

Summary a psychology experiment

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Summary of a psychology experiment Hamza, C., Willoughby, T., & Armiento, J. . A laboratory examination of pain threshold and tolerance among nonsuicidal self-injurers with and without self-punishing motivations. *Archives of Scientific Psychology*, 2, 33-42

In this study, the authors attempted to examine whether self-injurers tolerate pain because they engage in nonsuicidal self-injury (NSSI) to self-punish. In other words, the authors wanted to examine whether the motivations for self-punishment for engaging in NSSI are the reasons for the high pain thresholds and tolerances among the victims. The authors used three groups to test their hypothesis: one of group of self-injurers who took part in NSSI to control their need to self-punish. This was compared to another group of self-injurers who involved in NSSI without the desire to control their desire to self-punish and the final group comprised of non-injurers who were matched to the other two groups. 82 undergraduate students in their fourth year from a Canadian university took part in the study. The participants were first stressed up by being asked to prepare a one minute speech presentation in four minutes. They were then asked to take part in a cold-presser task.

The results of the study showed that those self-injurers who took part in NSSI with the aim of regulating their need to self-punish tolerated pain for longer periods and rated the pain to be less intense. This was different for those who did not aim at self-punishing and the other group of non-injurers. These findings therefore support the idea that those who engage in NSSI for self-punishing are willing to tolerate pain. As noted by the authors, the findings of this study help future studies to focus on how motivational factors related to NSSI help explain pain tolerance.

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This study is an enormous contribution towards the understanding of the reasons why self-injurers are able to tolerate pain. These findings can be useful when developing the best intervention methods for helping persons who engage in non-suicidal self-injury. In addition, the findings of this study are helpful in developing theories explaining NSSI behavior and pain tolerance. Although this study is important, the nature of the parameters being measured makes it difficult to control biases. For instance, it is difficult to fairly measure the extent to which a person is stressed or relaxed. It is also clear that testing the hypothesis is complex because measuring the motivations for self-injurers and the reason for tolerating pain is difficult. First, people who engage in NSSI are influenced by other external environmental factors that may be unique to a given group or to a certain location. Therefore, given that the study was only based on a group of 82 students from one university, it is difficult to generalize these findings to all groups. Secondly, the authors used the cold-presser task to test for pain tolerance. This may not provide accurate findings because it is different from the real pain associated with causing real body injuries. In addition, by subjecting the participants to a stressing activity in a short time, it is likely that the participants were not stressed in the same manner as they would in real life situations. Finally, the present study did not measure mental and health issues that might contribute to NSSI, further making the application of these findings limited.

It is important for future studies to be conducted on the same topic in order to validate the present findings. Currently, the validity of the results of this study is in question.