.
17. I am more likely to try to change things, which need changing. (II)	.142	.067, n.s.	.324	<.002
18. I have a stronger religious faith. (IV)	.209	<.01	.235	<.01
19. I discovered that I'm stronger than I thought I was. (III)	.187	.015, n.s.	.261	<.01
20. I learned a great deal about how wonderful people are. (I)	.027	.733, n.s.	.206	.025, n.s.
21. I better accept needing others. (I)	.022	.775, n.s.	.212	.021, n.s.
22. I have a greater sense of harmony with the world. (IV)	.187	.015, n.s.	.351	<.002
23. I feel more connected with all of existence. (IV)	.169	.028, n.s.	.383	<.002
24. I feel better able to face questions about life and death. (IV)	.193	.012, n.s.	.222	.016, n.s.
25. I have greater clarity about life's meaning. (IV)	.198	<.01	.284	<.002
26. I feel more spiritually aware.	.219	<.01	.355	<.002
27. I have greater clarity about life's meaning.	.198	<.01	.284	<.002
28. I have a greater sense that I am part of the fabric of life.	.217	<.01	.276	<.01
29. I have a greater sense of harmony with the world.	.187	.015, n.s.	.351	<.002

Original
PTGI-21

PTGI-X
(Expanded
Version)

Additional
Spiritual
Items

Discussion

Hypothesis:

- Supported: Some types of PTG were **uniquely correlated** with narcissism in American and Japanese participants (i.e., personal strength only in Japanese).
- Unsupported: More small to moderate correlations were found between narcissism and PTG in Japanese personnel than American.

Conclusions:

- PTG and narcissism were higher in the American sample than the Japanese sample, maintaining consistency with previous literature (Taku et al., 2009; Rohmann et al., 2012).
- Most types of PTG were not correlated with narcissism in American individuals, whereas **small to moderate** relationships were found in Japanese.
- Results display a great frequency of correlations in the spiritual growth domain.
- Characteristics of the **Spiritual Growth** domain, such as **lack of physicality**, may appeal to self-enhancing tendencies of narcissists.
- A majority of the significant correlations found in the Japanese sample were derived from the Spiritual Growth domain of the PTGI-X.
 - The recently revised PTGI-X was developed to better accommodate spiritual but not religious individuals in collectivistic cultures (Tedeschi et al., 2017).
 - Japanese culture embraces fluidity of religious identity (Taku, 2010) which may be harnessed by narcissistic traits to satisfy grandiose affirmations.

Limitations:

- The majority of the relationships in this study were small and their significance was likely attributable to sample size.

Future Directions:

- Assess how types of growth that are associated with narcissism may interact with the types of growth that do not require cognitive effort (Taku & Oshio, 2015).

Importance:

- Recognizing the potential for fluctuating relationships between narcissism and PTG at the item level may benefit clinicians in when assessing the authenticity of a client's growth.

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