

# Browsing Facebook: Envy, Happiness, and Tie Strength?

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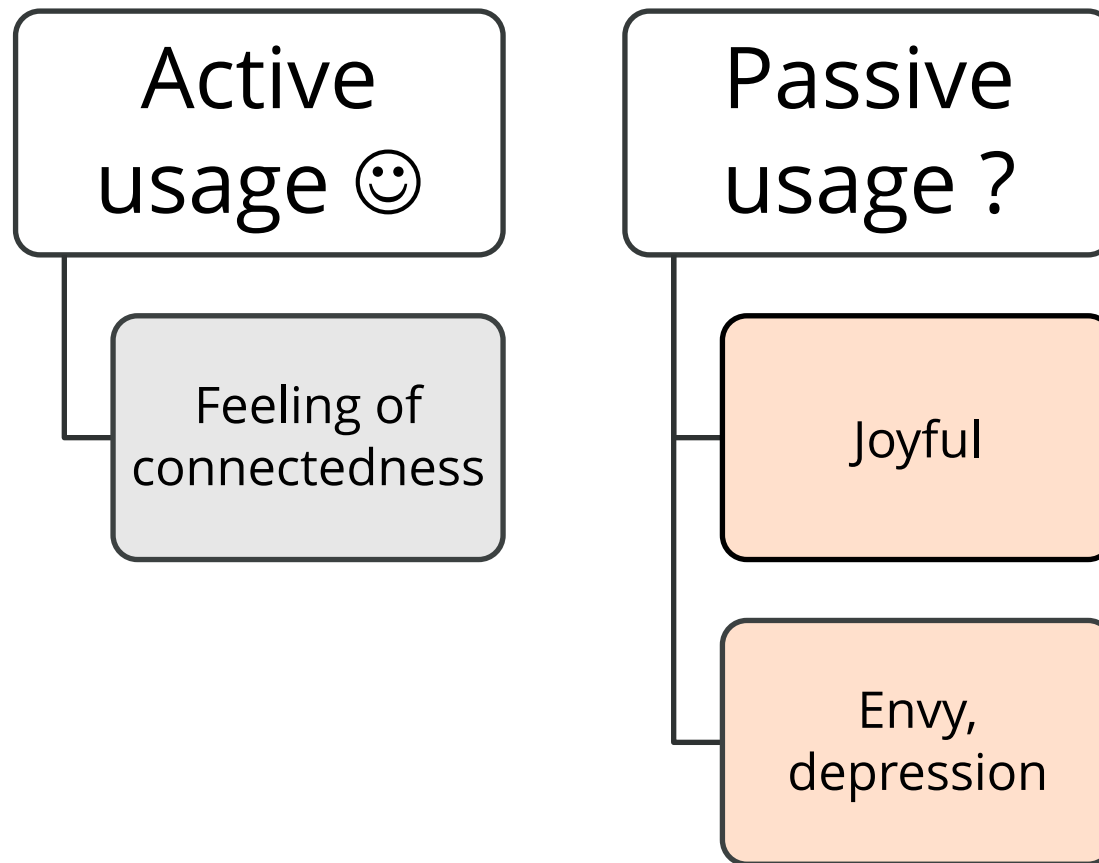
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# PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE



# EMOTIONAL RESPONSES: ON A MESSAGE LEVEL?



**Happy vs. Envious?**

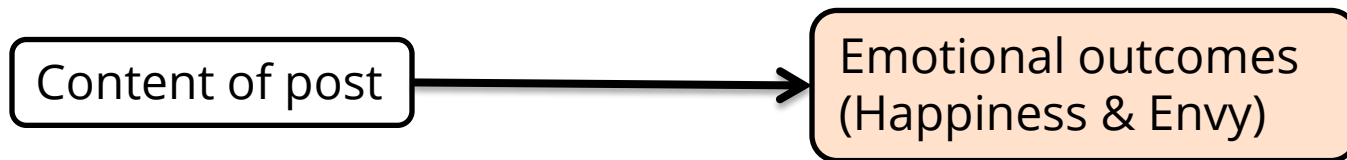
**Tie strength?**

(Granovetter, 1973)

- Strong tie (best friend)
- Weak tie (acquaintance)

# RESEARCH QUESTIONS

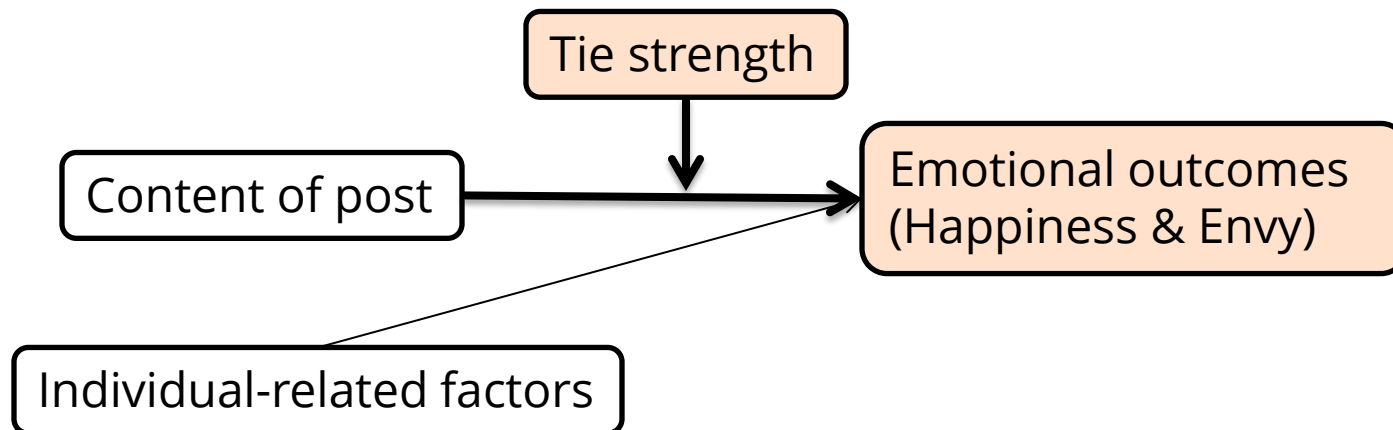
**RQ1: What are the most prevalent *momentary* emotional outcomes after reading a post on Facebook?**



# RESEARCH QUESTIONS

**RQ1: What are the most prevalent *momentary* emotional outcomes after reading a post on Facebook?**

**RQ2: Does tie strength between the poster and reader moderate the emotions (happiness and envy)?**



# THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

RQ2: Does tie strength between the poster and reader moderate the emotions (**happiness** and envy)?



**Happiness is contagious!**

Emotional Contagion

(Hatfield et al. 1993; Kramer, 2012)

**Empathy is more pronounced when relationship is closer**

Perception-Action Model

(Norscia & Palagi, 2011)

**Stronger tie → Stronger emotions**

# THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

RQ2: Does tie strength between the poster and reader moderate the emotions (happiness and **envy**)?



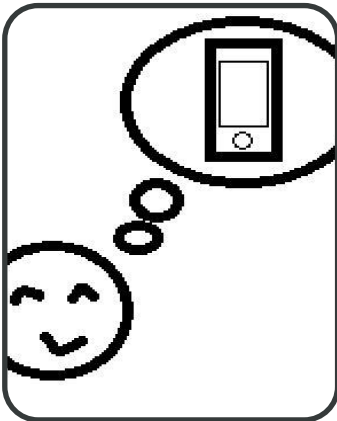
- **Upward Social comparison** (Festinger, 1954)
- Preconditions (Smith, 2004; Tesser, 1984)
  - Self-relevance
  - Perceived similarity
- **Benign envy**: moving up motivation
- **Malicious envy**: pulling down

# OVERVIEW OF TWO STUDIES



## **Correlational Study 1: Report posts and feelings**

- IVs: Tie Strength & Content Valence
- DVs: Happiness & Envy (General)



## **Experimental Study 2: Mocked up scenarios**

- IVs: Tie Strength (Manipulated)
- DVs: Happiness & Benign/Malicious Envy



# DESIGN & PROCEDURE OF STUDY 1



## Correlational Study 1: Report posts and feelings

- IVs: Tie Strength & Content Valence
- DVs: Happiness & Envy (General)

Mood



### Report post X 4

- Emotional responses
- Positivity of content
- Tie strength



Facebook usage  
and Personality

Sample: 207 American respondents; 598 posts from FB friends

# RESULTS OF STUDY 1

RQ1: What are the most prevalent *momentary* emotional outcomes after reading a post on Facebook?



Connected	66.4%	<b>Envious</b>	12.4%
<b>Happy</b>	64.2%	Jealous	11.0%
Informed	63.7%	Annoyed	10.0%
Entertained	53.7%	Frustrated	9.7%

# RESULTS OF STUDY 1

RQ2: Does tie strength between the poster and reader moderate the emotions (**happiness** and envy)?

**H1:**

The stronger the tie strength,

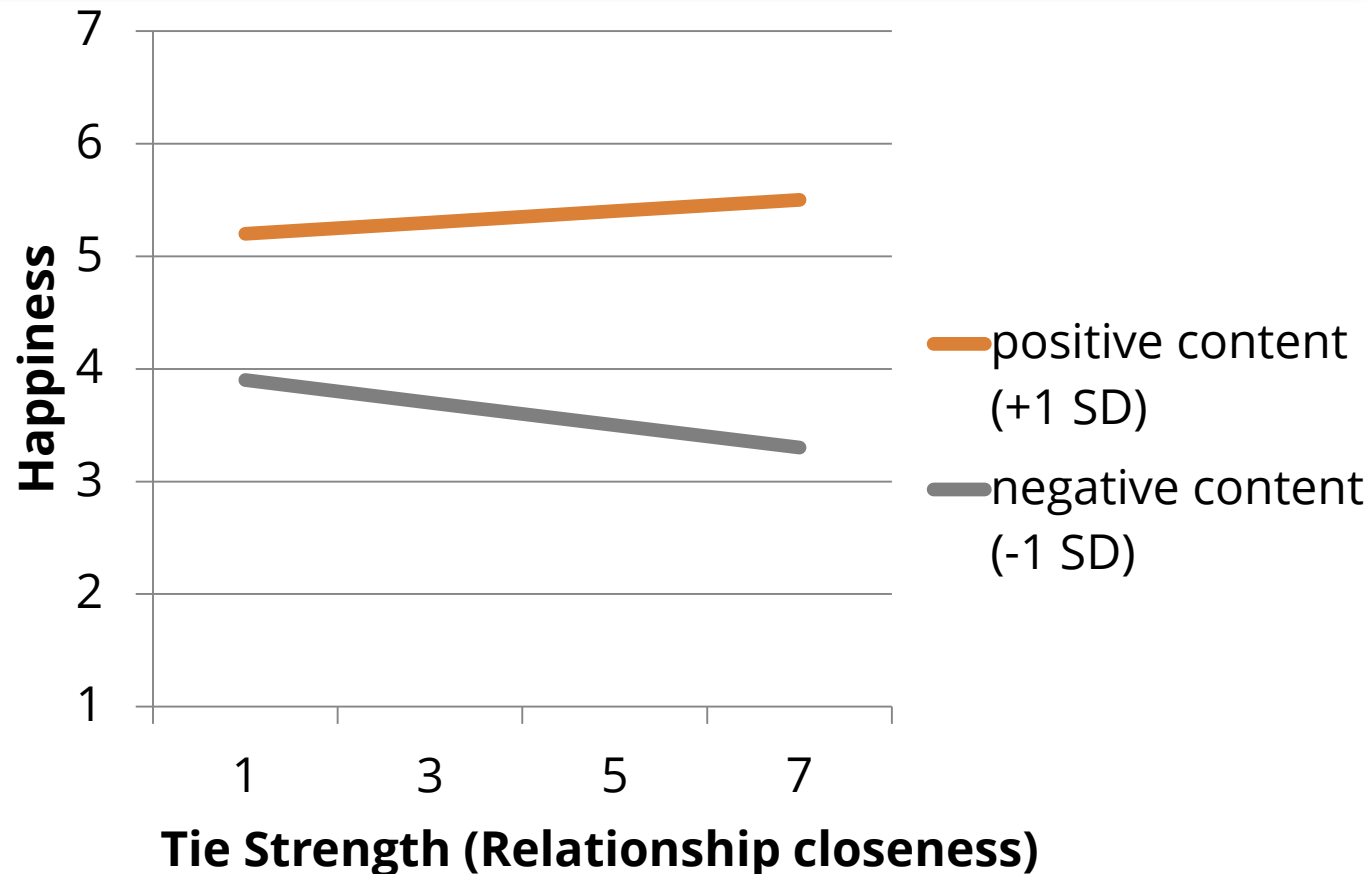
→ the happier one would be after reading a positive post

→ the less happy one would be after reading a negative news



# RESULTS OF STUDY 1

RQ2: Does tie strength between the poster and reader moderate the emotions (**happiness** and envy)?



# RESULTS OF STUDY 1

RQ2: Does tie strength between the poster and reader moderate the emotions (happiness and **envy**)?



Multi-level linear regressions for ENVY:

- **No effect of tie strength**
- **Positive content** is a significant predictor of envy
- People with higher **self-esteem** are less likely to report envy

# SUMMARY & LIMITATIONS OF STUDY 1

- **Positive emotions are more prevalent than negative emotions.**
- **The stronger the tie strength, the stronger the effect of emotional contagion.**
  - Mock up posts, manipulate tie strength
- **No effect of tie strength in predicting envy.**
  - Further differentiate **benign** and **malicious** envy, and take self-relevance of the compared domain into control

# DESIGN & PROCEDURE OF STUDY 2



## Report 3 FB friends

- Strong tie
- Mid tie
- Weak tie



## Vacation Scenario

- Emotions: Happiness; Benign envy; Malicious envy
- Self-relevance



## iPhone 6 Scenario

- Emotions: Happiness; Benign envy; Malicious envy
- Self-relevance



Measure relationship closeness

Measure personality

Sample: 194 German Participants

# HYPOTHESES OF STUDY 2

H2: stronger tie → **more happiness**

Benign envy: moving up motivation

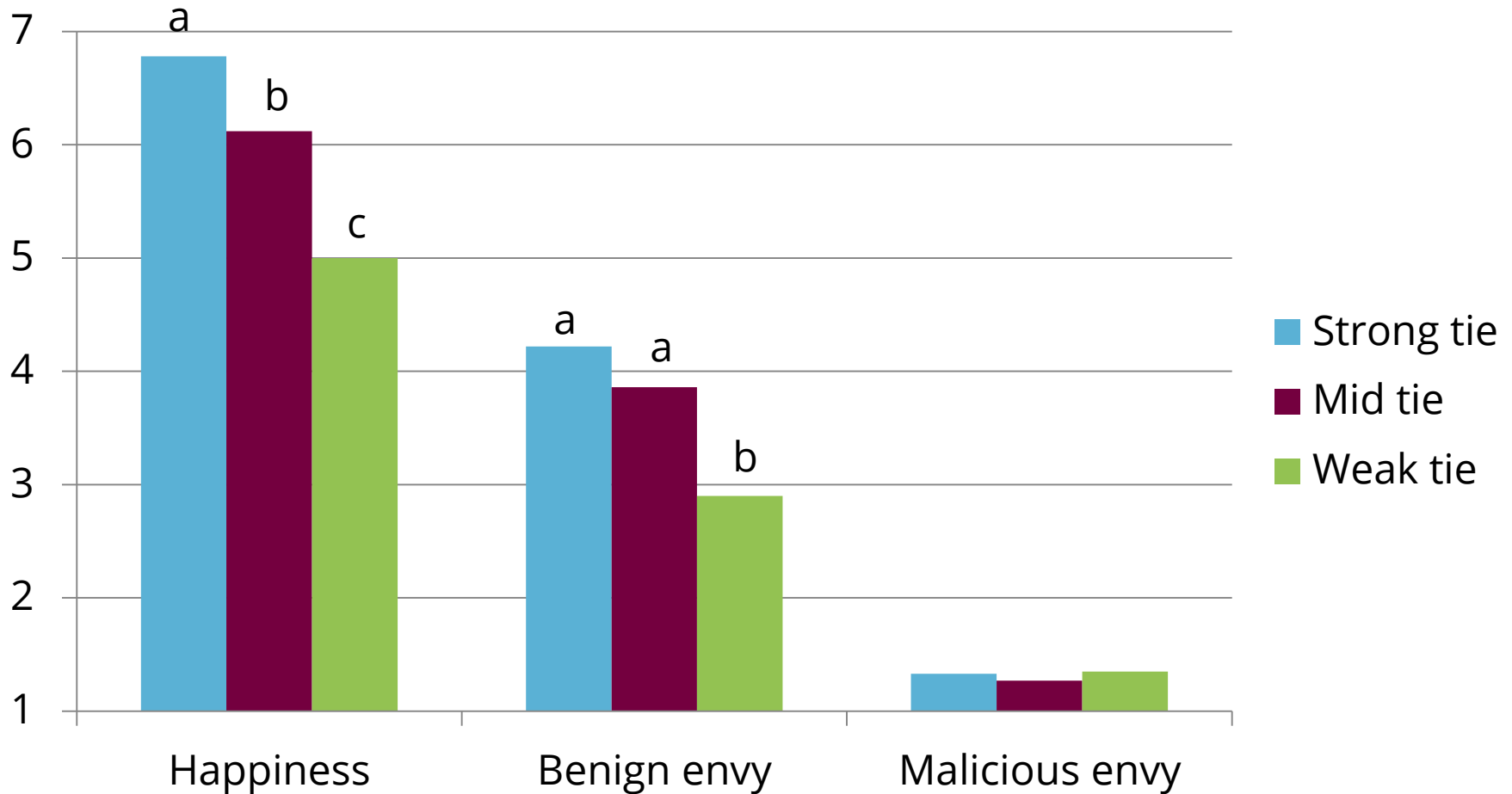
Malicious envy: pulling down

H3: stronger tie → **more benign envy**

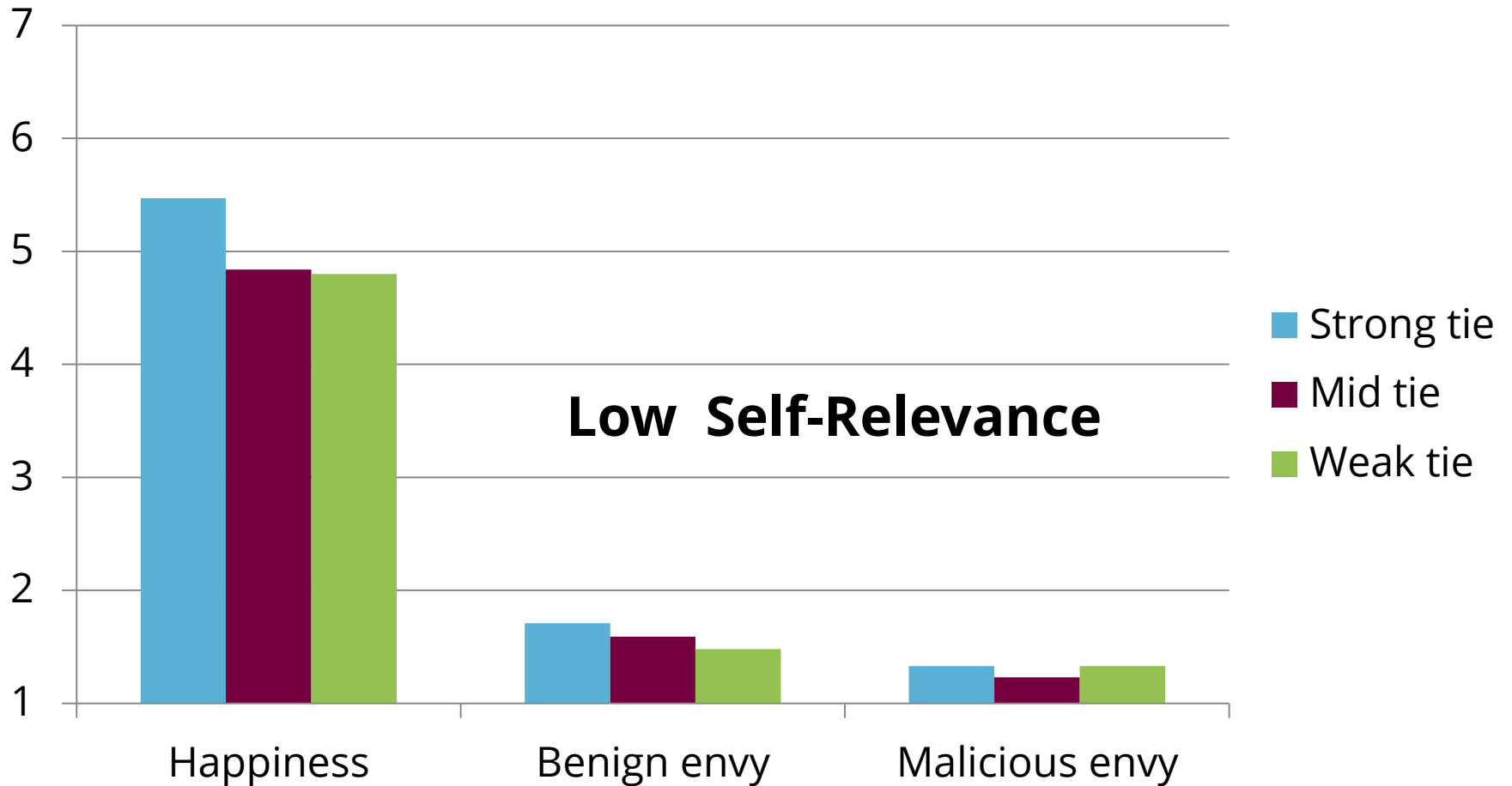
H4: stronger tie → **less malicious envy**



# RESULTS OF STUDY 2 (vacation scenario)



# RESULTS OF STUDY 2 (iPhone6 scenario)



# LINEAR REGRESSIONS FOR ENVY

	Benign envy		Malicious envy	
	Vacation	iPhone	Vacation	iPhone
Relationship closeness	<b>0.013***</b>	<b>0.005**</b>	-0.001	-0.001
Dispositional envy	<b>0.209*</b>	<b>0.167**</b>	<b>0.251***</b>	<b>0.158**</b>
Self-relevance	<b>0.294***</b>	<b>0.187***</b>	0.020	0.049
Perceived control	-0.081***	-0.010	-0.023†	-0.023†
Age	-0.004	0.025**	-0.010†	-0.005
Male	-0.256	0.126	0.297	0.014
Constant	0.559	0.133	0.761**	0.955***
R <sup>2</sup>	0.49	0.23	0.23	0.11
N	143	143	143	143

# Summary

- Multi-method approach
- Positive emotions are more prevalent than negative emotions.
- Tie strength moderates happiness and benign envy
- But not for envy and malicious envy (personality)

# Thanks for your attention!



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