



# Personality predictors of the experience, expression and control of anger

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## INTRODUCTION

Anger, as different from both aggression and hostility, is a multifaceted phenomenon. Spielberger analyzes it both as a situationally induced emotional state and as a general disposition to experience angry emotions (Spielberger, Reheiser & Sydeman, 1995). He describes also different modes of expressing and controlling angry feelings. Spielberger's conceptualization was a basis for a study designed to explore personality correlates and predictors of different aspects of anger. First part of the study concentrates on general personality traits (FFM - Costa & McCrae, 1992) and is replicative in nature. Previous studies (Bettencourt et. al, 2006; Martin, Watson, Wan, 2000) suggest that neuroticism and agreeableness are of special importance in predicting „anger-like” variables, and I wanted to check whether these results replicate on Polish sample. The second goal was to explore the role of some more specific personality variables. From many possible candidates I have chosen: (1) global self-esteem and (2) dispositional shyness.

## HYPOTHESES

1. At the level of general personality traits the experience, expression and control of anger can be best predicted by neuroticism and agreeableness.
2. The predictability of anger experience, expression and control can be strengthened when other, more specific personality variables such as self-esteem and shyness are taken into account.

### CORRELATIONS among personality and anger scales

	N	E	O	A	C	RCBS	SES
S-Ang	,33***	-,18*	-,04	-,33***	-,13	,23**	-,34***
T-Ang	,26**	-,08	-,03	-,35***	,03	,17*	-,15
AX-O	,09	,03	,07	-,35***	,05	,03	,01
AX-I	,40***	-,44***	-,17*	-,07	-,17*	,52***	-,37***
AC-O	-,36***	,16	,08	,30***	,16	-,19*	,28**
AC-I	-,21*	,21*	,07	,46***	,13	,16	,21*

\*\*\* p<0,001; \*\* p<0,01; \* p<0,05

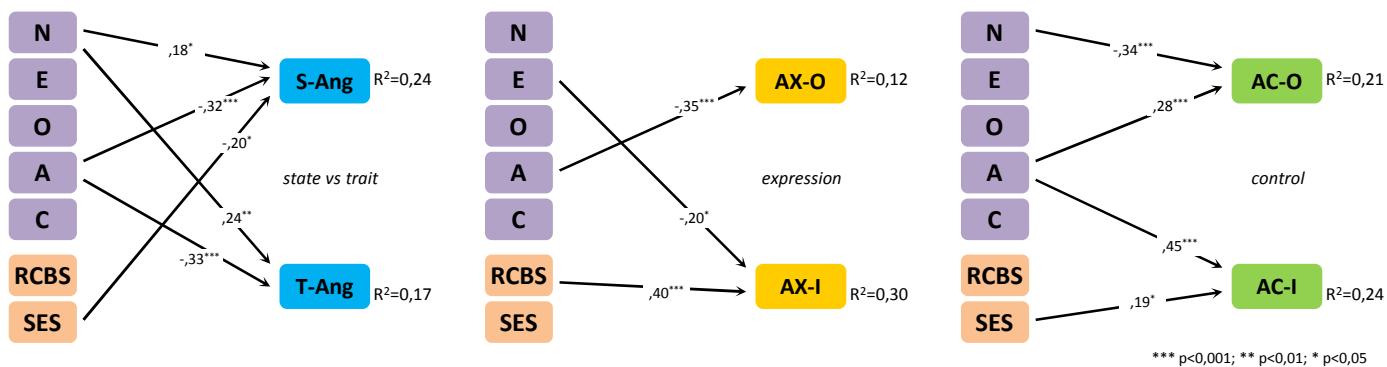
## PARTICIPANTS

The sample comprised 138 participants, of whom 70 (51%) were women, with an average age of 21,6 (SD=1,38).

## MEASURES

1. NEO Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI) (Costa & McCrae) - Polish adaptation by Zawadzki et. al (1998)
2. Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (SES) - Polish adaptation by Łąguna, Lachowicz-Tabaczek & Dzwonkowska (2008)
3. The Revised Cheek and Buss Shyness Scale (RCBS) - Polish adaptation by E. Chmielnicka-Kuter (in progress)
4. State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory (STAXI-2) (Spielberger et. al, 1995) - Polish adaptation by Bąk & Oleś (in progress). The inventory measures:
  - state anger (S-Ang) and trait anger (T-Ang)
  - two aspects of anger expression: (1) anger expression-out (AX-O) and (2) anger expression-in (AX-I)
  - two aspects of anger control: (1) anger control-out (AC-O) and (2) anger control-in (AC-I)

## REGRESSION ANALYSES



## SUMMARY

- From among the dimensions of the FFM neuroticism and agreeableness are the best predictors of experience and control of anger. High neuroticism and low agreeableness predict both state (S-Ang) and trait anger (T-Ang). In contrast, abilities to monitor and control the physical expression of anger (AC-O) and to relax and calm down before angry feelings get out of control (AC-I) are better when the person is emotionally stable and agreeable.
- In the domain of anger expression extraversion seem to be more important than neuroticism. Introverts (compared to extraverts) are predisposed to hold things and suppress angry feelings when they are angry or furious (AX-I). In contrast, overt expression of angry feelings in outwardly negative manner (AX-O) can be predicted by low agreeableness, but not neuroticism.
- When global self-esteem and dispositional shyness is taken into account general dimension of neuroticism vs emotional stability gets some more specific details.
- High self-esteem is predictive of the ability to reduce angry feelings before they get out of control (AC-I), while low self esteem correlates with state anger (S-Ang).
- Dispositional shyness is the strongest predictor (from among those included in the study) of anger suppression (AX-I).

## REFERENCES

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Martin, R., Watson, D., Wan, C. K. (2000). A three-factor model of trait anger: Dimensions of Affect, Behavior, and Cognition. *Journal of Personality*, 68, 869-897.

Spielberger C. D., Reheiser, E. C., Sydeman, S. J. (1995). Measuring the experience, expression, and control of anger. W: H. Kassirer (red.), *Anger disorders: Definitions, diagnosis, and treatment* (s. 49-67). Washington: Taylor & Francis.

<sup>1</sup>The study was part of a broader research project in which participated also: E. Gardjew, M. Górka, A. Kogut, M. Kustos, A. Paszkowska, A. Przytuła, E. Wierdak