

Multicausal Systems Ask for Multicausal Approaches

A Network Perspective on Subjective Well-being in Individuals with ASD

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Introduction

- Most studies have focused on the workings of specific factors relevant to outcome such as work, relations and happiness.
- The emerging tools of **network analysis** offer an alternative platform to study these factors as a multicausal system of interacting elements.
- We aim to simultaneously study both environmental and psychological factors and provide a clear overview of the multitude of variables that have an impact on subjective well-being in individuals with ASD.

Aim:

Unravel the architecture of the multicausal system of predictors that make up person-environment fit and how this relates to subjective well-being in the ASD population.

Method

We analyzed data of 2341 individuals with ASD to illustrate the network of interrelations between environmental and psychological factors relevant to subjective well-being.

Measures

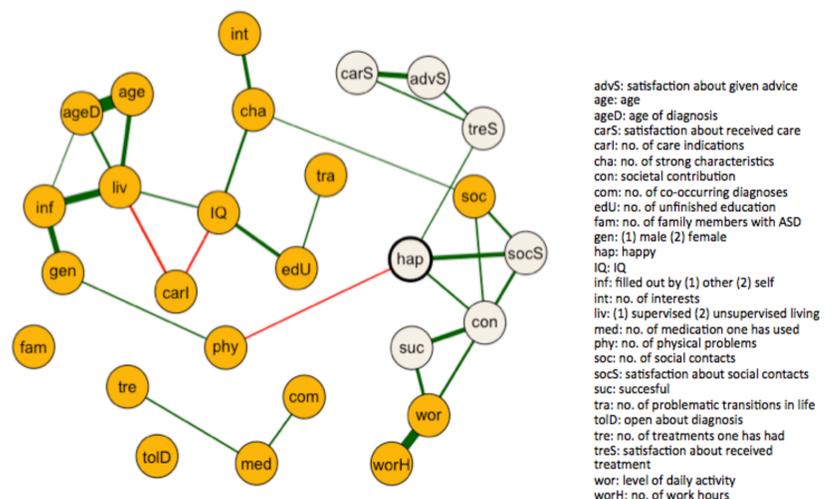
The NVA study was originally designed to assess a broad spectrum of questions within the Dutch ASD population. We selected a set of 27 questions to obtain a relatively complete assessment of life domains, covering demographics, diagnosis, treatment, education, living situation, happiness and wellbeing, work, social contact, and societal contribution.

Analyses

We computed a series of networks and analyzed these using the R package qgraph^[1]. The created networks then allow for the identification of the focal points of the network by looking at indices of node centrality: *betweenness*, *closeness* and *strength*.

Preliminary Results

Along the lines of network analysis, we aimed at examining what variables define a good person-environment fit for individuals with ASD and how this relates to happiness. We identified *social satisfaction* and *the feeling to contribute to society* to be highly central to how happy people are.



Preliminary Conclusions

- *IQ* and *happiness* emerged as highly central factors that often act as a bridge for the relation between two other factors in the network.
- *Social satisfaction* emerges as highly important for subjective well being and it funnels the influence of *the number of social contacts*.
- *Having family members with ASD* and *openness about one's ASD diagnosis* do not relate to any other factor in the network.