

## PSYCHOMETRIC TOOLS FOR DEFINING THE OTHER FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

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### Abstract

This article examines psychometric tools for defining “the other” in the context of social psychology. The phenomenon of “the other” is presented through socio-psychological characteristics describing the person’s dichotomous relationship to the “Self” and “the Other,” as well as the perception of reality. An analysis of theoretical approaches to defining “the other” from the perspective of social psychology is provided. Key psychometric tools for defining “the other” are presented, including behavioral characteristics of the perception of “the other.” Behavioral characteristics include variables such as external/internal behavioral orientation, codependent behavior, and the emotional behavior of the person interacting with “the other.” An empirical analysis is made of the severity of the perception of “the other” in different age and gender groups and its correlation with levels of neuroticism, social frustration, and codependency. The theoretical significance of the study lies in the presentation of behavioral characteristics of the perception of “the other”. The practical significance of the study is emphasized by the results presented for different age and gender groups of respondents. The study highlights the importance of studying psychometric tools for defining the concept of “otherness” and draws the attention of psychologists to the manifestations of this phenomenon.

**Keywords and phrases:** psychometric tools, social frustration, codependency, perception of the other, neuroticism.

## «ՕՏԱՐԻՆ» ՍԱՀՄԱՆԵԼՈՒ ՀՈԳԵՉԱՓԱԿԱՆ ԳՈՐԾԻՔՆԵՐԸ ՍՈՑԻԱԼԱԿԱՆ ՀՈԳԵԲԱՆՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՏԵՍԱՆԿՆԵՒՅՑ

### ՏԱԹԵՎԻԿ ՎԱԹՅԱՆ

ՀՀ ԳԱԱ Գիտակրթական միջազգային կենտրոնի  
հոգեբանության ամբիոնի հայցորդ  
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### Համառոտագիր

Այս հոդվածը քննում է «օտարի» սահմանան հոգեչափական գործիքները սոցիալական հոգեբանության համատեքստում: «Օտարի» երևոյթը ներկայացված է սոցիալ-հոգեբանական բնութագրերի միջոցով, որոնք նկարագրում են անհասի դիխոտոմիկ վերաբերմունքն «Ես»-ի և «Օտարի» համդեպ, ինչպես նաև իրականության ընկալումը: Վերլուծվում են «օտարին» սահմանելու տեսական մոտեցումները սոցիալական հոգեբանության տեսանկյունից: Ներկայացվում են «օտարին» սահմանելու հիմնական հոգեչափական գործիքները, ներառյալ «օտարի» ընկալման վարբային բնութագրերը: Վարբային բնութագրերը ներառում են այնպիսի փոփոխականներ, ինչպիսիք են արտաքին/ներքին վարբային կողմնորոշումը, փոփոխայացնելու վարքագիծը և «օտարի» հետ փոփոխագրող անհատի հուզական վարքագիծը: Փորձարարական եղանակով վերլուծվում են «օտարի» ընկալման դրսնորումները տարբեր սեռատարիքային խմբերում և այդ դրսնորում-

Ների կապը նկրոտիզմի, սոցիալական ֆրուստրացիայի և փոխկախյալության մակարդակների հետ: Ուսումնասիրության տեսական նշանակությունը կայանում է «օտարի» ընկալման վարքային բնութագրերի ներկայացման մեջ: Ուսումնասիրության գործնական նշանակությունը ընդգծվում է հարցվողների տարրեր սեռատարիզային խմբերի համար ներկայացված արդյունքներով: Ուսումնասիրությունը ընդգծում է «օտարի» հասկացությունը սահմանելու համար հոգեչափական գործիքների վերհանման կարևորությունը և հոգեբանների ուշադրությունը հրավիրում է այս երևույթի դրսուրումների վրա

**Բանափի բառեր և բառակապակցություններ՝ հոգեչափական գործիքներ, սոցիալական ֆրուստրացիա, փոխկախյալություն, օտարի ընկալում, նկրոտիզմ**

## ПСИХОМЕТРИЧЕСКИЕ ИНСТРУМЕНТЫ ДЛЯ ОПРЕДЕЛЕНИЯ «ДРУГОГО» С ТОЧКИ ЗРЕНИЯ СОЦИАЛЬНОЙ ПСИХОЛОГИИ

### ТАТЕВИК ВАТЯН

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#### Аннотация

В данной статье рассматриваются психометрические инструменты для определения «другого» в контексте социальной психологии. Феномен «другого» представлен через социально-психологические характеристики, описывающие дихотомические отношения человека с «Я» и «Другим», а также восприятие реальности. Проводится анализ теоретических подходов к определению «другого» с точки зрения социальной психологии. Представлены ключевые психометрические инструменты для определения «другого», включая поведенческие характеристики восприятия «другого». Поведенческие характеристики включают такие переменные, как внешняя/внутренняя поведенческая ориентация, созависимое поведение и эмоциональное поведение человека, взаимодействующего с «другим». Проводится эмпирический анализ выраженности восприятия «другого» в разных возрастных и гендерных группах и его корреляции с уровнями невротизма, социальной фрустрации и созависимости. Теоретическая значимость исследования заключается в представлении поведенческих характеристик восприятия «другого». Практическая значимость исследования подчеркивается результатами, представленными для разных возрастных и гендерных групп респондентов. Исследование подчеркивает важность изучения психометрических инструментов для определения понятия «инаковость» и привлекает внимание психологов к проявлениям этого явления.

**Ключевые слова и фразы:** психометрические инструменты, социальная фрустрация, созависимость, восприятие другого, невротизм.

#### Introduction

Psychometric tools for defining the other encompass a wide range of theoretical and methodological approaches to studying, measuring, and defining the psychological phenomenon of perceiving the other. Therefore, the study of psychometric tools must be substantiated at the conceptual level. It is necessary to present a modern concept of defining the other, which can be used to develop psychometric mechanisms for defining this socio-psychological phenomenon. In this article, the phenomenon of perceiving the other is examined from the perspective of the interrelationship between various behavioral characteristics. To present the socio-psychological concept of defining the other, the following characteristics of perceiving the other were proposed:

- the level of expression of personality traits,
- the level of social frustration,
- the severity of codependent behavior.

The aim of this empirical study was to identify psychometric tools for identifying “others” in the process of interpersonal relations. The study hypothesized that the psychometric characteristics of the perception of “others” are the positive correlation ties between levels of neuroticism, social frustration, and codependent behavior.

### **Literature Review**

Communicative interaction with the external social environment plays a crucial role in the interpersonal relations. Understanding the psychological characteristics of interactions helps build effective communication with different types of people. The key aspects examined by various researchers include recognizing the psychological types of interlocutors, developing emotional intelligence, active listening skills, conflict management, as well as adaptability and flexibility in communication [16; 4]. It is no secret that these skills allow a person to interact more effectively with different people, manage conflict situations, and adapt to changing social conditions. However, it should be noted that modern psychological science lacks research devoted to the perception of “others” in the interpersonal relations system. Moreover, the intrapersonal characteristics of a person that influence the perception of “others” are poorly studied. Among scientific studies, there is also no consensus on the influence of work experience on the communicative interaction of the person with the external social environment. On the one hand, there is an opinion that with increasing length of service, a person acquires deeper communication skills, such as empathy, leadership and persuasiveness, and their emotional competence also increases, which contributes to more effective conflict resolution [2; 7]. On the other hand, some studies indicate that long-term service can lead to a deterioration in some aspects of communicative interaction, including decreased empathy and sensitivity to criticism, as well as reduced flexibility in perceiving feedback [10; 11]. Experienced person may underestimate these channels. This diversity of opinions underscores the complexity and multifaceted nature of the problem under study, which requires further research for a more complete understanding of the relationship between length of service and the communicative behavior of a person.

The phenomenon of perceiving the other is formed within the context of the functioning of the social environment. To perceive an individual or social group as part of another society, distinct from one's own, it is insufficient to study only the external, social characteristics of that society. Many authors have concluded that the perception of the other, regardless of its direct connection to an individual's experience of communication with the outside world, is closely linked to personal traits that influence their perception of the Self and the Other [1]. Therefore, to identify the socio-psychological concept of the perception of the other and the psychometric tools for defining the other, we will present in more detail the personal characteristics that contribute to the formation of the perception of the other.

First, let's introduce personality traits and the associated socially conditioned features of perception of the other. Theoretical approaches to neuroticism have played a significant role in the study of the other. Many theorists and practitioners have noted that the study of neurotic phenomena is closely intertwined with socially induced phenomena linked with the perception of the other [12; 6; 9]. The role of social factors in the overall clinical symptoms of neurotic disorders has been examined from various perspectives. The psychoanalytic school made an important contribution to the study of the social component of neuroticism, emphasizing the influence of the social environment on personality development. Numerous studies have been conducted to determine the

degree of frustration of an individual's social activity, emphasizing that under conditions of activity frustration, the structural integrity of the personality is disrupted, regulatory behavior patterns are distorted, which, in turn, contributes to the manifestation of neurotic disorders. In other words, socially induced phenomena are largely perceived as one of the sources of structural transformations of the personality, leading to neuroticism and destructive disruptions in interpersonal functioning and perceiving the other. The psychosocial characteristics of neurotic phenomena have been emphasized by many psychologists and psychotherapists. A key feature of theoretical studies was that neuroticism was defined as a type of mental disorder, with the social component of this phenomenon presented as a concomitant factor. In modern psychology, research that not only reveals the psychological characteristics of neurotic manifestations but also defines the essence of neuroticism as a socio-psychological phenomenon inherent in modern society is becoming increasingly relevant. The trend toward defining neuroticism in a socio-psychological context has certain foundations, which can be represented using both qualitative and quantitative psychometric characteristics [13].

Qualitative characteristics of the phenomenon under study relate to the phenomenology of neuroticism. Recent research has increasingly emphasized the relationship between social phenomena and the psychogenic reactions of the individual to the others. Many researchers consider K. Horney's concept to be the theoretical basis for the social characterization of neuroticism. According to Horney's theoretical framework, neurotic disorders are "nourished" by socio-cultural contradictions that arise in society during periods of socio-economic and civilizational crises. The transformation of social behavior patterns is accompanied by a discrepancy between social realities and declared norms of behavior. According to followers of the phenomenological theory, such periods of social development inevitably lead to an increase in neurotic reactions and disorders [5].

Quantitative characteristics of neuroticism are reflected in statistical indicators of the increase in neurotic disorders. In particular, socially induced neurotic disorders include a high incidence of somatoform manifestations, as well as various social phobias. Recent empirical studies have shown that only 10% of the population exhibits a high level of stress resilience, while 25% of the population exhibits negative effects of stress on physical health, and destructive mental health manifestations are observed primarily in the majority of people with socially induced neurotic disorders. The authors note that, despite the fact that neurotic disorders have pronounced clinical symptoms, socio-environmental influences and, relatedly, the nature of the individual's chosen strategies of communication with the others significantly influence the course of neurotic disorders. Typically, a low threshold for perceiving the other is accompanied by increased anxiety, which, in turn, results in problems coping with everyday difficulties. Thus, the quantitative characteristics of neuroticism are expressed in numerical indicators of the prevalence of socially induced neurotic reactions in society. Some authors call such reactions as noogenic neurosis and include them in the definition of some deviations [14].

### Methods

The empirical study was conducted at the Psychology Laboratory of the International Scientific-Educational Center of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia. All respondents gave verbal consent to participate. The study involved a sample (N=100) representing the following groups of respondents:

Group 1 (N=50) – men aged 30–40 years;

Group 2 (N=50) – women aged 30–40 years.

Based on age and gender, the studied characteristics of neuroticism were more pronounced among women aged 30–40 compared to men.

To support the dust hypothesis, the following methods were used:

- Questionnaire on Behavioral Characteristics of Perception of the Other (supported by the author),
- The big five factors and personality traits questionnaire, presented by low (scores: 0–12), medium (scores: 13–25), and high (scores: 26–48) levels of neuroticism [3],
- The Codependency self-inventory scale (CSIS) [8],
- Social frustration Scale [15].

The Codependency self-inventory scale consists of 20-statement questionnaire. Each statement uses a 4-point scale: from 1 (never) to 4 (almost always). The sum of numerical responses to all statements forms the total score that indicates the codependency level. The higher level of codependency expresses the higher points of the total score. Thus, 20–29 points express very little codependent patterns, 30–39 points – medium level, 40–59 points – high level, and 60–80 points – very high level of codependent behavior patterns.

The diagnosis of social frustration is based on a method for assessing satisfaction with the degree of fulfillment of social needs. The degree of dissatisfaction is manifested by the presence of stressful social frustrators that hinder the achievement of set goals. Dissatisfaction or frustration is viewed as the inability to achieve social needs. Thus, social frustration arises as a consequence of a real social situation, which is assessed as unfulfilled. The level of social frustration is determined by summing scores from 1 (completely satisfied) to 5 (completely dissatisfied). The final social frustration coefficient is calculated using the formula  $Q=S/n$ , where  $Q$  is the final social frustration level variable,  $S$  is the total score, and  $n$  is the number of questions answered. The methodology revealed the following levels of social frustration:

- absence of social frustration
- not clearly declared social frustration
- zone of uncertain assessment
- moderate level of social frustration
- high level of social frustration.

The Behavioral Perception Questionnaire is a proprietary method that complements psychometric tools for diagnosing and determining the behavioral characteristics of perception of others. The method consists of 10 questions, answered by respondents during interviews. The questionnaire includes the following questions:

- Who do you consider "other"? Provide a brief description.
- Name three synonyms for the word "other."
- Imagine you met a stranger: describe their appearance, estimated age, and gender.
- What topic can you discuss with the stranger?
- What danger do you think the stranger poses?
- Who should initiate the conversation—you or the stranger?
- What, in your opinion, could bring you closer to a stranger?
- Are you willing to help a stranger?
- How would you behave if the stranger were dangerous?
- How will you behave if a stranger seems friendly?

Respondents' responses to the above questionnaire were compared with the results of methods for assessing neuroticism, codependency, and social frustration. The results of the empirical study are presented below.

## Results

The study results are presented as percentages for each of the methods used. The relationship between neuroticism, social frustration, and codependency is demonstrated through a correlation analysis of the above-described indicators. Statistical processing

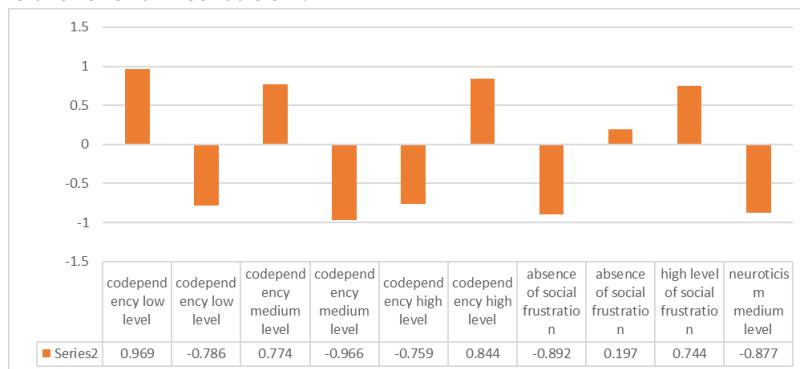
of the data was performed using JASP 0.17.3.0 software (Pearson's Partial Correlation,  $p < .01$ ).

**Table 1. Variables of neuroticism, codependency, and social frustration levels, %**

<b>Neuroticism levels</b>	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
low level	11	6
medium level	50	44
high level	39	50
<b>Codependency levels</b>	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
low level	14	9
medium level	43	33
high level	39	48
very high level	4	10
<b>Frustration levels</b>	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
absence of social frustration	9	2
not clearly declared social frustration	14	12
zone of uncertain assessment	28	19
moderate level of social frustration	23	25
high level of social frustration	26	42

As Table 1 shows, the levels of neuroticism, codependency, and social frustration are most pronounced in Group 2.

Figure 1 clearly shows the statistically significant correlations between neuroticism, codependency, and social frustration, obtained through correlation analysis. As the study results demonstrate, neuroticism increases with increasing levels of codependency (0.844) and social frustration (0.744). Conversely, a decrease in neuroticism is associated with a decrease in codependency (-0.786) and social frustration (0.197). Of significant importance is the conclusion that maintaining a moderate level of codependency also maintains the level of neuroticism.



**Figure 1. Pearson's Partial Correlation**

As the results of the empirical study showed, the severity of neuroticism correlates positively with the level of codependency and social frustration. A comparative analysis of the obtained data with respondents' responses regarding behavioral characteristics of others' perceptions allowed us to identify applicable methods as psychometric tools for assessing others' perceptions. The comparative analysis revealed that among respondents with the highest levels of neuroticism, codependent behavior, and social

frustration, their perception of the other was accompanied by more aggressive behavioral characteristics. These respondents lacked communication skills with strangers and used either avoidance or attack tactics during interactions. Defense mechanisms aimed at polarizing relationships were more pronounced. Conversely, respondents with low levels of neuroticism, codependency, and social frustration demonstrated more constructive and friendly behavioral characteristics of other's perception.

### **Discussion**

As we can see, the phenomenon of neuroticism is determined by a combination of both socio-environmental and clinical factors. The leading factor in the manifestation of neuroticism can be considered a state of social frustration, in which the individual is unable to comprehend and overcome difficult life situations conditioned by social factors perceiving the others. Moreover, neurotic manifestations are accompanied by the individual's codependency with respect to the frustrating reality. Key characteristics of neurotic manifestations are behavioral characteristics inherent in codependent behavior patterns, such as:

- external focus of behavior or focusing on the behavior of others,
- prioritizing the needs of others over one's own needs,
- suppression of one's own emotions.

A person not only loses the ability to activate own psychological defense mechanisms but also becomes dependent on the socially induced value attitude to the other. Constant exposure to frustrating social factors allows a person to reinforce an established pattern of dependent behavior, reduces their subjectivity, and leads to an emphasis on the perception of others, which manifests itself in:

- hopelessness in overcoming difficulties encountered in communication with others,
- inability to adapt to new value systems necessary for communication with others, and
- “dependence” on the established perception of others.

### **Conclusion**

The study of neuroticism has revealed certain correlations with levels of codependency and social frustration. The empirical data point to specific gender and age patterns in the manifestation of neuroticism and provide grounds for developing a methodological concept of neuroticism that includes positive correlations with levels of codependency and social frustration. The study's results also open up new possibilities for further research into the phenomenon of social neuroticism in various social groups. As the results of the interview method showed, respondents with a pronounced high degree of neuroticism, codependency, and social frustration noted an externally focused behavior when communicating with the others. It was also noted that for these same respondents, the perception of others was accompanied by the suppression of their own emotions and codependent behavior.

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