

## **Bachelor's thesis review – Opponent's evaluation**

Title: *The relationship between reciprocal friendships and self-esteem in school aged children*

Author: Anežka Kunčická

Supervisor: Ellen Zakreski, Ph.D.

Opponent: Zsófia Csajbók, M.A., Ph.D.

---

Anežka Kunčická tested the relationship between the number of reciprocal friendships and self-esteem in school-aged children and adolescents. She hypothesized that by having more reciprocal friendships, children will have higher self-esteem. She also expected that this relationship will be stronger in older children and in girls.

### **Theoretical part**

The literature review was thorough and investigated with great detail the question at hand. Ms. Kunčická walked the reader through the entire research topic from many angles. The literature she cited was foundational to the research topic. I found in particular Ulrich Orth's studies of high quality and really good sources to rely on. She did a great job at establishing the hypotheses based on the literature. It could have been a little bit more conventionally structured (the introduction before the literature review is unusually long and in essence the same as the literature review part). But apart from that, she did structure it in a logical way. My only minor problem was that she did not mention the evolutionary relevance of physical attractiveness in women's perception (in contrast to it only being a societal pressure).

The language of the theoretical part was clear and concise, even though I find this topic is generally difficult to cover. Very minor comment is that the referencing style did not follow the latest APA 7 style (instead APA 6), but I am only mentioning this for future reference. I found one part in the thesis (p. 10) where 3 sentences overlapped exactly with an uncited reference (Coelho et al., 2017). I evaluate it as an honest mistake, because the rest of the document did not show any such practice, but the student should make every effort to avoid such mistakes.

### **Empirical part**

The empirical part perfectly followed the IMRaD structure. The analytical strategy was good, and the analyses were carefully executed. The student performed a power analysis in support of the findings. The results were properly reported. In the discussion, Ms. Kunčická appropriately and in great detail reflected on the results and the possible reasons for the unexpected null findings. For example, she reflected on the possibility that the Rosenberg self-esteem questionnaire may not be appropriate for the studied age group. She also reflected on the notion that boys and girls have different friendship needs and the measure used in the study could not reflect on such differences. She briefly touched on the idea that other individual differences were not considered either, although I think that some obvious ones could have been added (e.g., introversion/extraversion). She also mentioned that underlying unobserved variables could cause the results.

## **General comment**

The studied hypotheses were essentially the same or very similar to another student thesis. Nonetheless, the execution was slightly different, as Anežka performed the analyses with a few more details added. The introduction, however, was completely different from the other student thesis, with many different sources cited and worked through.

## **Summary**

Ms. Kunčická did a great job at reviewing the literature and organizing it in a meaningful way. While I think that this is a topic generally difficult to work with, she fulfilled the formal requirements for a student bachelor's thesis very well. An exception from this the copied text without quotation marks and references, which is not acceptable. The quantitative part, analysis and interpretations were done very well. I recommend the grade to be excellent (1).

## **Questions for the defense**

How do you think the results were influenced by the children's introversion and extroversion? In particular, refer to the influence on self-esteem, need for friends, and preferences for different types of friendships.

How do you think mental health in general (e.g., depression, anxiety) influences the perception of friends and how it influences individuals' proactivity in reaching out to friends and maintaining friendships?

Why is female beauty important from an evolutionary psychological point of view?

In Prague, September 2<sup>nd</sup> 2024

Zsófia Csajbók, M.A., Ph.D.