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The Effects of Neuroticism and Perceived Failure on Emotion Regulation Strategy Choice

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Abstract

Existing research on emotion regulation strategy choice confirms individual factors that influence how people choose to regulate their emotions, but the question of which traits influence this remain preliminary. This paper examines how neuroticism and perceived failure affects emotion regulation strategy choice. It was hypothesized that individuals with higher (vs. lower) levels of neuroticism and perceive more (vs. less) failure will be more likely to choose distraction (vs. reappraisal) as an emotion regulation strategy choice. Secondly, it was hypothesized that neuroticism and perceived failure will have a positive association. To investigate this, we created a survey to measure the levels of neuroticism, perceived failure and emotion regulation strategy choice in a negative feedback setting. Participants (N = 211) completed a recruitment test that was created to be highly challenging, for the purpose of the study, in order to create emotional arousal when anticipating the feedback. The participants then choose between two emotion regulation strategies, namely (1) reappraisal and (2) distraction. Although no statistically significant relationship was found between emotion regulation strategy choice in relation to perceived failure or neuroticism, the results showed a strong, positive association between perceived failure and neuroticism. Furthermore, we discuss possible limitations and implications of the current design, and call for further research in the specific field, such as an experimental design.

Keywords: emotion regulation, strategy choice, neuroticism, perceived failure, feedback

The Effects of Neuroticism and Perceived Failure on Emotion Regulation Strategy Choice

On a daily basis we face emotional arousal which can be controlled both consciously and unconsciously by using emotion regulation strategies (Matthews, et al., 2021; Parkinson & Totterdell, 1999). Due to emotional arousal, an individual may be motivated to influence the quality or quantity of their emotions. This process is referred to as *emotion regulation*, and consists of three independent stages: (1) acknowledging the emotion; (2) assessing and setting a goal in order to select a specific emotion-regulation strategy; and (3) the *strategy* is implemented in the specific context (Gross, 2015). Scientific research on emotion regulation only emerged as an independent field of empirical study within the last two decades (Sheppes & Levin, 2013; Sheppes, 2020; Webb, et al., 2012). It being a relatively new field, there are several remaining gaps in the research on emotion regulation strategies, as it almost exclusively focuses on strategy implementation, and although implementation is highly important, emotion regulation is a multi-stage phenomenon. To understand it in all its complexity, the other stages such as what factors influence these choices, should be researched further (Shafir et. al., 2016; Sheppes, 2020; Webb, et al., 2012;).

To address this, some works have established a conceptual framework, in order to have a starting point in understanding the determinants of emotion regulation choice, as well as the underlying mechanisms (Sheppes & Levin, 2013; Sheppes, et al., 2014). The study by Sheppes et. al. (2014), investigated emotional, cognitive and motivational determinants of emotion regulation choice and if emotion regulation choice can be executed by deliberative executive control processes. The empirical evidence supported their framework, and with growing research in the field, studies have shown there are socio-cultural, individual, motivational, cognitive as well as affective factors that influence which emotion regulation strategy one chooses

(Matthews, et. al., 2021). Previous literature argues for neuroticism being a possible individual factor that influences emotion regulation choice (Matthews et. al., 2021; Shafir et. al., 2016; Tamir, 2005; Yang, et al., 2020). *Neuroticism* can be defined as a personality trait, indicating the inclination to respond with negative emotions to threat, frustration, or loss, as well as the extent to which an individual is engaging in biased patterns of cognition, in a way which leads to heightened perceptions of distress and threat (Costa & McCrae, 1987; Ormel et. al., 2013). However, although there is some evidence of high (vs low) neuroticism influencing emotion regulation choice, findings have also been inconsistent, as well as the measures have been indirect (Matthews, et. al., 2021). Therefore, the goal of this study was to investigate the effects of neuroticism on emotion regulation choice.

Emotion Regulation Choice

According to the conceptualization of emotion regulation strategies by Grundeman et. al. (2020), the strategies can be classified in two subgroups, namely engagement and disengagement. As the name suggests, the individual may choose to engage or disengage with an emotion. More specifically, they can be classified into two engagement strategies (1) reappraisal and (2) feedback focus, and two disengagement strategies which are (1) distraction and (2) feedback removal (Grundmann, et. al., 2020). In the context of this study, the main focus is on one engagement strategy, namely reappraisal, and one disengagement strategy, namely distraction. The main focus was on these two strategies specifically, as previous works have shown direct evidence showing the effect of numerous contextual factors on the choice between these two emotion regulation strategies (Sheppes & Levin, 2013; Sheppes et. al., 2014). The two can be defined as the following; *reappraisal* aims to change the meaning of the feedback, whilst *distraction* is about focusing one's attention elsewhere.

Two critical gaps exist in the present research on emotion regulation strategy choice. Firstly, as mentioned above, most of the empirical research on emotion regulation almost exclusively focuses on the strategy implementation, which is the last stage of the process of emotion regulation, and although important, emotion regulation is a multi-stage phenomenon (Sheppes, 2020; Webb, et al., 2012). Therefore, the interest in the second stage of emotion regulation, namely the *emotion regulation choice*, has been growing and is also the focus of this study (Shafir et. al., 2016; Sheppes & Levin, 2013).

The second issue in empirical research is the categorization of good versus bad strategies; engagement strategies were perceived as good, whilst disengagement as bad. However, growing empirical evidence exists suggesting that different strategies are maladaptive in one context, but reconciling in another (Bonanno, et al., 2004; Shafir et. al., 2016; Sheppes & Levin, 2013; Sheppes, 2020). This form of categorization is a limitation to many existing studies on emotion regulation choice, including the studies on the effects of neuroticism on emotion regulation choice. For example, the previous literature shows evidence that individuals who score higher (vs. lower) on neuroticism, tended to use more maladaptive emotion regulation strategies (Tamir, 2005; Tang & Huang, 2019; Yang, et al., 2020;). In the following section it is clarified in which contexts, and which strategies are associated with being maladaptive.

Neuroticism and Emotion Regulation Choice

Traits such as self-esteem, neuroticism and dispositional regulatory style have been associated with a relationship to how individuals choose to regulate their emotions (Matthews et. al., 2021; Shafir et. al., 2016; Tamir, 2005; Yang, et al., 2020). The meta-analysis by Matthews et al., (2021), includes eleven studies that matched the criteria for measuring the association between mental health disorders and emotion regulation choice. These studies showed significant

differences between clinically depressed participants compared to undiagnosed control groups in regard to how they choose to regulate their emotions (Millgram, et al., 2015; Millgram, et al., 2018). For example, depressed individuals were more likely to engage with sad stimuli, as well as choosing to upregulate their sadness (Arens & Stangier, 2020; Millgram et al., 2015; Millgram, et al., 2018). In an earlier paper Matthews et al. (2016) argue that the findings of clinically depressed participants choosing to regulate their emotions differently is related to neuroticism since previous literature shows that the trait has significant positive correlations and strong associations with depressive symptoms as well as being a significant predictive factor for depressive symptoms (Liu, et al., 2020; Schmitz, et al., 2003).

A study by Tamir (2005) found that levels of neuroticism positively correlated with mental disengagement, and others have found that individuals with relatively higher levels of neuroticism, have the tendency to use certain strategies more than those with lower levels of neuroticism. These strategies are rumination, expressive suppression, self-blame and denial, which are most commonly known as maladaptive (Boland & Cappeliez, 1997; Gross & Levenson, 1993; McCrae & Costa, 1986; Nolen-Hoeksema, et al., 2008;). Other studies have also shown evidence that individuals who score higher (vs. lower) on neuroticism tend to use more significantly maladaptive emotion regulation strategies (Tamir, 2005; Tang & Huang, 2019; Yang, et al., 2020). Therefore, in this study the first hypothesis is that neuroticism has an effect on which strategy one is to choose when regulating their emotions.

All in all, literature provides evidence that neuroticism has an effect on the way individuals choose to regulate emotions, however, these findings are inconsistent and indirect. The studies compare clinically depressed participants vs undiagnosed control groups rather than highly neurotic vs low neuroticism. Additionally, in this study we build upon the conceptualization of

emotion regulation strategies by Grundemann et. al. (2020), and none of the strategies in question (i.e. reappraisal vs distraction) have been directly investigated in previous literature in relation to neuroticism. However, a study conducted by Shafir et. al. (2016), investigated emotion regulation strategy choice in relation to self-esteem, which is a trait-like measure just like neuroticism. Shafir et. al. (2016) measured emotion regulation choice using the two specific emotion regulation strategies that are investigated in the present study. Interestingly the study found significant effects on emotion regulation choice by perceived failure, which has been shown to have an association with neuroticism as well.

Perceived Failure and Emotion Regulation Choice

Shafir et. al., (2016) found a marginally significant effect of perceived failure on emotion regulation choice, namely, participants were 1.08 times more likely to distract with each one-point increase in perceived poor performance. According to the conceptual framework developed by Grundmann, et. al. (2020), this effect could also be attributed to the context of negative feedback of the study. Namely, the higher the perceived failure, the more emotional valence the specific event has, which has been found to influence emotion regulation strategy choice. Therefore, in the first hypothesis it was also hypothesized that perceived failure will have an effect on emotion regulation strategy choice. Furthermore, perceived failure has been found to have a significant relationship with neuroticism as well (Thomson, 2016).

Neuroticism and Perceived Failure

The results of a study conducted by Tamir (2005), found that neuroticism was negatively correlated with positive reinterpretation. In line with these findings, a study conducted by Thomson (2016), found that higher levels of neuroticism are associated with more persistent negative viewpoints, and more demanding ideals. All of the findings above lead to the

conclusion that higher levels of neuroticism lead to negative viewpoints, perceptions of threat and negative reinterpretation, leading to the conclusion that higher levels of neuroticism may lead to increased perceived failure. Therefore, the second hypothesis in this study is that there will be a strong association between neuroticism and perceived failure.

Hypothesis

The aim of this study is to investigate how neuroticism and perceived failure affects emotion regulation strategy choice. Combining our emotion regulation choice account with conceptual views of the influence of neuroticism on emotion regulation choice, as well as perceived failure in relation to emotion regulation choice, we predicted that participants with higher (relative to lower) levels of neuroticism as well as perceived failure, would be more inclined to engage in mental disengagement and thus choose distraction over reappraisal. Additionally, due to the previous literature showing strong associations between perceived failure and neuroticism, we also predicted that neuroticism will have a positive relationship with perceived failure.

Methods

Participants & Design

The total number of participants that took part in the study was 259. However, 47 had to be excluded as they did not complete the study, and one had to be excluded because they did not give their consent. Therefore, the total sample size was $N=211$. All participants were recruited through the platform *Prolific*, and were compensated with a total of £2.75, for the completion of the study. Participation was voluntary, and participants were asked to give their consent (see Appendix A) in the beginning of the survey, and could exit the survey at any time. The survey involved a screening for exclusion criteria in the beginning. Only adult individuals who are actively looking for a job could partake. However, participants were excluded if they failed to

pass the attention test, which was an open question in the teaching phase of the survey, where coherency was checked. The 47 participants that were excluded did not pass the attention test. The average age of participants was $M=34.91$ ($SD = 11.63$), ranging from 18 to 65. 48.3% were male, 47.9% were female, and 3.8% non-binary.

Procedure

The study was presented and collected in an online survey generator named Qualtrics, and was completed on the participants' personal device, which was recommended to be a laptop or a stationary desktop computer. The completion time was around twenty minutes. Upon starting the online survey, the participants were given information about the research (see Appendix B) and had to give their consent to participate (see Appendix A). Afterwards, the participants filled in their 'Prolific ID', and were asked some demographic and screening questions (see Appendix C). If participants did not meet the inclusion criteria, which were (1) actively looking for a job and (2) above the age of 18, they would automatically exit the survey.

The participants were further informed that the study is interested in understanding how job seekers react to performance feedback on recruitment tests and they are about to complete a shortened version of a widely used occupational propensity test (see Appendix D for description), often used for recruitment, as well as receive feedback on the six dimensions that the test assesses and choose how to react to this feedback (see Appendix E for description). The occupational propensity test was developed for the purpose of the study, in order to create a test which is highly challenging, and therefore creating a negative feedback context for the study, which has shown to require emotion regulation (Carver & Scheier, 1994; Shafir et. al., 2016).

The participants were then further informed about the six dimensions and how they will be assessed. The six dimensions on which the participants would receive feedback on were

sociality, fluid intelligence, emotional understanding, analytic thinking, wise reasoning and conflict management. In order to trigger participants to be aware of the evaluative nature of the study, participants were asked to rate how anxious they felt (on a 9-point Likert scale) to receive feedback on the dimensions they will be tested on in the recruitment test.

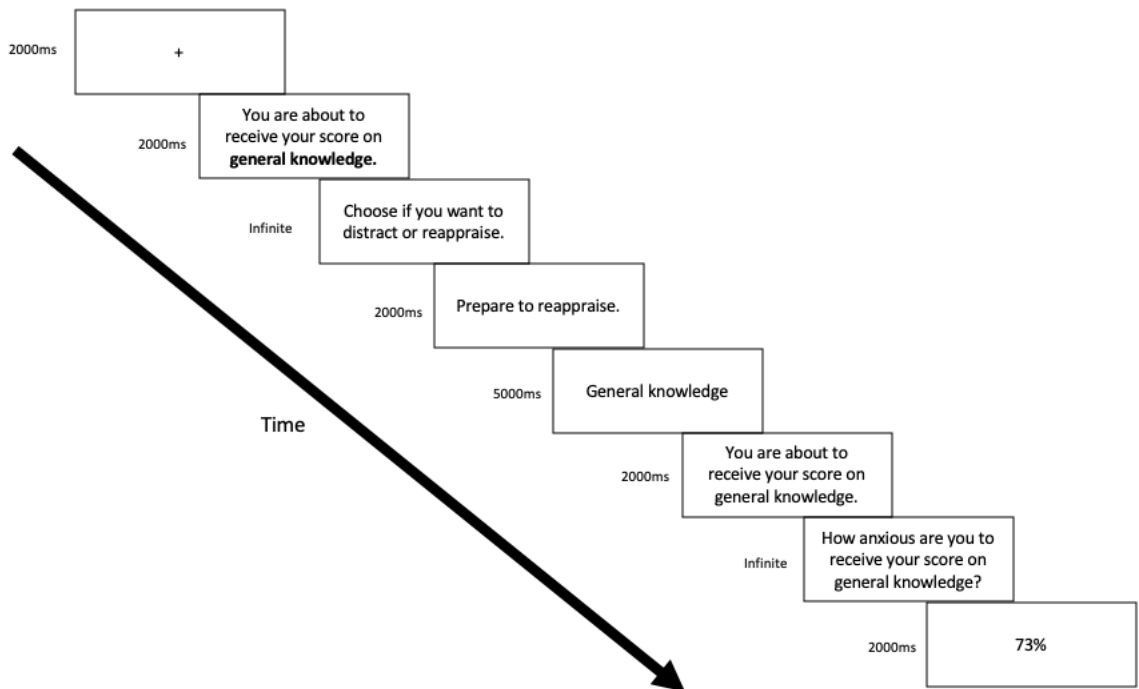
Following the pre-test anxiety ratings, participants were informed that after the test they will be asked to choose and implement one of two regulatory forms; distraction and reappraisal, whilst waiting to receive feedback on the test. Participants were then, in the form of a video as well as written text, taught how to implement distraction (e.g. imagine yourself making coffee) and reappraisal (e.g. rephrase the feedback to a blessing, since it will help you do better in the future). To ensure adherence, participants were asked to think of a way to implement each of the strategies and write it down. If the participant wanted to, they could keep practicing, to ensure that the strategies were clear. The order of regulatory instructions was randomized across participants. This approach has been proved to be effective and was a replica from Shafir et. al., (2016).

The teaching phase was followed by four practice trials of emotion regulation choice (figure 1) to ensure adherence. The practice trials were performed the same as the real trials, except for the use of different dimensions, namely insightfulness, creativity, trustworthiness, persuasiveness, confidence and general knowledge were derived from previous research of Shafir et. al., (2016) –in order to avoid repetition as well as losing the connection between the challenging task and specific dimension. The trials consisted of the participant being shown the specific dimension they will receive feedback on within the specific trial, followed by the choice of the emotion regulation strategy, and then further implementing the strategy whilst waiting to receive the final score. Whilst doing so, the participants were asked how anxious they felt to

receive feedback on the particular dimension, on a 9-point Likert scale, before viewing their score on the dimension. The order of trials was randomized across participants. Previous studies have recognized this waiting period as a significant stage in an evaluation context, that requires emotion regulation (Carver & Scheier, 1994; Shafir et. al., 2016). See figure 1 below for a visual representation of the structure of the trials.

Figure 1

Trial Structure of the Emotion Regulation Choice Paradigm Across Time



Note. Inspired by the works of Shafir et. al., 2016

Following the practice trials, the participants then began the occupational propensity test, which consisted of three parts, namely a pattern-identification task, realistic-thought task and emotion-perception task. Each of the three sections was created to seem to measure two of the

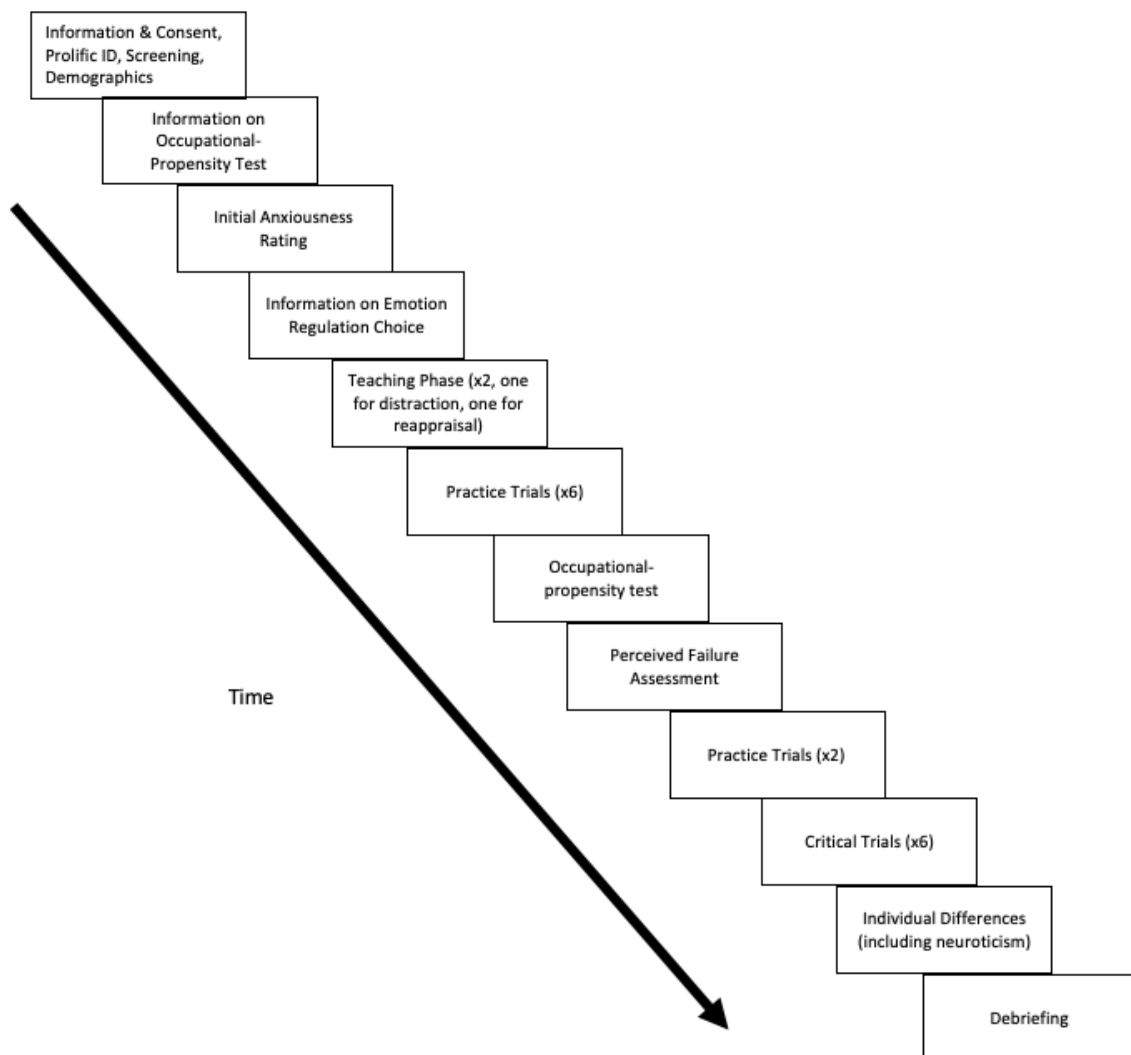
dimensions, however, the final scores were fictitious. The pattern-identification task consisted of fifteen matrices (Appendix F), and participants were given 10 seconds to complete each. The matrices were inspired by Ravens Progressive Matrices (Raven, 1941). The participants were told this section of the test was to assess their analytic thinking and fluid intelligence. The realistic-thought task was based on a wisdom cognition measurement created by Brienza et. al., (2018), which consisted of thinking back on a difficult situation and reflecting on how you approached it. The realistic thought task assessed participants on their wise reasoning and conflict management (see Appendix G for full measure). Lastly, the emotion-perception task consisted of watching a muted video of an individual talking about either a positive or negative experience. The participant had to indicate what emotion the individual in the video is feeling and communicating. Whether the video was negatively or positively charged, was randomized for each individual. The emotion-perception task was based on the work of Wieck, et. al. (2022), and assessed the dimensions of emotional understanding and sociality (see Appendix H). The order of the three sections of the occupational-propensity test was randomized across participants.

After the occupational-propensity task, the participants were asked to rank their perceived failure on a 9-point Likert scale (1 = above 10% of all participants, 9 = above 90% of all participants) on each of the six dimensions (see Appendix I). The perceived performance ranking was followed by two more measures on whether participants would like to improve, and whether they thought it would be possible (Appendix J), however this is not relevant to the present study. After completing this, two more practice trials for the emotion regulation choice were conducted, before the participants started the six critical emotion regulation choice trials (see figure 1).

Subsequently, the individuals were informed that the study is also interested in individual differences, and were assessed on neuroticism (see Appendix K) as well as other measures (see Appendix L), such as self-esteem, implicit theories of emotion and hedonic-goal salience, that are not relevant to the present study. Lastly, the participants were debriefed (see Appendix M). See figure 2 below for the visual representation of the survey flow across time.

Figure 2

Visual Representation of Survey-flow Across Time



Note. Inspired by the works of Shafir et. al., 2016

Measures

The participants were informed that the occupational-propensity test is measuring their performance, and although it was put together using a combination of reliable measurements, the answers of participants were not actually recorded, and the results were fictitious. Therefore, these measures are not elaborated on in this section. Other measurements, including those on individual differences, such as self-esteem, implicit theories of emotion and hedonic-goal salience, were also measured, but not relevant to the research question of the present study and thus not elaborated on either.

Emotion Regulation Strategy Choice

Emotion regulation strategy choice was measured identically to Shafir et. al (2016). See figure 1 for the trial sequence. The order of trials was randomized across participants, and the fictitious percentile scores ranged from 65% to 85%. The measurement of interest was the choice between reappraisal and distraction for each dimension. The emotion regulation strategy choice was made into a continuous variable by assigning distraction the value of one, and reappraisal zero. Calculating the average between the six trials, provided an overall score for each participant, and thus compute proportional, individual, scores, which allows for single-level data to be used in the analysis, instead of multilevel analysis. A score higher than 0.5 meant the participant would be on average, more likely to distract themselves, and lower than 0.5 meant the participant would be more likely to use reappraisal.

Perceived Failure

Perceived failure measure was adapted from the study conducted by Shafir et. al. (2016). The measure was almost identical, except for the present study being an online assessment whilst Shafir et. al. (2016) measured perceived failure in person. During the assessment, the participants

were asked to rank their perceived failure, disguised as perceived performance, on each of the six dimensions, using a percentile scale ranging from 1 (performing “above 10% of all other participants”) to 9 (performing “above 90% of all other participants”). The average score across the six dimensions was calculated in order to create one specific score for each participant. The perceived performance measurement was used to assess perceived failure and thus negative feedback anticipation; the lower the perceived failure, the more negative emotions related to the anticipated feedback.

Neuroticism

Neuroticism was measured by using the subset of neuroticism from the 44-item inventory of the “Big Five” factors of personality (Goldberg, 1993). The subset consists of eight statements, for which the participants would give a score on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The final score was calculated by averaging the eight responses for each individual.

The full inventory measures neuroticism, extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness and openness. The “Big Five” inventory has been shown to have high reliability, and in the reliability of the subset of neuroticism scored $\alpha = 0.906$.

Data Analysis Plan

A multiple regression analysis was used to evaluate the effects of self-perceived failure, neuroticism on the choice between two regulatory strategies. Firstly, an assumption check was carried out. In the case of multiple regression analysis, this comes down to checking for linearity, multicollinearity, constant variance and normal distribution of the residuals, and finally checking for influential cases such as outliers. There was no data manipulation in this analysis.

Concerning the first hypothesis, a linear regression model using perceived failure and neuroticism as explanatory, or independent, variables of emotion regulation choice (dependent variable) was created. To conclude how much either of the independent variables influence the dependent variable, and how significant the main effect is, using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) their interaction was plotted on a graph. A linear regression was also used to address the second hypothesis, with neuroticism serving as the predictor and perceived failure as the outcome. This allowed for a further understanding as to the direction and strength of the association between neuroticism and perceived failure.

Results

Preliminary Analysis

In table 1 below, descriptive statistics were calculated for each of the variables. Overall, participants reported their performance as relatively neutral ($M= 5.01$, $SD= 1.59$), and chose to reappraise more than distract (reappraisal: 59% of trials, distraction: 41%). Participants reported a moderate level of neuroticism ($M=2.85$, $SD=0.99$).

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics Retrieved from Raw Data Collected During Survey

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Perceived failure	211	8.00	1.00	9.00	5.01	1.59	2.55
Strategy choice	211	1.00	0.00	1.00	0.41	0.34	0.12
Neuroticism	211	4.00	1.00	5.00	2.85	0.99	0.99

Assumption Check

Firstly, an assumption check was conducted, to make sure that there were no violations of the six assumptions for multiple regression analysis; checking for (1) linearity, (2) multicollinearity, (3) constant variance and (4) normal distribution of the residuals, and finally checking for (5) influential cases, such as outliers. With the exception of the first assumption, namely linearity, there were no other violations. A scatterplot was created to assess the linearity of the relationship between emotion regulation choice and the two independent variables. As can be seen in both figure N1 and figure N2 in appendix N, the relationship is not linear. Further, it can be concluded from the correlation matrix (figure O1) and coefficient table (figure O2) in appendix O that there is no multicollinearity in the data. No multicollinearity is also confirmed by the low VIF score, namely $VIF = 1.07$, which should be below 10 (*Assumptions of multiple, 2022*). Lastly, the tolerance (.94), assures that there is no multicollinearity in the data set (*Assumptions of multiple, 2022*). A Durbin-Watson statistic was calculated to assess the assumption that the values of the residuals are independent, which suggested that this assumption was not violated (2.04) (*Assumptions of multiple, 2022*). Appendix P shows the data output. A scatterplot was created to assess the assumption that the variance of the residuals was constant. The plot did not indicate a violation of this assumption (Appendix Q). A P-Plot was created to assess the assumption that the values of the residuals are normally distributed, which indicated no violation of the assumption (Appendix R). Lastly, the data shows no significant outliers, due to Cook's Distance statistic not showing any of the participants having a score above 1 (*Assumptions of multiple, 2022*).

Main Analysis

The aim of the present study is to investigate how neuroticism and perceived failure affects emotion regulation strategy choice, in negative feedback situations. The first hypothesis speculated that participants with higher (relative to lower) levels of neuroticism as well as perceived failure, would be more likely to choose distraction over reappraisal. The second hypothesis predicted that neuroticism would have a positive relationship with perceived failure, meaning the more neurotic would have a higher rate of perceived failure.

Hypothesis 1

A multiple linear regression was conducted to examine whether emotion regulation strategy choice can be predicted by their perceived failure and by an individual's level of neuroticism as a personality trait. The model was not significant, $F(2, 208) = 0.31, p = .732$, explaining 0.3% ($R^2 = .00$) of the variance in the outcome variable. Both neuroticism ($B = .00, t = 0.17, p = .480$) as well as perceived failure ($B = .01, t = 0.71, p = .480$) did not contribute significantly to the model. As can be further seen in Table 2 below, this model predicted that for every one unit of increase of perceived failure on the 9-point Likert scale, emotion regulation choice would be more likely to lean towards distraction, although this was statistically very insignificant. The same goes for neuroticism; for every one unit of increase on the 5-point Likert scale towards being more neurotic, the model predicted that the participant would be more likely to choose to distract, however, again, by a very statistically insignificant amount.

Table 2

Coefficient Table from Multiple Regression Analysis

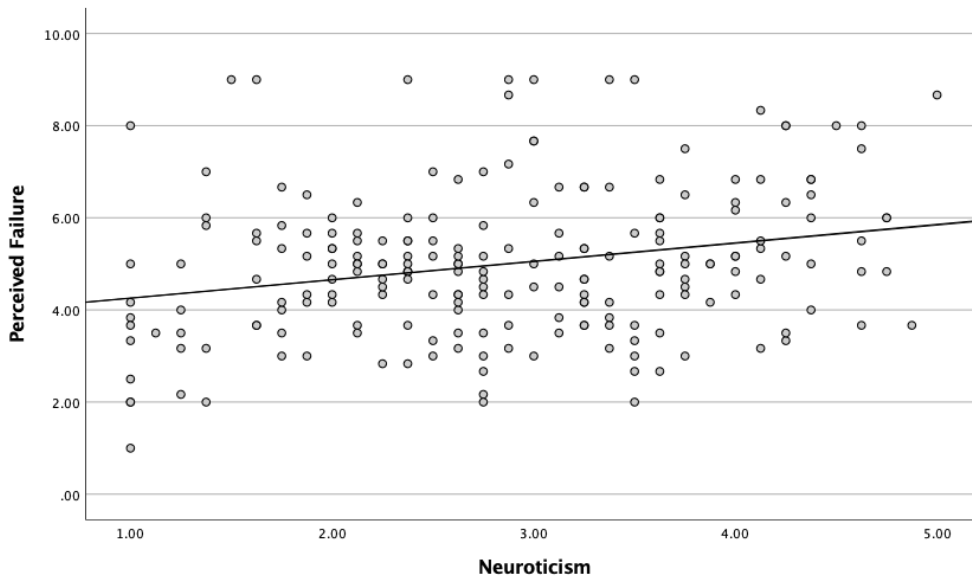
	Unstandardized coefficients	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval
Emotion	0.347	0.094		3.677	<0.001	[0.161;0.533]
Regulation choice						
Perceived failure	0.011	0.016	0.051	0.708	0.480	[-0.020;0.042]
Neuroticism	0.004	0.025	0.012	0.165	0.869	[-0.045;0.053]

Hypothesis 2

In order to test the association between neuroticism and perceived failure, a linear regression was conducted. The results show a strong, positive correlation was between the two, $r(208) = .248, p < .001$. Thus, the findings suggest that individuals with higher levels of neuroticism as a personality trait are more likely to perceive higher failure. See figure 3 below for a visual representation of the association.

Figure 3

Correlation between perceived failure and neuroticism



Discussion

The aim of this study was to research the effect of neuroticism on emotion regulation strategy choice, more specifically choice of distraction or reappraisal, in negative feedback situations. This is highly relevant since empirical research in this field is relatively new and mainly focuses on one of three independent stages of the process. The three stages of emotion regulation are (1) acknowledging the emotion, (2) assessing and setting a goal in order to select a specific emotion-regulation strategy, and (3) the strategy is implemented in the specific context (Gross, 2015). This study contributes to research on the second stage of the process, while most of the empirical research currently strictly focuses on the third (Sheppes, 2020; Webb, et al., 2012;). Based on existing literature, it was hypothesized that (1) participants with higher, in relation to lower, levels of neuroticism will be more inclined to engage in distraction over

reappraisal when regulating the negative emotions that arise from perceived failure, and (2) levels of neuroticism will have a positive correlation with perceived failure.

Regarding the first hypothesis, there was no significant relationship found between perceived failure and neuroticism with emotion regulation choice. This is unexpected, as existing literature argues that the trait of neuroticism has significant associations with emotion regulation strategy choice (Matthews et. al., 2021; Shafir et. al., 2016; Tamir, 2005; Yang, et al., 2020). More specifically, that individuals with higher levels of neuroticism are more commonly using maladaptive strategies such as rumination, expressive suppression, self-blame and denial (Boland & Cappeliez, 1997; Gross & Levenson, 1993; McCrae & Costa, 1986; Nolen-Hoeksma, et al., 2008) However, all the existing literature either focused on (1) indirectly measuring neuroticism, i.e. comparing diagnosed vs undiagnosed clinically depressed individuals which have a strong association with neuroticism, which perhaps is not sufficient to suggest a direct relationship of between the two or indicates that diagnosed depression is not a good proxy measurement for neuroticism (Millgram, et. al., 2015; Millgram, et. al., 2018) or (2) indirectly measuring effects of neuroticism on emotion regulation choice, as the studies focus on the implementation rather than choice which again might not be sufficient evidence to draw conclusions regarding the effects on emotion regulation choice specifically (Gross & Levenson, 1993; McCrae & Costa, 1986; Nolen-Hoeksma, et. al., 2008). Lastly, another reason for this unexpected result, could be that distraction in the context of receiving negative feedback might not be such a maladaptive strategy after all. Actively looking at negative feedback and working with the negative emotions that arise from it intuitively seems to be more helpful. From an emotion regulation perspective, however, distraction might just as well prove to be an adaptive strategy. For example, it could be argued that although in this context of anticipation of negative

feedback you would gain more in the long term by using reappraisal, it could also be argued that distraction, in the short term, allows an individual to avoid unnecessary stress. Unnecessary in the sense that at that point in the survey there is nothing to be changed, so perhaps it is also adaptive to just not worry about the possible negative score. Thus, perhaps both strategies are adaptive from the emotion regulation perspective. This could be one explanation for unexpected results as we built upon existing literature showing how neuroticism has a positive, significant relationship with mental disengagement, rumination, denial, and generally significantly more maladaptive emotion regulation strategies, thus when both strategies are adaptive in the context of the study, there cannot be a clear differentiation explaining the lack of relationship (Boland & Cappeliez, 1997; Gross& Levenson, 1993; McCrae& Costa, 1986; Nolen-Hoeksma, et al., 2008; Tamir, 2005; Tang & Huang, 2019 Yang, et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the fact that perceived failure had no significant relationship to emotion regulation choice in this experiment is also unexpected, since previous literature has very consistent scientific evidence that perceived failure significantly affects emotion regulation choice; participants were 1.08 times more likely to distract themselves with each one-point increase in perceived failure (Shafir et. al., 2016). Additionally, the conceptual framework building on conceptualizing feedback processing from an emotion-regulation perspective created by Grundemann et. al. (2020), argued that high emotional valence is a significant factor when influencing emotion regulation in the context of feedback.

We also predicted that neuroticism will have a positive, strong association with perceived failure. The results of this study showed a strong, significant association between neuroticism and perceived failure. This finding is in line with existing literature, as previous literature shows higher levels of neuroticism in association with more persistent negative viewpoints, as well as

negative correlations with positive reinterpretation and more demanding ideals, which all lead to more perceived failure (Tamir, 2005; Thomson, 2016).

Limitations & Implications

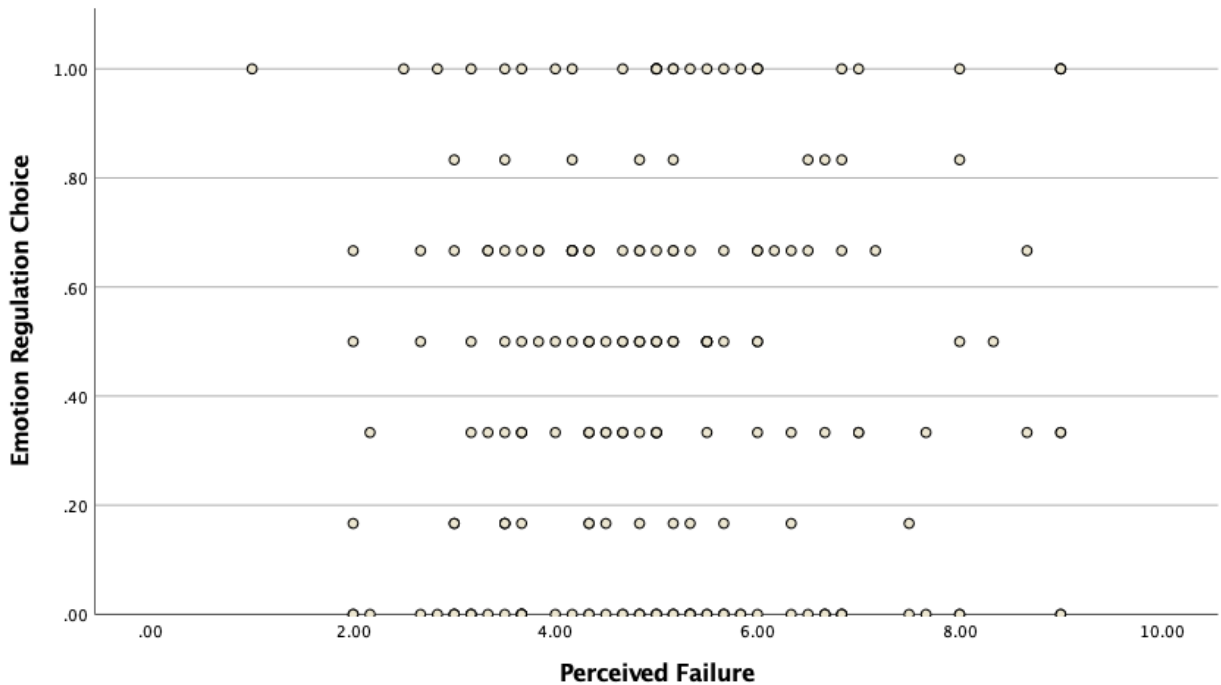
Firstly, it is highly important to acknowledge one of the differences between the first and the second hypothesis is that the second hypothesis does not include the dependent variable; emotion regulation strategy choice. As we can see in figure 4 below, the scatterplot shows the distribution of emotion regulation strategy choice is not necessarily continuous. This is a requirement in multiple regression analysis, as without it the assumption of linearity cannot be confirmed. For the feasibility of the study, a different analysis was used compared to the study which was replicated. Since the study consisted of six separate emotion regulation trials, a multilevel regression analysis would have been most appropriate. It could therefore be argued that the multiple regression analysis was not the best model to use for this particular kind of data and could be the reason why no significant results were found.

Not only would future research profit from using multilevel regression analysis for the specific procedure used, it would also be advisable to conduct such studies in an experimental setting to investigate the lack of relationship found in this study—since the current design has its limitations, and cannot confirm or deny a causal effect. Therefore, an experimental design with a multilevel regression analysis would be more effective to draw conclusions on the relationship between neuroticism and emotion regulation choice. This is particularly relevant because contemporary scientific literature on the topic concludes that levels of neuroticism do have an effect on emotion regulation strategy choice. This effect, however, is often indirect or inconsistent. Thus, researching the lack of causality between neuroticism and emotion regulation

strategy choice would bring science in the field one step closer to understanding what individual traits influence how people choose to regulate their emotions.

Figure 4

Scatterplot of emotion regulation strategy choice and perceived failure



The repetition of the critical trials could be another possible flaw in the method leading to unreliable results, due to repeating the trials six separate times, six practice trials could cause participants to rush through the study and simply select one as it is getting too repetitive. Although that was the procedure of Shafir et. al. (2016), and the emotion regulation trials were also completed on a computer, the rest of the study was in real life. The repetition of the trials in addition to all the study being online may have possibly led to too much repetition and therefore unreliable results.

The findings of this study also suggest a strong association between perceived failure and neuroticism, which is in line with the current literature. However, it cannot be concluded that this relationship is causal, thus an experimental design is crucial for future research.

Conclusion

Despite its limitations, this study is still an important addition to the existing literature concerning neuroticism and emotion regulation choice. The findings suggest that neuroticism does not have a significant effect on emotion regulation strategy choice, however, more experimental research that measures the direct effects of neuroticism on emotion regulation strategy choice has yet to confirm this. Additionally, no significant effect was found on emotion regulation choice in relation to perceived failure. Lastly, neuroticism and perceived failure did have a significant association, although we should not take this to be a confirmation of a causal relationship. It is highly relevant nonetheless, as it allows for a contextual understanding in future emotion regulation strategy choice studies in relation to neuroticism, giving us a better understanding of how the trait affects one's perception.

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Appendix A

Consent Form

I have read the information about the research. I understand what the research is about, what is being asked of me, which consequences participation can have, how my data will be handled, and what my rights are. I understand that participation in this research is voluntary. I myself choose to participate. I can stop at any moment. If I stop, I do not need to explain why. Stopping will have no negative consequences for me. That is, if you do not consent or want to withdraw you can quit the questionnaire now without any consequences by closing the window. Below I indicate what I am consenting to.

Below I indicate what I am consenting to.

Consent to participate in the research and to the processing of my data:

- Yes, I consent to participate and to the processing of my personal data as mentioned in the research information. I know that I can ask to have my data withdrawn and erased until the 01.05.2022.
- No, I do not consent.

As a participant, you have the right to a copy of this consent form. In case you would like a copy, we suggest that you either take a screenshot of this page or contact the study's contact person, Lote Leimane (l.leimane@student.rug.nl), directly to receive a .pdf-version of the consent form. Note that this would lead to your identification.

If you agree to participate in this survey, please click on the --> button to move on.

Appendix B

Information Sheet (Questionnaire)

We invite you to participate in a study that examines how individuals react to feedback on a widely used recruitment test. The starting date of this research project is October 18th, 2021, with the project ending on May 1st, 2022. This study adheres to the guidelines of the ethical review process of The University of Groningen. The research is conducted by Lote Leimane (contact person), Felix Grundmann, and Kai Epstude.

Do I have to participate in this research?

Participation in the research is voluntary. Because your consent is needed, please read this information carefully. Only afterwards you decide if you want to participate. If you decide to not participate, you do not need to explain why, and there will be no negative consequences for you. You have this right at all times, including after you have consented to participate in the research.

Why this research?

Recruitment tests are oftentimes part of companies' hiring process. In this study, we seek to understand how job seekers react to feedback on their test performance.

What do we ask of you during the research?

First, we ask whether you consent to participating in this survey study and to provide basic demographic information. You then learn about two common strategies used in feedback situations and practice implementing them. After that, you complete the occupational-propensity test. Following the test, you receive a couple of questions about the test and your performance. You then receive performance feedback and implement one of the two strategies you have learned about. Lastly, we ask you some questions about yourself.

What are the consequences of participation

Participation does not involve any foreseeable risks.

How will we treat your data?

We process your data to better understand employment-relevant dimensions and individuals' reactions to receiving feedback on them. The final aim is to eventually publish our insights in a peer-reviewed scientific journal. We will record your responses. All your (anonymized) responses are securely stored on servers of the University of Groningen for 10 years and only accessible to the research team, and not passed on to any third parties. Further note that your responses are considered personal data. You have the right to access, rectify, and request the deletion of your (sensitive) personal data. You can do so and also obtain a copy of your personal data by sending an e-mail to the study's contact person. Some scientific journals require researchers to make their data publicly available. If required, we will share the anonymized data sets which grants protection to your privacy.

What else do you need to know?

You may always ask questions about the research. You can do so by emailing (l.leimane@student.rug.nl) or by phoning (+31 6 444 186 90) the study's contact person. Do you have questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant? For this you may also

contact the Ethics Committee Psychology of the University of Groningen: ecp@rug.nl. If you do so, please mention the study code (PSY-2122-S-0165). Do you have questions or concerns regarding your privacy, or regarding the handling of your personal data? For this you may also contact the Data Protection Officer of the University of Groningen: privacy@rug.nl.

To continue, please click on the --> button below.

Appendix C

Demographics and Screening Questions

Which of the following best describes you?

- I am currently actively looking for a job. (1)
- I am currently not actively looking for a job. (2)
- N/A (3)

How old are you?

What is your gender?

- Female (1)
- Male (2)
- Non-binary (3)

What is your nationality?

- American (1)
- Other: (2) _____

Appendix D

Description of the Occupational Propensity Test

Education is not everything: The relevance of other skills for successful employment

CEOs, managers, and recruiters have recognized that educational attainment is a poor indicator of job performance. In other words, there is more to doing a job well than having a degree. Nowadays, organizations seek employees that can quickly adapt to new contexts, are capable of navigating complex social situations, and solve problems efficiently. To identify them, human-resource specialists have developed various recruitment tests.

Completing such recruitment tests and learning how well one did can be quite stressful. For that reason, we were commissioned by the national careers institute to conduct a study that allows us to better understand how job seekers react to performance feedback on recruitment tests. The insights gained through this study may help job seekers to properly prepare for recruitment tests and to adequately deal with related feedback.

In the following, you will Complete a shortened version of the widely used **occupational-propensity test** **Receive feedback** on the dimensions that the test assesses and **choose how to react to it**

The occupational-propensity test

The occupational-propensity test has been used by numerous recruitment agencies since 2018 to select promising job candidates. The test assesses job seekers on six dimensions. These dimensions have been deemed relevant for succeeding in most occupations. The dimensions are 1) emotional understanding, 2) sociality, 3) fluid intelligence, 4) analytic thinking, 5) conflict management, and 6) wise reasoning. More information about the dimensions can be found below.

Appendix E

Description of the Six Dimensions Measured in Occupational Propensity Test

Emotional Understanding

Emotional understanding pertains to a person's ability to accurately recognize emotions. Good emotional understanding enables individuals to understand and manage the emotions of others. It also allows them to be empathetic.

Sociality

Sociality pertains to a person's tendency to perceive others in ways that either facilitate or inhibit the development of meaningful interpersonal relationships. By generally making individuals happier and physically healthier, strong social connections translate into improved work performance.

Fluid Intelligence

Fluid intelligence pertains to a person's capacity to quickly adapt to changing situational demands. Individuals with high fluid intelligence tend to be flexible and proactive problem solvers. Fluid intelligence also correlates with comprehension ease and learning.

Analytic Thinking

Analytic thinking pertains to a person's ability to work with abstract information. It is associated with pattern detection. That is, individuals who think analytically, employ a form of thinking that follows strict principles. This kind of thinking allows them to organize complex data and to identify hidden or hard-to-see relationships.

Conflict Management

Conflict management pertains to the degree to which a person is able to successfully deal with conflicts with others. Individuals who score high on this dimension are generally able to find creative solutions to interpersonal problems. Such individuals are sought after by employers, as they counteract workplace negativity and stress. Thereby, they facilitate employee motivation.

Wise Reasoning

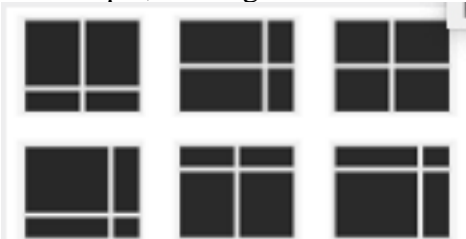
Wise reasoning pertains to a person's ability to consider the multiple ways in which a situation may unfold and to recognize others' perspectives and interests. As such, wise reasoning is a hallmark of realistic thought. Moreover, it has been linked to a productive work environment and work performance.

Appendix F

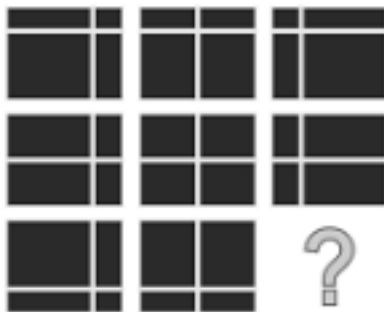
The Pattern-Identification Task

You are about to work on the pattern-identification task. You will be presented with ten 3x3 matrices. In each matrix, eight fields are occupied by a pattern. Hence, one pattern is missing. Your task is to identify the missing pattern. The missing one must be determined from six answer options. For each matrix, there is a 'rule' how patterns change from left to right and top to bottom.

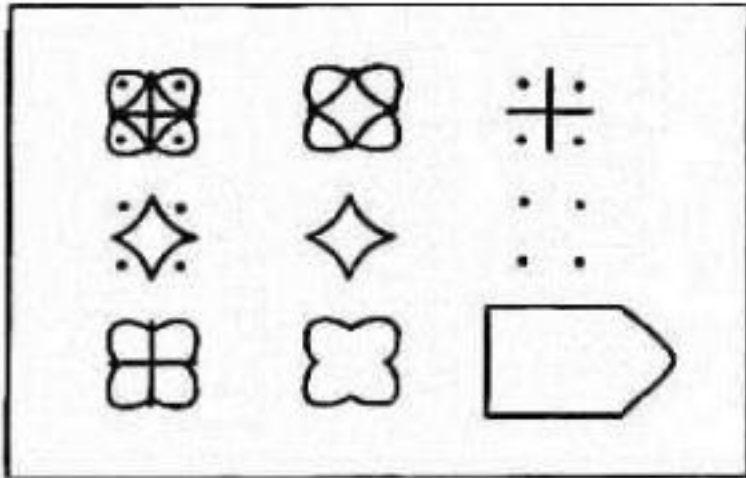
For example, looking at the matrix:



Which pattern logically completes the matrix?



You will be presented with one matrix at a time. The matrices will increase in difficulty. You have 10 seconds to provide a response. If you fail to do so, you will auto-advance to the next matrix. Your score will be the number of correctly identified patterns.



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Appendix G

The Realistic-thought Task

You are about to work on the realistic-thought task. You will be asked to think about a recent difficult situation and answer some related questions. More information will follow. For all questions, please answer them honestly and thoughtfully.

Your score is determined by the answers you provide to the questions.

Please think about the most recent difficult situation that has happened to you with a coworker (e.g., a disagreement, conflict). This should be a situation that you yourself were involved in, whether or not you were the person who initiated the situation.

If you are unable to think of a moment, please think about the most recent difficult situation that has happened to you with a close friend.

Take a moment to recall this situation and visualize the events in your mind's eye; consider who was involved and what happened, what you thought and how you felt.

When did this situation first begin?

- This week (1)
- Within the last month (2)
- Within the last 6 months (3)
- Within the last year (4)
- Over a year ago (5)

What day of the week was it?

- Monday (1)
- Tuesday (2)
- Wednesday (3)
- Thursday (4)
- Friday (5)
- Saturday (6)
- Sunday (7)
- I don't remember (8)

What time of day was it?

- Morning (1)
- Afternoon (2)
- Evening (3)
- Don't remember (4)

Where were you when the situation happened? (~ 1 sentence)

What were you doing when it happened? (1-2 sentences)

What was the gender of the other person?

- Female (1)
- Male (2)
- Non-binary (3)

As you were thinking about this situation, what thoughts and emotions came to your mind?
Please describe them in the space provided.

Please continue to think about the situation you called to mind in the previous section and recall what you actually did as the situation unfolded.

None of the statements listed below are supposed to be "good" or "bad". The focus simply lies on how people approach difficult situations. Therefore, it is very important that you answer as accurately as possible - your honesty is appreciated, and your replies are, of course, anonymous. Please select the extent to which you engaged in the following thoughts and behaviors:

While this situation was unfolding, I did the following:

	Not at All	Not Really	Undecided	Somewhat	Very Much
Thought the situation could unfold in many different ways.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tried my best to find a way to accommodate both of us.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wondered what I would think if I was somebody else watching the situation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tried to see the conflict from the point of view of an uninvolved person.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Thought about whether an outside person might have a different opinion from mine about the situation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Double-checked whether my opinion on the situation might be incorrect.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tried to communicate with the other person what we might have in common.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Took time to get the other person's opinions on the matter before coming to a conclusion.

Considered alternative solutions as the situation evolved.

Considered whether the other person's opinions might be correct.

Appendix H

The Emotion-perception Task

You are about to work on the emotion-perception task. You will be presented with a short video clip. The video clip is about 2 minutes long. In the video clip, a person recounts an emotional event from their past. Your task is to carefully monitor the person's facial expressions to decipher the emotions they are experiencing. You will find a list with various emotions (happy, sad, etc.) below each video clip. For each of the emotions, you indicate the extent to which the person in the video clip is experiencing it. Because what the person is saying may give away what the person is feeling, the video clip is muted. You are allowed to pause and to rewind the video clip.

Your score depends on the overlap between your responses and the responses that the protagonists provided when the videos were recorded. It further depends on the kind of emotions that you recognize.

Task 1: emotional understanding & sociality

Make sure to pay close attention to the person's facial expressions. You are able to continue once the video clip has finished playing (after 120 seconds). There is **no** sound.



To what extent is the person feeling ...?

	Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Very	Extremely
Angry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Downhearted	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Alarmed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Worried	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Disgusted	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sickened	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Happy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Glad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Proud	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Satisfied	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Relaxed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Calm	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Appendix I

Measure of Perceived Failure

We would like to ask you to rank your performance on each of the dimensions of the occupational-propensity test. As a reminder, the *pattern-identification task* assessed your analytic thinking and fluid intelligence. The *realistic-thought task* assessed your wise reasoning and conflict management. The *emotion-recognition task* assessed your sociality and your emotional understanding.

Please provide your ranking in form of a percentile score. 1 indicates you scored "above 10% of all participants who completed the test" while a 9 indicates you scored "above 90% of all participants who completed the test".

	above 10% of all participants 1	2	3	4	above 50% of all participants 5	6	7	8	above 90% of all participants 9
Sociality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emotional Understanding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fluid Intelligence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Analytic Thinking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conflict Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wise Reasoning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Appendix J

Ranking of Improvement and Opportunity of Improvement

We are also interested to hear whether you want to improve on the dimensions. Please indicate your agreement with the following statement(s).

I want to improve my [dimension]?

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Sociality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emotional Understanding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fluid Intelligence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Analytic Thinking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conflict Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wise Reasoning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In addition, we would like to know whether you think improvement on the dimensions is possible. Please indicate your agreement with the following statement(s).

If I wanted to, I could improve my [dimension].

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Sociality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emotional Understanding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fluid Intelligence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Analytic Thinking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conflict Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wise Reasoning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Appendix K

Measure of Neuroticism

Here are a number of characteristics that may or may not apply to you, on a scale from 1 to 5. 1 indicates that you strongly disagree, whilst 5 indicates that you strongly agree.

Please finish the following sentence in the context of each of the questions.

"I see myself as someone who..."

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
is depressed, blue.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
is relaxed, handles stress well.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
can be tense.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
worries a lot.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
is emotionally stable, not easily upset.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
can be moody.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
remains calm in tense situations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
gets nervous easily.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Appendix L

Individual Differences Measures

When I received feedback on the dimensions, I wanted to...

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Feel more positive.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feel more positive emotions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feel less bad.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The following statements focus on the changeability of emotions.

Please indicate your agreement with the statements.

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Everyone can learn to control their emotions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If they want to, people can change the emotions that they have.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No matter how hard they try, people can't really change the emotions that they have.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The truth is, people have very little control over their emotions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please also indicate your agreement with the statements presented below.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to do things as well as most people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I take a positive attitude toward myself.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I wish I could have more respect for myself.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I certainly feel useless at times.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
At times I think that I am no good at all.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Appendix M

Debriefing of the Study

Thank you for participating in this study! Through your participation we may make progress in our understanding of the determinants of implementing different emotion regulation strategies when engaging with negative feedback.

Research question and expectations

The aim of this research was to investigate if individuals scoring high (vs. low) on neuroticism as a trait-like characteristic, would significantly differ in their choice of emotion regulation strategy, when anticipating receiving negative feedback. We predicted that participants scoring higher (rather than lower) on neuroticism would be more likely to engage in distraction (vs. reappraisal) as an emotion regulation strategy.

Deception

Please note that

- The feedback was made-up. It does not reflect your performance.
- The occupational-propensity test is not a measure of the skills vital to be successful on the job market.
- The information the of vital skills necessary to be successful was made-up.
- The study was not commissioned by the national careers institute.

We did not disclose that the feedback was bogus feedback, that the occupational-propensity test does not measure emotional understanding, sociality, fluid intelligence, analytic thinking, wise reasoning or conflict management. The information within the recruitment test was made-up because past research has shown that knowledge of what researchers are interested in or hope to find influences how individuals respond to questions. Therefore, to avoid this, we withheld this information.

The contact person of this study is Lote Leimane (l.leimane@student.rug.nl). You can contact her to obtain a summary of the results, for more information about the background of this study or to receive a .pdf-copy of the debriefing form (alternatively, you can take a screenshot of this page). Note that this would lead to your identification.

If there is anything you would like to share with us, please do so by writing in the text box below.

Appendix N

Assumption of Linearity

Figure N1

Scatter Plot Between Perceived Failure and Emotion Regulation Choice

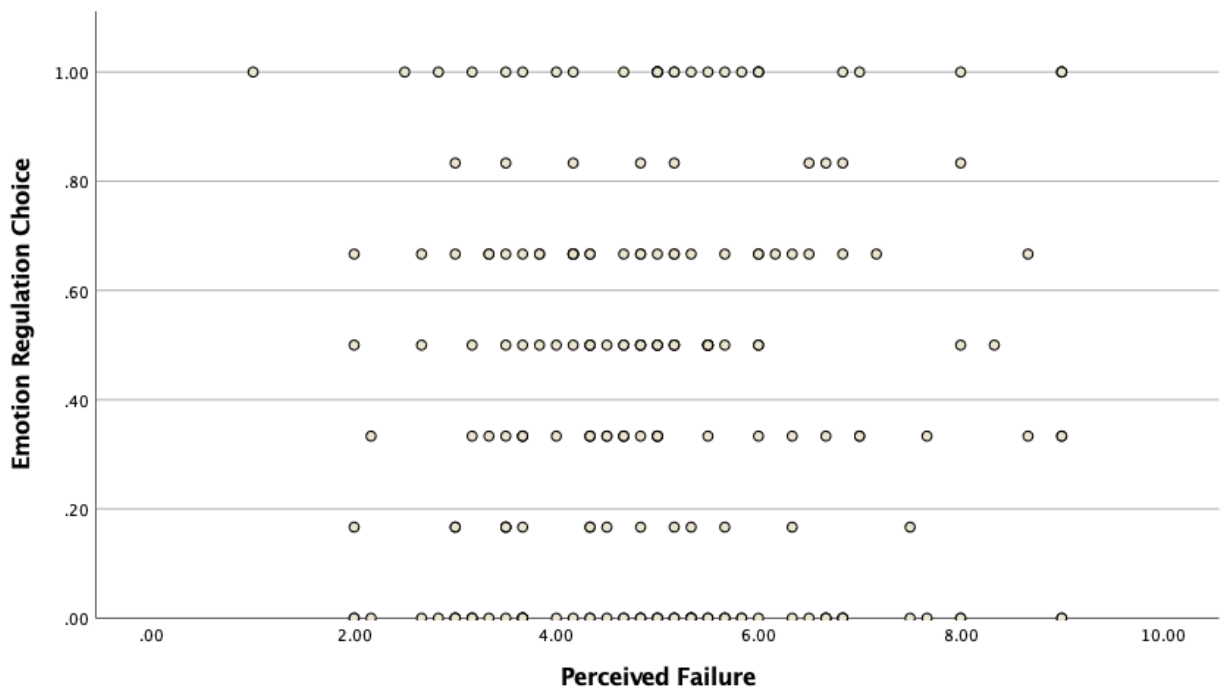
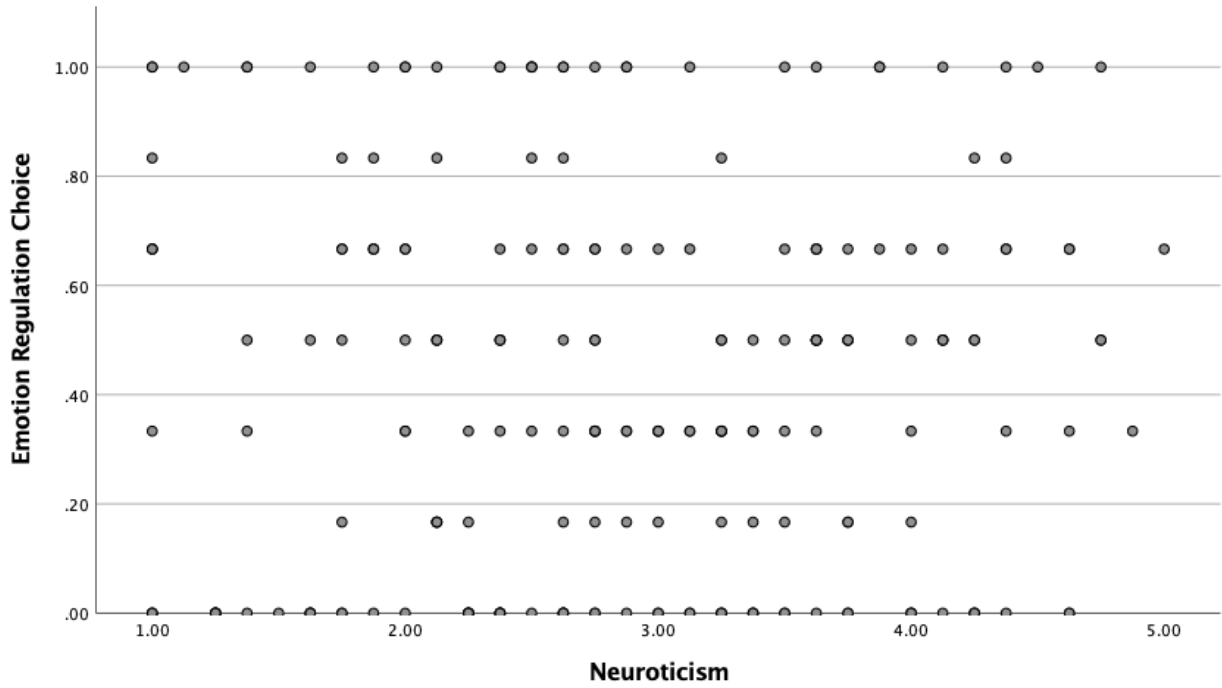


Figure N2

Scatter Plot Between Neuroticism and Emotion Regulation Choice



Appendix O

Assumption of Multicollinearity

Figure O1

Linear Regression Correlation Matrix

		Emotion regulation choice	Neurotic ism	Perceived failure
Pearson Correlation	Emotion regulation choice	1.000	.024	.053
	Neuroticism	.024	1.000	.248**
	Perceived failure	.053	.248**	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Emotion regulation choice	.	.363	.220
	Neuroticism	.363	.	.000
	Perceived failure	.220	.000	.

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Figure O2

Linear Regression Table of Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations		Collinearity Statistics		
		B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	.347	.094		3.677	<.001	.161	.533					
	neuro	.004	.025	.012	.165	.869	-.045	.053	.024	.011	.011	.939	1.066
	perceived failure	.011	.016	.051	.708	.480	-.020	.042	.053	.049	.049	.939	1.066

a. Dependent Variable: mean from critical trials

Appendix P

Assumption that Values of the Residuals are Independent

Table P

Linear Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
	.055 ^a	.003	-.007	.34936	2.038

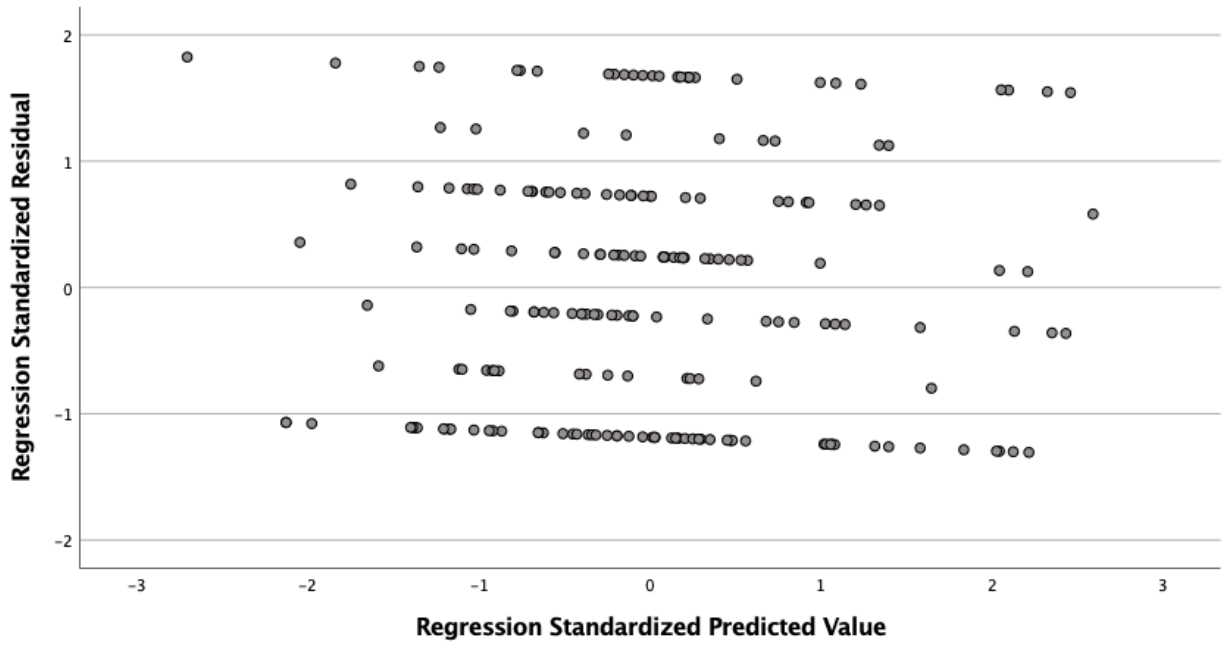
a. Predictors: (constant), perceived failure, neuroticism

Appendix Q

Assumption of the Variance of Residuals Being Constant

Figure Q

Scatterplot showing Variance of Residuals



Appendix R

Assumption that Values of Residuals are Normally Distributed

Figure R

P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual, with Dependent Variable of Emotion Regulation Choice

