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„Indirect effects of actual-ought discrepancies on wellbeing through the father's wellbeing and the moderating role of the connectedness between father and child“

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Abstract

Numerous studies have investigated how matching individual goals contributes to wellbeing. However, less is known about how matching the expectations of others affects wellbeing. Indeed, the perception of actual-ought discrepancies can be regarded as an important regulator that motivates people to behave more in accordance with external expectations. It therefore seems fair to assume that the level of actual-ought discrepancy is correlated to the own wellbeing because it reduces the likelihood of stressful conflicts, but at the same time it might contribute to the wellbeing of others, which in turn should affect the own wellbeing too. Hence, the present, cross-sectional study ($n = 203$) investigated whether the association between the level of actual-ought discrepancy and the personal affective wellbeing is partly mediated by the level of wellbeing of the father. Furthermore, a possible moderating effect of connectedness on the relation between actual-ought discrepancy and the father's wellbeing was examined. Even though, support was found for the mediation hypothesis, the hypothesis proposing the association between the level of actual-ought discrepancy and the father's wellbeing is moderated by connectedness, could not be supported. Results of further exploratory analyses on the other hand, showed a significant moderation effect of each the relation between the level of actual-ought discrepancy and the wellbeing of the subject, and of the relation between the wellbeing of the father and the wellbeing of the subject. Given these unexpected findings, more research in this era is needed to fully understand the complex associations between self-discrepancies, wellbeing, and the quality of the father-child relationship.

Keywords: self-discrepancy theory, ought-self, wellbeing, father-child relationship

Indirect effects of actual-ought discrepancies on wellbeing through the father's wellbeing and the moderating role of the connectedness between father and child

Long hours spent on social media (Statista, 2021), comparing oneself to others (Bessenoff, 2006; Festinger, 1954; Verduyn et al., 2020), a self-optimization movement with a market that is generating an estimated volume of around 10 billion Dollars a year (Cederström & Spicer, 2017), rising levels of individualism worldwide (Santos et al., 2017) with people chasing after their *ideal selves*: Meanwhile, in research it is sometimes also talked about another self – the *ought self* (Higgins, 1987; Higgins, 1989b).

The ideal self are all the attributes an individual would ideally want to possess (Higgins, 1987). This might be, for example, to be great at baseball or a decent cook or simply a nice and humble person. The *ought self*, on the other hand, is defined by the attributes a person believes are expected to be possessed by her or him (Higgins, 1987). For example, you could think your mother expects you to be successful at your job, or that your brother expects you to be generous with birthday presents.

While the ought self is talked about in academia, in western societies it does not seem worth striving for to try and please others all too much. Perhaps as a result, there are not many studies looking at different possible positive impacts of being close to this self. Even though there is evidence for a beneficiary direct impact of being close to one's ought self on the own wellbeing (Mason et al., 2019), according to my knowledge there are no studies exploring potential indirect effects on the own wellbeing through the perceived wellbeing of others.

Consequently, the present study explored firstly, how a discrepancy (or lack thereof) between the self one actually resembles, and the self the father seems to expect from one impacts the father's perceived wellbeing. Secondly, how the father's perceived wellbeing impacts the own wellbeing and lastly, whether the relationship between father and child

impacts the expected correlation between self-discrepancy and the father's perceived wellbeing.

Theoretical Background

Self-Discrepancy Theory and Wellbeing

One fundamental assumption of this study is that reduced levels of actual-ought discrepancy go along with higher levels of wellbeing. This proposition is nothing new, as it has already been described by the so-called *self-discrepancy theory* (SDT; Higgins, 1987; Higgins, 1989b) and has since been strengthened through numerous studies (for an overview, see Mason et al., 2019).

But people generally do not only care about themselves, instead, people are social beings who are part of relationships and social groups, which implies caring for the wellbeing of others as well. According to SDT, actual-ought discrepancies can be looked at as serving a regulative function within relationships and social groups in order to make sure behavior is adapted to meet the expectations of the members of said groups (Higgins, 1987). This means that actual-ought discrepancies should yield behavior which not only leads to improved wellbeing of oneself, but also leads to meeting external expectations and therefore improves the wellbeing of others. In other words, we try to meet external expectations because it makes us happy to make others happy, which is important for social regulation purposes.

Consequently, another pivotal assumption of this study is that the positive effect of reduced levels of actual-ought discrepancy on wellbeing is mediated by the wellbeing of others. To my knowledge, there have been no studies investigating this aspect yet.

The third assumption of this study is that the quality of the relationship between oneself and one's father influences the impact of the level of actual-ought discrepancy on the father's perceived wellbeing. More precisely, how connected the child is to the father, should

impact the correlation of the child's level of actual-ought discrepancy and the father's perceived wellbeing.

Self-Discrepancy Theory

SDT (Higgins, 1987; Higgins, 1989b) is a framework that provides an explanation for the relation of self and affect. It proposes three domains of the self: the *actual self*, the *ideal self*, and the *ought self*. According to SDT, individuals can experience discrepancies along two different self-guides: On one hand, there is the actual-ideal discrepancy, which describes a discrepancy between one's actual self (i.e., the status quo) and one's ideal self. On the other hand, there is the actual-ought discrepancy, referring to the discrepancy between the actual self and the ought self. The ought self can be described as the attributes an individual believes are expected to be possessed by her or him by others (Higgins, 1987; Higgins, 1989b). Whenever there is a discrepancy between the actual self and either the ideal or the ought self, it supposedly has a negative effect on the individual's wellbeing (Higgins, 1987; Higgins 1989b; Mason et al., 2019).

Wellbeing. As just described, SDT originally proposed wellbeing and self-discrepancy are negatively correlated (Higgins, 1987). Subjective wellbeing consists of two components. One component of wellbeing is cognitive wellbeing. This refers to the overall life satisfaction as well as to the evaluation of specific domains of life (e.g., job satisfaction or relationships; Diener, 1984). The second component is affective and defined by how often and how intensely positive and negative affect is experienced (Diener, 1984; Diener et al., 1999; Lyubomirsky et al., 2005).

More recent studies have indeed hardened the evidence that affective wellbeing is correlated with self-discrepancy (Mason et al., 2019): A meta-analysis investigating the link between psychopathology as well as positive and negative affect and self-discrepancy confirmed that people with lower levels of self-discrepancy report higher levels of positive

affect and lower levels of negative affect (Mason et al., 2019). In other words, people who are closer to who they want to be or to who they feel they ought to be, generally feel more positive and less negative emotions (Mason et al., 2019).

Domains and Standpoints of the Self. Contrary to other theories concerning the self and affect, SDT was developed as a model that should predict which *specific* negative emotions are related to which kinds of self-state interrelations (Higgins, 1987; Higgins, 1989b). These *self-states* can be categorized into two dimensions: domains of the self and standpoints on the self (Higgins, 1987; Strauman & Higgins, 1987).

Domains of the self are the afore-mentioned actual self, the ideal self, and the ought self. The *standpoints on the self*, refer to the “point of view or position from which a person is judged” (Strauman & Higgins, 1987, p. 1004). This point of view can either be your *own* personal standpoint or the standpoint of some significant *other* (e.g., parent, sibling, partner, close friend, etc.; Higgins, 1987).

Combining the domains of the self and the standpoints on the self, results in six different *self-state representations*. The self-states actual/own and actual/other are equal to a person’s *self-concept* (Wylie, 1979, as cited in Strauman & Higgins, 1987). The other four self-states (namely ideal/own, ideal/other, ought/own, and ought/other) are referred to as *self-guides* (Strauman & Higgins, 1987). Both self-concept and self-guide play an important role in SDT’s motivational assumptions (Higgins, 1989b).

This study focuses on the actual/own and the ought/own standpoint. The significant other who presumedly places expectations on the participant’s self is the participant’s father (or father figure) because the father usually is one of two primary caregivers and he therefore normally plays a major role in the development and socialization of self-guides.

Socialization of Self-Guides. For a self-guide to become dominant or to even develop, interaction between the child and the caregivers is a requirement. These interactions

create psychological situations for the child. Different kinds of psychological situations bear different quality: There are positive and negative situations, and among these there are different kinds of positive and negative situations too (Higgins, 1989a).

First, there are two basic types of positive situations for the child: The presence of positive outcomes and the absence of negative ones (Higgins, 1989a). If the child for example speaks for the first time, the father may applaud and embrace the child, which is a positive outcome for the child. An example for the absence of a negative outcome would be the mother nursing the child after it wept over hunger.

Second, there are also two basic types of negative situations: The absence of positive outcomes as well as the presence of negative outcomes (Higgins, 1989a). The absence of positive outcomes might for example be to deprive the child of needed care. The presence of negative outcomes, on the other hand, could be physical or psychological punishment of the child.

Depending on the parenting styles applied by the caregivers, the child develops a certain dominant self-guide: The presence of negative outcomes is associated with agitation-related emotions, as is the case with an actual-ought discrepancy. The absence of positive outcomes to the contrary leads to dejection-related emotions, just like actual-ideal discrepancy (Higgins, 1987; Higgins, 1989a). Accordingly, children who often experienced punishments (i.e., negative outcomes) by their parents develop a dominant ought self-guide, while children deprived of good things (i.e., positive outcomes) develop a dominant ideal self-guide. In short, which self-guide becomes dominant depends on a child's early experiences with her or his caregiver (Higgins, 1987).

It should also be noted that there are strong cultural differences when it comes to which self-guide is dominant. The actual-ought self-guide is more often dominant in

collectivistic societies such as in many Eastern countries, whereas the actual-ideal self-guide is usually predominant in more individualistic Western societies (Higgins, 2008).

Motivational Assumptions of the SDT. Higgins (1989b) describes two main motivational assumptions of the SDT. First, the SDT distinguishes two different emotional-motivational states. These are caused by the discrepancy between people's self-concept and their self-guide and are determined by the person's dominant self-guide (Higgins, 1989b). One emotional-motivational state is represented by an actual-ideal discrepancy. In this case, the perceived state of the person's actually available attributes does not coincide with the ideally possessed attributes. This represents a negative psychological situation, in which actual or expected positive outcomes are absent. Associated to this situation are dejection-related emotions like sadness, disappointment, and dissatisfaction (Higgins, 1987; Higgins, 1989b). The second emotional-motivational state is represented by an actual-ought discrepancy. The actual-ought discrepancy occurs if the perceived state of the person's actually available attributes does not match the attributes the person feels obliged to possess. This negative psychological situation is associated with the presence of actual or expected negative outcomes. Agitation-related emotions like fear, worry, or tension are the result (Higgins, 1987; Higgins 1989b).

Second, SDT proposes that people are motivated to decrease the discrepancy between their self-concept and their dominant self-guide in order to improve their own wellbeing (Higgins, 1989b). But motivation is not only sparked by the prospect of bettering the own situation: According to the *theory of other-orientation* for example, individuals with high levels of other-orientation prioritize potential consequences for others over the implied consequences for oneself (Meglino & Korsgaard, 2004). Now, even though one key presumption of the concept of actual-ought discrepancy is that individuals care for the wellbeing of others, to my knowledge it has not been investigated yet if this has motivational

implications. Hence, the present study proposes that not only the prospect of increasing the own wellbeing might be motivating, but the prospect of increasing the wellbeing of others too could motivate individuals to decrease actual-ought discrepancies, implying positively impacting the own wellbeing through the wellbeing of others.

Actual-Ought Discrepancy and Social Adjustment. Developmental Psychology provides a further angle to look on self-discrepancies and its motivational character: According to Staudinger and Kunzmann (2005), adults' developmental tasks consist of personal growth and social adjustment. These tasks are similar to the SDT's self-guides: Personal growth is comparable to decreasing actual-ideal discrepancies whereas social adjustment is about "adjusting to the given societal circumstances (i.e., rules, norms, societal expectations)" (Staudinger & Kunzmann, 2005, p. 321), which is similar to reducing actual-ought discrepancies. Put differently, lower levels of actual-ought discrepancy may indicate higher levels of social adjustment. Moreover, just like low levels of actual-ought discrepancy, social adjustment, too, positively impacts subjective wellbeing (Staudinger & Kunzmann, 2005). This means that through social adjustment, people close to a person are impacted positively, which should affect their wellbeing positively. Subsequently this person should be facing less social *friction* which should increase the person's personal wellbeing too (Staudinger & Kunzmann, 2005). Altogether, these similarities might indicate that low levels of actual-ought discrepancy not only impact the own wellbeing directly, but because of the positive impact of the social adjustment, also through the wellbeing of significant others.

Actual-Ought Discrepancy, Wellbeing, and the Father-Child Relationship.

One of the fundamental presumptions of the present study established at the outset of this paper was that the levels of actual-ought discrepancy may impact the own wellbeing through the wellbeing of significant others. As mentioned earlier, the significant other this study focuses on is the participant's father. In other words, it is presumed that the level of

actual-ought discrepancy is related to the own wellbeing and this relation is mediated by the father's wellbeing. Now, it seems reasonable to assume that relationships between father and child vary in a way that impacts this mediating effect. To take this variation into account, a moderated mediation model is proposed: The assumed relation between the level of actual-ought discrepancy and the father's wellbeing should be moderated by the level of *connectedness* between father and child.

Connectedness. Just like the socialization of self-guides, separation-individuation is another developmental process which usually involves the father and starts in early childhood (Blos, 1967).

Separation-individuation is a process that is universal for all humans and reoccurs several times on the road to adulthood. It starts with the child's task to separate psychologically from the mother during early childhood. During this first round of separation-individuation, the child gradually gains independence from the mother's emotional support and physical presence. Normally, this first separation-individuation process is completed at the end of the third year of age, when the psycho-physiological homeostasis of the child is managed by her or his own and object constancy is attained (Blos, 1967).

The second process of separation-individuation starts with the beginning of adolescence. Analogous to the first separation-individuation process, the task of adolescents lies in the reduction of dependencies on others. This time it is not the dependencies on only the mother though, but the dependencies towards the whole family. The goal of this phase is to become a responsible and capable member of society. Additionally, self-esteem and moods ought to become more consistent and more independent from external factors (Blos, 1967).

While Blos (1967) assumed that separation-individuation during adolescence comes with a necessary rebellion against the parents, newer evidence suggests that the frequency of conflict actually declines during adolescence (Laursen et al., 1998). It has been shown that a

stable relationship to the parents is even beneficial to the separation-individuation process (Laursen et al., 1998). Therefore, the goal of separation-individuation is not only reaching independence but also maintaining a stable connection with the parents (Kruse & Walper, 2008).

Emerging Adulthood. Originally, the belief was that the second separation-individuation process is generally completed by the end of adolescence – right before the start of adulthood (Blos, 1967). That might have held true in years past but nowadays, the road of reaching adulthood is prolonged (Arnett, 2000). Thanks to longer educational paths and other delays of normative transactions (e.g., getting married, expecting the first child, or full-time employment) young men and women tend to meet criteria of adulthood later, compared to earlier times (Arnett, 2000). Such criteria are, for instance, being financially independent, shouldering responsibility, and making your own decisions (Arnett, 2014). Further markers of adulthood are being able to provide for, protect, and manage a family, norm compliance, as well as various biological and legal role-transactions (Arnett, 2014; Facio & Micocci, 2003; Mayseless et al., 2003; Sirsch et al., 2009).

Because this delay was unaccounted for in previously existing developmental models, the concept of emerging adulthood was developed (Arnett, 2000). Emerging adulthood describes the span from the age of 18 to 29. This phase is characterized by identity exploration, instability, self-focus, feeling in-between, and the perception that there are a lot of possibilities (i.e., optimism; Arnett, 2000; Arnett, 2006; Arnett, 2014).

All the above is relevant because with the delay of reaching adulthood comes an extension of the second separation-individuation process (Buhl, 2008; Masche, 2008). More precisely, certain tasks of separation-individuation (namely the separation aspect) are already completed at the end of adolescence, while others (the individuation aspects) are tackled for the first time when emerging adulthood begins. Therefore, the process that still has to be

conquered during emerging adulthood can solely be called *individuation* (Komidar et al., 2014).

Individuation. According to Komidar et al. (2014), there are five dimensions that define individuation for emerging adults. *Support seeking, connectedness, self-reliance, intrusiveness, and fear of disappointing the parent.*

Support seeking describes the need of being helped by the parents. That includes verbal as well as a more active form of support (Komidar et al., 2014; Komdar et al., 2019). *Connectedness* means an emerging adult's feeling of equality, trust, security, and open communication in relation to the parent (Komidar et al., 2014). *Self-reliance* is characterized by the extent, to which emerging adults are able to master personal challenges. Low levels of self-reliance come with higher anxiety and uncertainty towards the parent (Komidar et al., 2014). *Intrusiveness* is the perceived intrusion, overdone control and concern by the parent regarding the emerging adult's affairs. High perceived intrusiveness is usually accompanied by stronger feelings of guilt, anxiety mistrust and anger towards the relationship with the parent (Komidar et al., 2014). *Fear of disappointing the parent* is about an emerging adult's fearful expectation of negative reactions by the parent induced by failures in important spheres of the emerging adult's life (Komidar et al., 2014).

The fear of disappointing the parent is an agitation-related emotion similar to the emotional consequences when facing an actual-ought discrepancy. High perceived intrusiveness too is related to agitation-related emotions (Komidar et al., 2014). On the other hand, there are three dimensions which are more about closeness between child and parent, which are subsumed for the purpose of this study as *connectedness*.

People who feel connected more deeply with their fathers and turn to them more frequently when they need help or support are presumably more influenced by their fathers' perceived expectations. Additionally, the father's perceived wellbeing would presumably be

more affected by the actual-ought discrepancy when the child feels a closer connection to her or his father. Overall, it seems reasonable to assume that the connectedness between father and child influences the relation between the child's level of actual-ought discrepancy and the father's perceived wellbeing.

Contribution to Research

Considering the lack of research investigating actual-ought discrepancy and its relation to the wellbeing of others (i.e., the father), the present study's main goal was to take a first look at this relationship. More precisely, this study investigated the mediating role of the father's perceived wellbeing between the child's level of actual-ought discrepancy and her or his own wellbeing. Because it is assumed that reduced levels of actual-ought discrepancies of less connected children do not positively affect their fathers' perceived wellbeing as much as with more connected children, connectedness is investigated as a potential moderating variable of the correlation between the child's level of actual-ought discrepancy and the father's wellbeing. In a nutshell, the study at hand aims to expand the knowledge on how reducing actual-ought discrepancies increases not only the wellbeing of oneself but at the same time potentially increases the wellbeing of significant others.

Research Questions

With the contribution to research in mind, this study revolves around the question of whether the relation between the child's level of actual-ought discrepancy and level of wellbeing is mediated by the father's wellbeing. Additionally, the question is raised if the child's level of connectedness is moderating the beforementioned relationship.

Hypotheses

As established earlier, actual-ought discrepancies might influence an individual's wellbeing (Mason et al., 2019). Hence, there is the motivational character of self-discrepancies that lets us reduce discrepancies in order to improve our wellbeing (Higgins,

1989b). But human beings generally are not only selfishly interested in their own wellbeing, they also care about the wellbeing of significant others, as for example their fathers (Meglino & Korsgaard, 2004). They presumably adjust to their fathers' expectations to please them and to live happier themselves too. Therefore, the first hypothesis goes as follows:

Hypothesis 1: The relation between the level of actual-ought discrepancy and the wellbeing of the subject is partially mediated by the level of wellbeing of the subject's father (Figure 1).

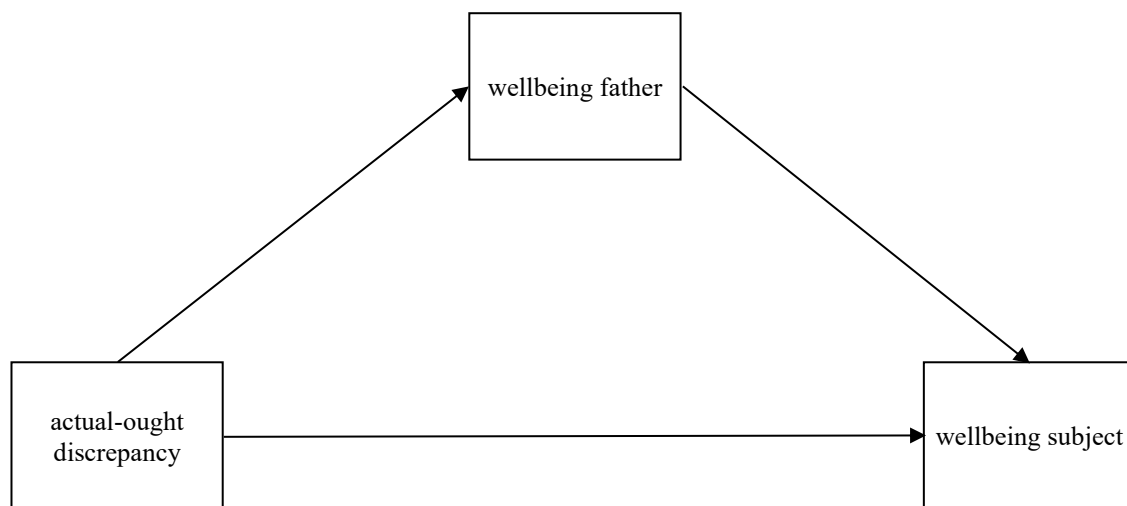


Figure 1. Conceptual model of Hypothesis 1.

As is generally known, the relationships between father and child can vary a lot. One way in which these relationships differ is how closely connected the child is with her or his father (Komidar et al., 2014). While some might be seeking a lot of guidance, possibly considering their fathers' expectations more, there are probably some who feel less connected, caring less about their fathers' expectations. Thus, it is assumed, that the strength of the connection between father and child affects the assumed relation between the child's levels of actual-ought discrepancy and the father's wellbeing (see Figure 2). Consequently, Hypothesis 2 reads as follows:

Hypothesis 2: The in H1 proposed relation between the child's level of actual-ought discrepancy and the father's wellbeing is moderated by the level of connectedness between child and father.

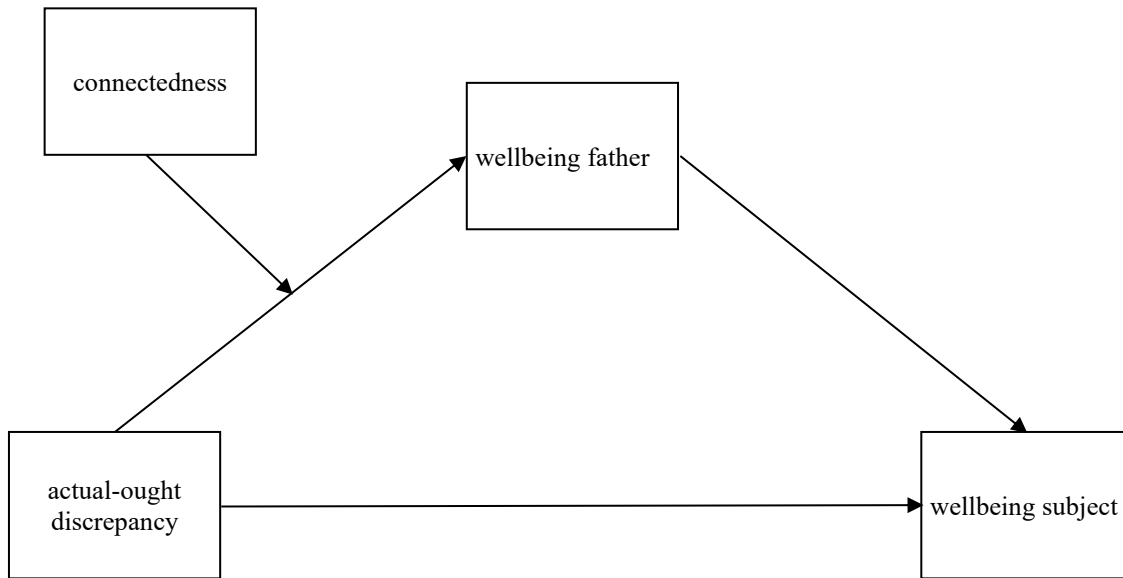


Figure 2. Conceptual model of Hypothesis 2.

Method

Participants

The required sample size for the moderation analysis was calculated a-priori using G*Power. This was accomplished using an F-test (“linear multiple regression: fixed model, R^2 increase”), assuming a small to medium effect size ($f^2 = .04$), with $\alpha = .05$ and $\beta = .80$. This calculation yielded a suggested sample size of 199 participants. For the mediation analysis, a partial mediation with small to medium effects on both the a’ and b’ path was assumed. For this case, Fritz and McKinnon (2007) suggest a sample size of around 150 to 200 participants – depending on the used tests and the expectable effect sizes. In line with the above, a sample size of at least 200 participants was aimed for.

Effectively, a sample of 222 participants was recruited through two major channels. On the one hand, the invitation link was posted in various social media communities (e.g.,

Facebook groups for university students and Facebook groups as well as Reddit communities revolving around topics like parenthood). On the other hand, the link was shared with personal contacts, some of whom additionally forwarded it.

To participate in the study, two prerequisites had to be met. Firstly, participants had to be older than 18 for legal reasons. Secondly, participants needed to have an active relationship to either their biological father or a similar father figure. 96.1% of the participants indicated to have an active relationship to their biological father. The rest mentioned to have father figures like stepfather, foster father, and uncle in their lives.

After excluding 19 participants for failing the attention check, the sample contained 203 participants. Since there were no participants who were unrealistically fast to complete the study (i.e., at least one standard deviation below average) and there was no methodological necessity to complete it without a break, no participants were excluded based on their operation time.

The participants' mean age ranged from 18 to 58 years ($M = 30.14$, $SD = 9.15$) with 78.3% identifying as female, 20.7% identifying as male and 1.0% identifying as diverse. Most participants were Austrian (72.9%) or German citizens (20.7%). 96.1% had at least finished high school, 70.9% also held a university degree. German language proficiency ranged from *very good* to *native speaker* and was therefore not considered impedimental for any participants.

Design and Procedure

This study employed a cross-sectional design, using an online survey via the platform unipark.com (Questback). After consenting to the terms and conditions of participation, participants were informed the topic of the study was the self, wellbeing, and individuation in the context of the father-child relationship. Afterwards, participants answered general demographic questions (e.g., gender, age, level of education) followed by three

questionnaires to assess the levels of individuation, affective wellbeing, as well as self-discrepancies. On average, completing the whole survey took participants 23.68 minutes ($Mdn = 18.23'$).

Materials

Individuation

For assessing the level of individuation, the Individuation Test for Emerging Adults-Short (ITEA-S; Komidar et al., 2019) was used. This short version of the Individuation Test for Emerging Adults (ITEA; Komidar et al., 2014) has already been available and validated in German and consists of 21 items (instead of 36), divided into five scales (see Table 1). Participants rated statements like “He respects my wishes” and “I think he wants to know too much about my friends” on a five-point Likert-scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *strongly agree*).

The five subscales of the ITEA-S are: First, the subscale *support seeking*, which consists of five items and exhibits good reliability ($M = 2.77$, $SD = 0.93$, $\alpha = .86$) in the present study. Second, the *connectedness* subscale, consisting of four items and also exhibiting good reliability ($M = 3.52$, $SD = 0.92$, $\alpha = .87$). The *intrusiveness* subscale consists of five items and shows adequate reliability ($M = 1.61$, $SD = 0.58$, $\alpha = .74$). *Self-reliance* was assessed on a four-item subscale, also showing adequate reliability ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 0.68$, $\alpha = .74$). Lastly, the *fear of disappointing the parent* subscale consists of three items and has good reliability ($M = 2.43$, $SD = 1.00$, $\alpha = .88$) in the present study.

Table 1*The ITEA-S Items in English (Komidar et al. 2014)*

Support Seeking

When I have problems in my relationships with people, I ask him for advice.

When something goes wrong, I call him.

When I am in doubt about important decisions, I turn to him.

When I'm in distress, I turn to him

If I have problems, I usually count on his help.

Connectedness

He respects my wishes.

I like to chat with him.

He understands my problems.

I can talk openly to him.

Self-Reliance

When I have a problem, I try to find a solution without his help.

I can make important decisions without his help.

I can manage most things in my life without his help.

If I have problems in my personal life, I solve them independent of him.

Intrusiveness

I think he wants to know too much about me.

I think he wants to know too much about my friends.

I think he asks too many questions about my work or studies.

I think he tries to control too much of my life.

He asks more questions about my personal life than I want to disclose.

Fear of Disappointing the Parent

When I do something wrong, I worry about his response.

If I had problems at work or school, I would worry that I would disappoint him.

I fear that I could disappoint him.

Note. The items in German are presented in Appendix B.

Wellbeing

Affective wellbeing was assessed using the Scale of Positive and Negative Experience (SPANE; Diener et al., 2009). The scale was translated to German and independently back-

translated to English for verification. The German translation was used, consisting of 12 items, equally divided into two subscales. One subscale assesses the frequency of positive, the other assesses the frequency of negative experiences of the participant over the four weeks prior. Participants rated how frequently they had e.g., “positive” or “angry” experiences on a 5-point Likert-scale (1 = *very rarely or never* to 5 = *very often or always*). The same subscales were adapted for the participants to rate the frequency of positive and negative experiences of their fathers by simply changing the instructions from something like “Please think about what you have been doing and experiencing during the past 4 weeks” to “Please think about what your father has been doing and experiencing during the past 4 weeks”.

The subscale for positive experiences of the participant shows excellent reliability ($M = 3.75$, $SD = 0.67$, $\alpha = .92$) whereas the subscale for negative experiences of the participant exhibits good reliability ($M = 2.50$, $SD = 0.74$, $\alpha = .85$). The adapted subscales for positive and negative experiences of the father show similar reliability ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 0.76$, $\alpha = .91$ and $M = 2.42$, $SD = 0.76$, $\alpha = .84$, respectively). Both subscales were combined to form the affect balance, as suggested by Diener et al. (2009).

Self-Discrepancy

Actual-Ought Discrepancy. The extent of the actual-ought self-discrepancy was assessed using an adapted version of the Self-Discrepancy Scale (S-DS; Philippot et al., 2018). The scale was adapted in that it first was translated and back-translated, and secondly the person who serves as the source of the ought-self is explicitly said to be the participants’ fathers. Moreover, participants were asked to state five desired attributes and five undesired attributes. With the introduction of this scale comes a list of traits and the appeal to think about what attributes the participants think their fathers would want them to possess.

Additionally, participants are asked to what extent they think they possess each attribute on a slider ranging from 0 to 100 (for the German version used see Appendix A).

The reliability for this subscale is given to an adequate extent in the present sample ($M = 66.24$, $SD = 17.10$, $\alpha = .73$). The same task was given with traits they think their fathers would not want them to possess. For this subscale, reliability is given to a good extent ($M = 31.51$, $SD = 20.29$, $\alpha = .81$). After these two tasks, participants answered two more items on a 7-point Likert-scale, to assess their actual-ought discrepancy on a global level and to assess how much this discrepancy distresses them.

Actual-Ideal Discrepancy. The S-DS was also used to assess the extent of participants' actual-ideal discrepancy. For that purpose, the wording of the introductions was adapted, the rest stayed the same as for assessing the level of actual-ought discrepancy (for the German version used see Appendix A). In this study, the subscale describing to what extent one possesses the attributes one would ideally like to possess, reached adequate reliability ($M = 62.50$, $SD = 16.74$, $\alpha = .75$). The other subscale, regarding the traits one would ideally not like to possess, too exhibited adequate reliability ($M = 30.62$, $SD = 17.80$, $\alpha = .73$).

Attention Check and Common Scale Formats

Additionally, an attention check item ("To make sure whether you read the questions thoroughly, please select *strongly disagree*.") and an item to control for common method variance (CMV; "How often does your father use public transport?", with a Likert-scale similar to the one used by the SPANE: 1 = *very rarely or never* to 5 = *very often or always*) have been employed.

Common Method Variance. Because two of the scales used feature 5-point Likert-scales, there was need for controlling for the CMV. As suggested by Podsakoff et al. (2003), different scale endpoints were used in both the ITEA-S and the SPANE (different wording

and inverted poles). Additionally, the marker variable without relevancy to and unrelated to the studied topic has been employed, as suggested by Lindell and Whitney (2001). Including the marker variable in the models did not take away any of the by the variance, explained by the other variables. Common method variance therefore is not considered problematic in this analysis.

Data Analysis

For data analysis, R (Version 4.1.0; R Core Team, 2022) was used. For reliability analyses of all measures, the package psych (version 2.2.5; Revelle, 2022) was used. The two hypotheses were tested applying a mediation and a moderated mediation model to the data, using the PROCESS function by Hayes (2012; version 4.1.) For various other tasks, like data preparation and visualization, the following packages were used: data.table (version 1.14.2; Dowle et al., 2021), ggplot2 (version 3.3.6; Wickham, 2016), effects (version 4.2-2; Fox, 2003), plyr (version 1.8.7; Wickham, 2011), car (version 3.0-13; Fox & Weisberg, 2019), QuantPsyc (version 1.5; Fletcher, 2012), and ggiraphExtra (version 0.3.0; Keon-Woong, 2020). The Pearson correlation coefficient of all relevant measures has been calculated using apaTables (version 2.0.8; Stanley, 2021).

Results

Preliminary Analysis

Table 2 reports descriptive statistics as well as Pearson's correlations between all important measures in this study. As expected, the levels of actual-ought discrepancy and the wellbeing of father were correlated negatively, $r(201) = -.32, p < .01$. As also expected, the levels of actual-ought discrepancy were negatively correlated to the wellbeing of the subject, $r(201) = -.31, p < .01$. The level of connectedness, which served as the moderating variable in the following analysis, was found to be negatively correlated to the levels of actual-ought discrepancy, $r(201) = -.42, p < .01$, and positively correlated to the father's and subject's

wellbeing, $r(201) = .40, p < .01$ and $r(201) = .17, p < .05$, respectively. Furthermore, the wellbeing of the father and the subject were correlated positively, $r(201) = .32, p < .01$, also as anticipated. Finally, the levels of actual-ought and actual-ideal discrepancies were correlated positively, $r(201) = .43, p < .01$.

Table 2

Means, standard deviations, and correlations with confidence intervals

Measures	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4
1. Actual-ought discrepancy	0.00	0.85				
2. Wellbeing father	1.03	1.37	-.32** [-.44, -.19]			
3. Wellbeing subject	1.25	1.31	-.31** [-.43, -.18]	.32** [.19, .43]		
4. Connectedness	2.74	0.73	-.42** [-.53, -.30]	.40** [.28, .51]	.17* [.03, .30]	
5. Actual-ideal discrepancy	0.00	0.78	.43** [.31, .53]	-.15* [-.28, -.01]	-.42** [-.53, -.30]	-.08 [-.22, .06]

Note. *M* and *SD* are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively. Values in square brackets indicate the 95% confidence interval for each correlation. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

Results of the Mediation Hypothesis (H1)

It first was hypothesized, that the relation between the level of actual-ought discrepancy and the wellbeing of the subject is partially mediated by the level of wellbeing of the subject's father. To test Hypothesis 1, the PROCESS function (Hayes, 2012) for R was used (model 4). Bootstrap estimates from 10000 bootstrapped samples were used to generate bias-corrected confidence intervals (CI) to test significance (Shrout & Bolger, 2002).

The level of actual-ought discrepancy was entered as the independent variable, whilst the wellbeing of the subject was entered as the dependent variable, with the wellbeing of the father as the mediator. Age and gender were included as covariates. Table 3 shows the results

of testing the mediation hypothesis: The total effect of the level of actual-ought discrepancy on the subject's wellbeing was significant, $b = -0.48$, $SE = 0.10$, 95% CI (-0.69 to -0.28).

Consistent with the hypothesis, the indirect effect of the level of actual-ought discrepancy via the level of the father's wellbeing was significant on the wellbeing of the subject, $b = -0.15$, $SE = 0.05$, 95% CI (-0.26 to -0.07). Additionally, the direct effect of the level of actual-ought discrepancy on the subject's wellbeing was significant as well, $b = -0.33$, $SE = 0.11$, 95% CI (-0.54 to -0.12). For a summary of the mediation model with its path coefficients, see Figure 3.

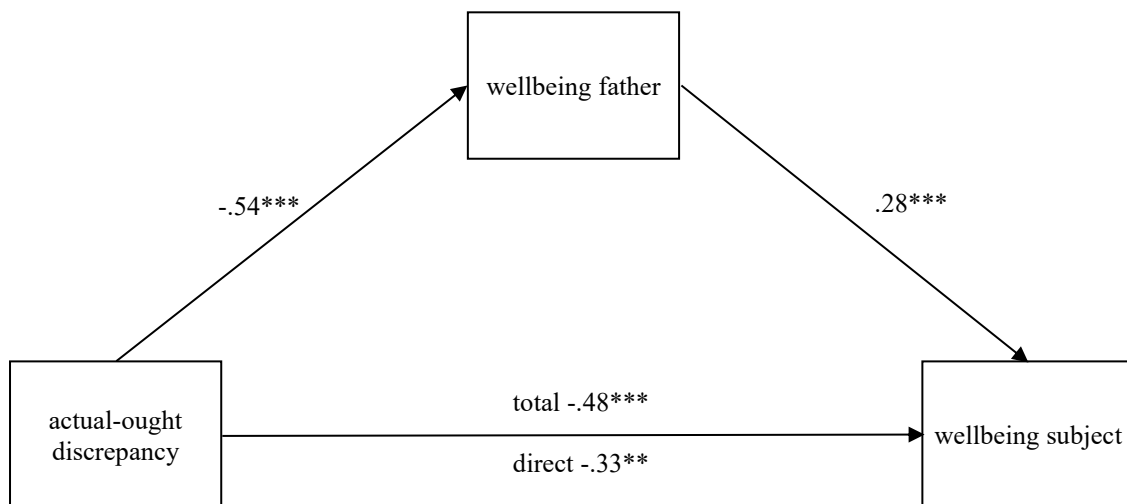


Figure 3. Summary of the results of testing Hypothesis 1.

Table 3

Results of mediation hypothesis (H2)

Mediator	Predictor variable: AOD Dependent variable: WBS			
	Indirect effect		Direct effect	
	95% CI		95% CI	
	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
WBF	-0.26	-0.07	-0.54	-0.12

Note. The Bootstrap 95% confidence intervals (CI; Lower and Upper Bounds) reported. The effect is significant when the CI does not include zero. Bold font indicates statistical significance. AOD = actual-ought discrepancy. WBF = wellbeing of father. WBS = wellbeing of subject.

Results of the Moderated Mediation Hypothesis (H2)

Hypothesis 2 read as follows: The proposed relation between the child's level of actual-ought discrepancy and the father's wellbeing is moderated by the level of connectedness between child and father. To test Hypothesis 2, again the PROCESS function (Hayes, 2012) was used (model 7). Bootstrap estimates from 10000 bootstrapped samples provided bias-corrected confidence intervals (CI) to test significance (Shrout & Bolger, 2002). Moreover, the independent variable and moderator were mean centered.

Similar as for analysing the first hypothesis, the level of actual-ought discrepancy was the independent variable, with the wellbeing of the subject as the dependent variable, and the wellbeing of the father as the mediator. Additionally, like before, age and gender were included as covariates. What differentiated this model from the model testing H1 was the variable *connectedness*, which was entered as the moderating variable of the relation between the independent (actual-ought discrepancy) and the mediator (father's wellbeing) variable.

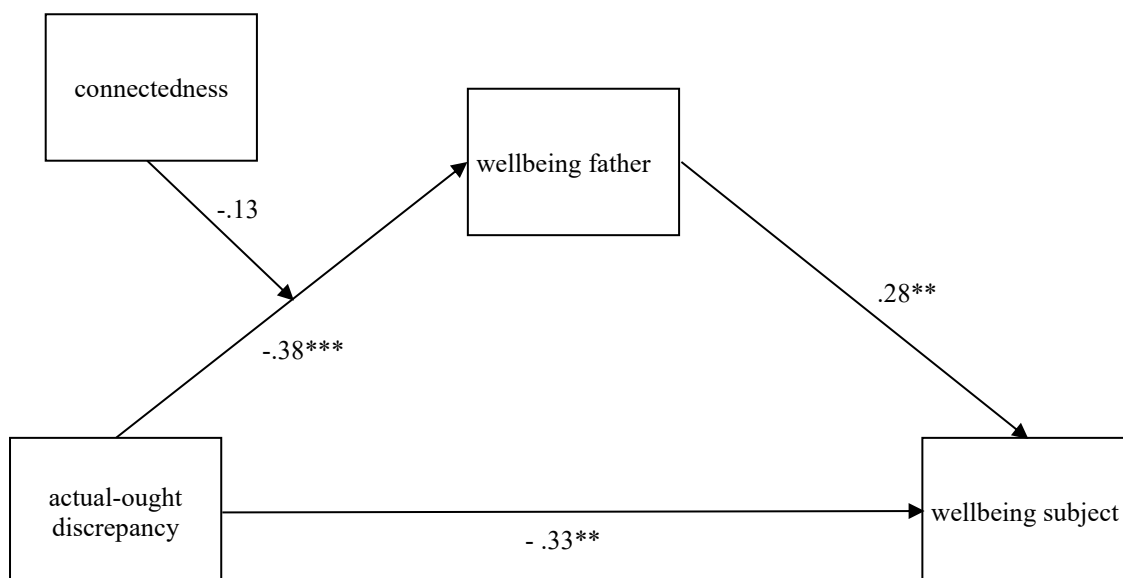


Figure 4. Summary of the results of testing Hypothesis 2.

In contrast to the expectations, as shown in Table 4, the output of the linear regression analysis did not indicate a significant interaction between the level of actual-ought discrepancy and connectedness, $b = -0.13$, $t = -1.04$, $p = .300$ (see Figure 4 and 5). In line with the regression output, Table 5 shows that the moderated indirect effect was not significant, $b = -0.03$, $SE = 0.04$, 95% CI $(-0.12 \text{ to } 0.03)$. Therefore, no support for Hypothesis 2 was found.

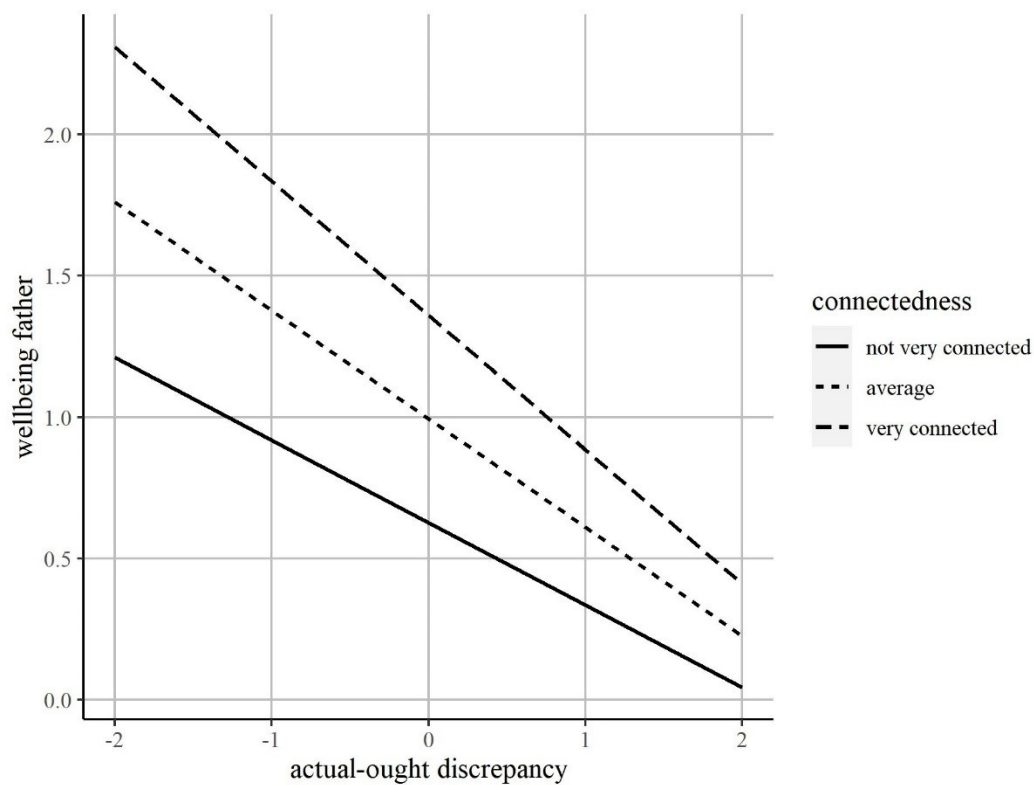


Figure 5. The interaction between actual-ought discrepancy and closeness on the father's wellbeing.

Table 4

Regression results of PROCESS for the influence of actual-ought discrepancy and closeness (H3).

Predictor variables	Outcome variables: Wellbeing					
	WBF			WBS		
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>
Controls						
Age	-0.04	0.01	0.000	0.02	0.01	0.056
Gender	-0.16	0.19	0.410	0.08	0.19	0.679
AOD	-0.38	0.11	0.000	-0.33	0.11	0.002
Closeness	0.50	0.13	0.000			
AOD X closeness	-0.13	0.12	0.300			
WBF				0.28	0.07	0.000

Note. Unstandardized coefficients presented from the estimated models. AOD = actual-ought discrepancy. WBF = wellbeing of father. WBS = wellbeing of subject.

Table 5

Results of moderated mediation hypothesis (H3)

Mediator	Predictor variable: AOD Dependent variable: WBS Moderator: closeness			
	Moderated indirect effect		Direct effect	
	95% CI		95% CI	
	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
WBF	-0.12	0.03	-0.54	-0.12

Note. The Bootstrap 95% confidence intervals (CI; Lower and Upper Bounds) reported. The effect is significant when the CI does not include zero. Bold font indicates statistical significance. AOD = actual-ought discrepancy. WBF = wellbeing of father. WBS = wellbeing of subject.

Complementary Analyses

Discriminant Validity

In addition to the main analyses, I looked into the discriminant validity of actual-ought and actual-ideal discrepancy in the data. To do so, the mediation model was calculated again. The same variables were used: actual-ought discrepancy as the independent variable,

wellbeing of the subject as the dependent variable, and wellbeing of the father as the mediator. Covariates were age and gender, this time adding actual-ideal discrepancy as an additional covariate. The results can be seen in Figure 6: The total effect of the model is still significant, $b = -0.25$, $SE = 0.11$, 95% CI (-0.47 to 0.04). The non-significant direct effect of the level of actual-ought discrepancy on the subject's wellbeing, $b = -0.12$, $SE = 0.11$, 95% CI (-0.33 to 0.10), indicates that including the level of actual-ideal discrepancy to the model takes away a lot of the variance initially explained by the level of actual-ought discrepancy. The indirect effect stays significant, $b = -0.14$, $SE = 0.05$, 95% CI (-0.24 to -0.05), suggesting actual-ought discrepancy is solely responsible for explained variance of the mediated relation between actual-ought discrepancy and the subject's wellbeing.

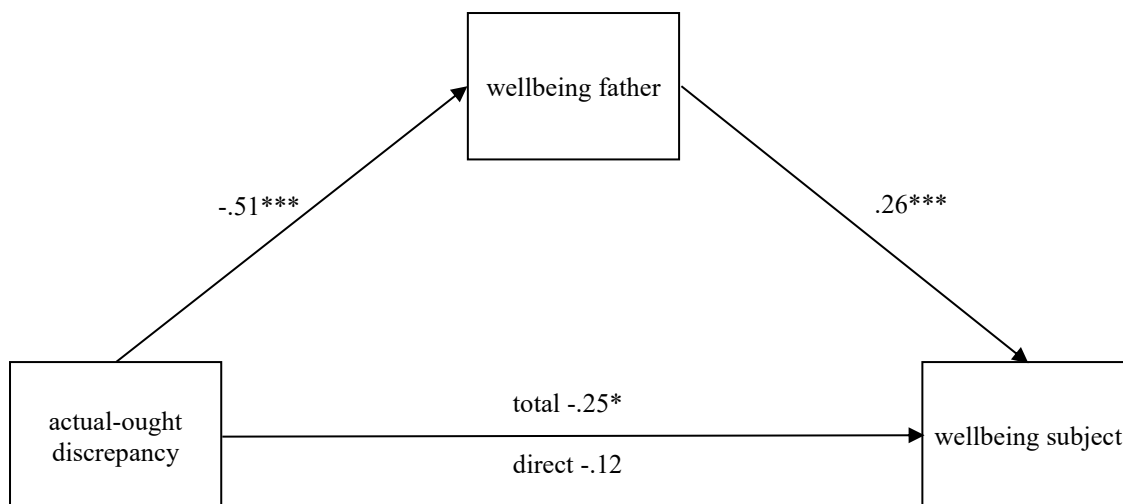


Figure 6. Summary of the results of analysing the discriminant validity between actual-ought and actual-ideal discrepancy.

Direction of the Model

The theoretical derivation of the model suggested that the level of actual-ought discrepancy is the independent variable and the subject's wellbeing the dependent variable. To put this assumption to the test, the same mediation model as used for Hypothesis 1 was calculated, only with interchanged independent and dependent variables (Figure 7). Results show a still significant but smaller total effect, $b = -0.20$, $SE = 0.04$, 95% CI (-0.29 to -0.12),

direct effect, $b = -0.14$, $SE = 0.04$, 95% CI (-0.23 to -0.05), and indirect effect, $b = -0.06$, $SE = 0.02$, 95% CI (-0.11 to -0.03), than in the initial model. This finding strengthens the assumption of the initial model with actual-ought discrepancy as the independent and subject's wellbeing as the dependent variable.

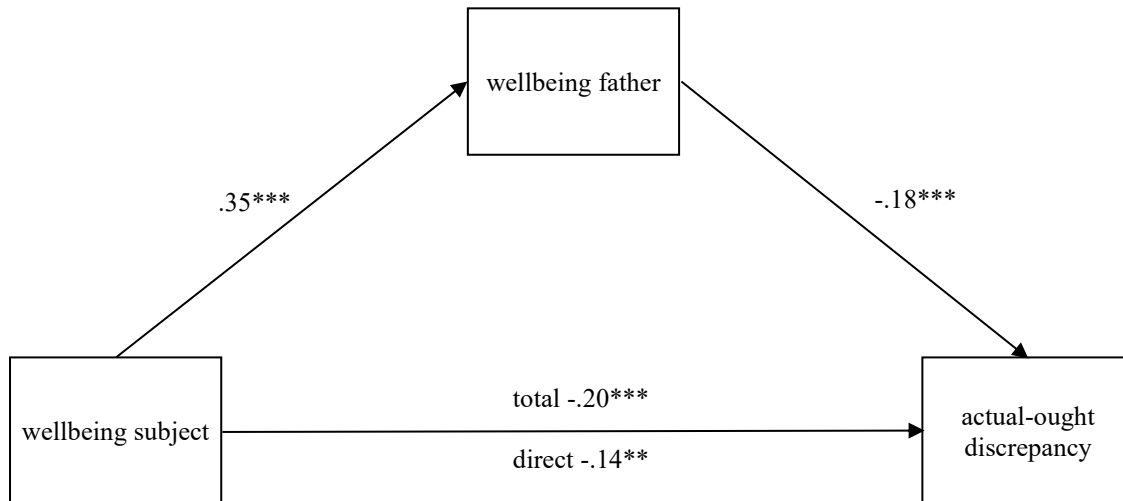


Figure 7. Summary of the results of analysing the mediation model with interchanged IV and DV.

Exploratory Analyses

Since there was no support found for the moderation of the relation between actual-ought discrepancy and the father's wellbeing by the connectedness between father and child, I additionally explored different moderated mediation models. Again, PROCESS (Hayes, 2012) was used to calculate the models, with bootstrap estimates from 10000 bootstrapped samples providing bias-corrected confidence intervals (CI) to test significance (Shrout & Bolger, 2002).

Firstly, a model (PROCESS model number 14; see Figure 8) was tested with actual-ought discrepancy as the independent variable, the subject's wellbeing as the dependent variable and the father's wellbeing as the mediator variable. In this first model, connectedness was the assumed moderating variable of the relation between the father's and the subject's wellbeing. The results show a significant direct effect, $b = -0.33$, $SE = 0.11$, 95%

CI (-0.56 to -0.11), as well as significant moderated mediation, $b = -0.09$, $SE = 0.05$, 95% CI (-0.19 to -0.01). Furthermore, the interaction term between the father's wellbeing and connectedness on the subject's wellbeing was significant, $b = 0.16$, $t = 2.07$, $p = .050$ (Figure 9).

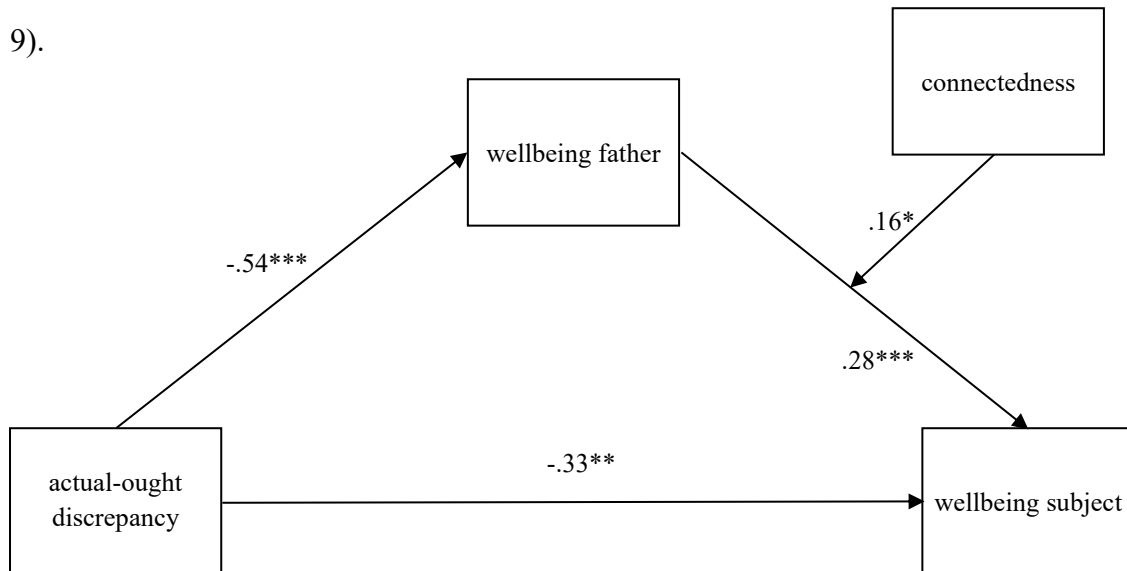


Figure 8. Summary of the results of analysing the moderated mediation model with connectedness moderating the relation between the father's and the subject's wellbeing.

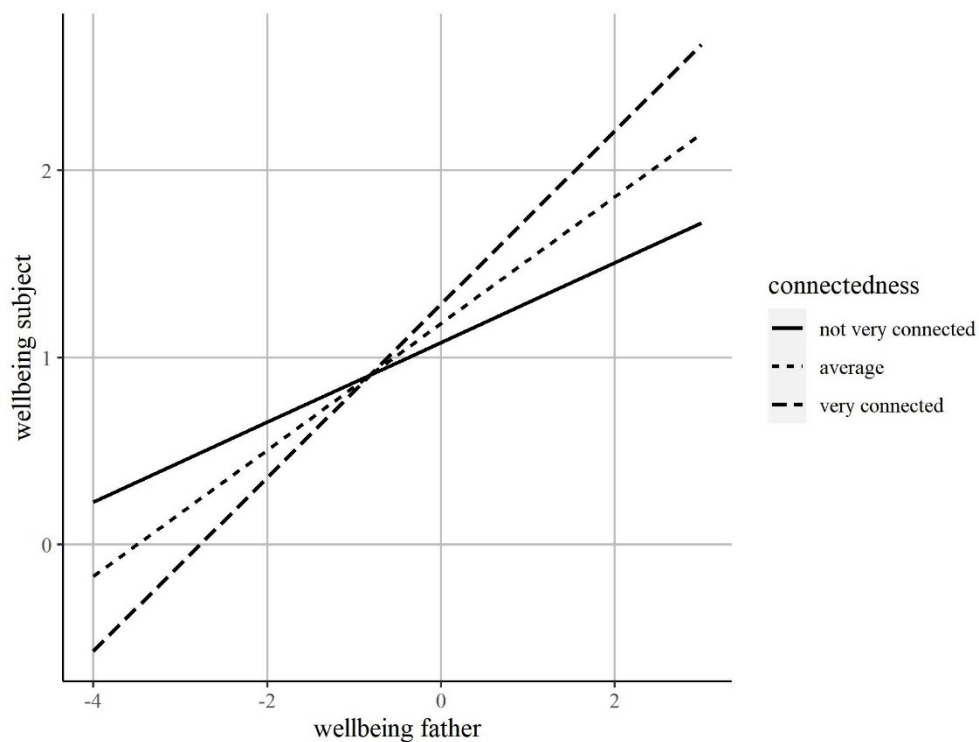


Figure 9. The interaction between the father's wellbeing and connectedness on the subject's wellbeing.

For the second model tested (PROCESS model number 5; see Figure 10) the same variables were used as in the model before, with only the moderator (connectedness) changing its place within the model. This time, connectedness was the assumed moderating variable of the relation between the level of actual-ought discrepancy and the subject's wellbeing. The results showed a significant indirect effect, $b = -0.14$, $SE = 0.05$, 95% CI (-0.25 to -0.06), a significant direct effect, $b = -0.40$, $SE = 0.12$, 95% CI (-0.63 to -0.18), and a significant interaction term between actual-ought discrepancy and connectedness on the subject's wellbeing, $b = -.38$, $t = -3.12$, $p = .002$ (see Figure 11).

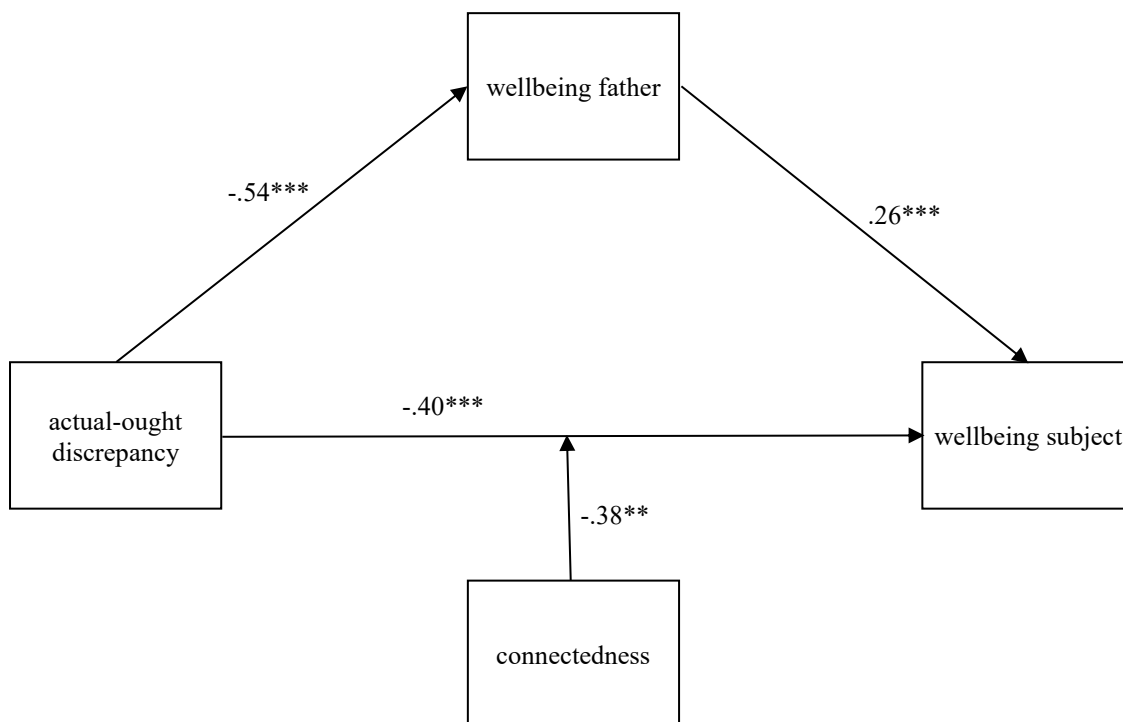


Figure 10. Summary of the results of analysing the moderated mediation model with connectedness moderating the relation between the actual-ought discrepancy and the subject's wellbeing.

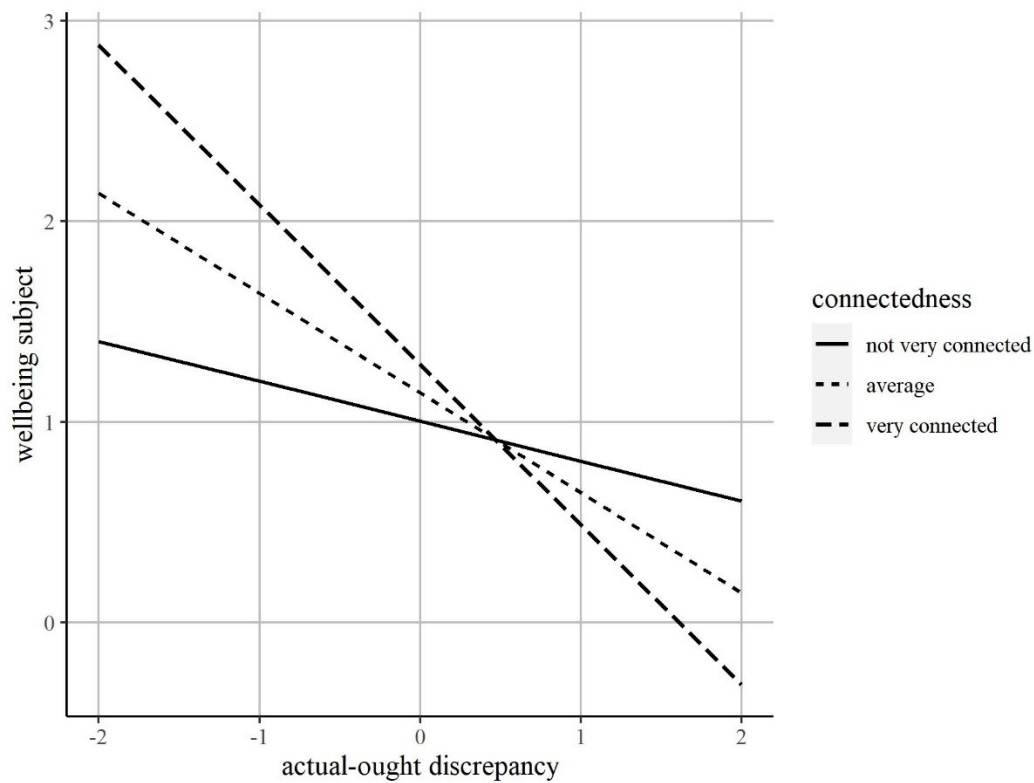


Figure 11. The interaction between the level of actual-ought discrepancy and connectedness on the subject's wellbeing.

Discussion

Nowadays, individuals are focused on themselves more than ever (Santos et al., 2017). Similarly, research efforts seem concentrated on the effects self-discrepancies have on the own wellbeing (e.g., Higgins, 1987; Mason et al., 2019). To my knowledge, possible positive effects of low self-discrepancies on others have not been subject to any other studies before. However, this question is important, because human beings are social beings who care not only about their own wellbeing but also about the wellbeing of (significant) others (e.g., Meglino & Korsgaard, 2004; Staudinger & Kunzmann, 2005).

Generally speaking, one significant other in the live of most people are their fathers. They usually play important roles when it comes to many developmental processes, for example the socialisation of the self-guide (Higgins, 1989a). So, while the father is actively shaping the child's development when it is younger, during emerging adulthood the focus

shifts. Starting with the age of 18, one major developmental task for the child lies in establishing an independent identity whilst forging and maintaining a healthy relationship with the father (Buhl, 2008; Komidar et al., 2014; Masche, 2008). But not everyone succeeds in this task equally, leading to differences in the quality of the father-child relationship (Komidar et al., 2014).

The developed self-guides differ too (Higgins, 1987), depending on the earlier interactions with the father amongst other primary caregivers (Higgins, 1989a). While some people end up being focused on their ideal self, others value their ought self more (Higgins, 1987). In any case, reaching the ideal or ought selves is a motivating force, probably because of the improved subjective wellbeing after reducing self-discrepancies (Higgins, 1987). But that might not be all that is to it: Indeed, the perception of actual-ought discrepancies can be regarded as an important regulator of behavior to strengthen the adjustment of the individual to the expectations of the social environment and the society. In other words, we do not only care about others' wellbeing but actively adapt to make them happier, which in turn should make ourselves happier too (Staudinger & Kunzmann, 2005). Thus, it seems only natural to look at this question through the lens of SDT as well: Are there positive effects of low levels of actual-ought discrepancy on others? Accordingly, this study investigated whether the already shown relation between the self-discrepancy and the personal wellbeing might be partially mediated by the father's wellbeing.

In accordance with expectations, the relation between the level of actual-ought discrepancy and the personal affective wellbeing was partly mediated by the wellbeing of the father. Although, the observed direct effect of actual-ought discrepancy on the subject's wellbeing was correspondent with previous studies (Mason et al., 2019), this is still a very important finding as it is the first time it has been shown that actual-ought discrepancies do not only affect the subjective wellbeing directly, but also do so through the wellbeing of a

significant other, in this case, the father. It should be noted here that the father's wellbeing was not his actual wellbeing, but the father's perceived wellbeing, through the eyes of the participant. While one may see this as a limitation of this study, the point can be made that it is indeed not a limitation, since the participants' ought self was also about what they perceived they should be like, not what their fathers actually wanted them to be like.

Another aspect taken into account by this study is the aforementioned fact that relationships between father and child differ in quality. To be more specific, one way in which the relationships differ is how connected the child feels to the father (Komidar, 2014). Therefore, the second major objective of this study was to investigate whether connectedness moderates the proposed relationship between the level of actual-ought discrepancy and the father's wellbeing. However, there was no significant moderation of the relation between the level of actual-ought discrepancy and the father's wellbeing. In other words, I did not observe the father's wellbeing being less affected by the level of actual-ought discrepancy, when father and child are less connected.

One possible explanation for not finding a significant interaction between the level of actual-ought discrepancy and connectedness on the father's wellbeing, might be that the interaction had been assumed in the wrong place. Therefore, I conducted further analyses investigating the possibility of connectedness moderating any of the other relations of the mediation model instead. Interestingly, the analyses showed just that: In both models the interaction term got significant. The strongest moderation effect was observed in the model with connectedness moderating the relation between actual-ought discrepancy and the subject's own wellbeing. Which means high levels of actual-ought discrepancy correlated negatively with the personal affective wellbeing and the strength of this negative correlation depends on how connected you are to your father. In other words, if I am not very connected to my father, my level of actual-ought discrepancy does not affect my wellbeing as much.

Though smaller, the second model indicated a similar moderating effect on the relation between the father's and the subject's wellbeing. This means the wellbeing of the father is stronger correlated to the child's wellbeing when the two are more connected.

The latter moderation of the relation of the father's and child's wellbeing is coherent with previous findings where mimicry and emotional contagion was stronger with higher social closeness of the subjects (Elfenbein, 2014; Gump & Kulik, 1997; Likowski et al., 2007). One plausible explanation for the former observed moderation of the relation between the level of actual-ought discrepancy and the subject's wellbeing could be a decreasing importance of the ought-self when father and child are less connected. But there was only a small correlation between connectedness and the actual-ought-discrepancy-induced stress level, $r(201) = .16, p = 0.019$. So, while the moderated relation between actual-ought discrepancy and the subject's wellbeing seems to make sense from a lay point of view, further research is necessary to explain the underlying mechanisms of this relation.

Relevance

This study was a small step in countering the alleged bias of western research efforts towards the ought-self. Admittedly, it might make some sense to focus on the ideal-self as a scientist in an individualistic part of the world (Bochner, 1994). It also might seem reasonable to think that one should worry less about what others expect and focus more on what one wants for her- or himself. Nevertheless, humans are social beings and they do care deeply about the expectations and the wellbeing of others too. Accordingly, the findings of this study were able to show that even in an individualistic country like Austria, the ought-self plays an important role in relation to our own wellbeing, the perception of our fathers' wellbeing, and our relationships with our fathers. These findings could bear useful implications for professionals in the field of psychotherapy as well as for lay people interested in self-development and mindfulness as they give valuable insights in the complex relations between

self, individuation, and wellbeing. In any case, the research on this has just started and much more of it is needed to provide a clearer picture of the underlying mechanisms.

Limitations and Further Research

One of the biggest limitations is the cross-sectional study design. Cross-sectional studies come on the one hand, with increased practicability but on the other hand, also limit the possible conclusions. While an experimental study or an interventional study usually allows to deduce causal connection, cross-sectional data only allows for correlational conclusions. Future research might consider experimental or longitudinal designs in order to get to the bottom of causalities and useful interventions.

As already mentioned above, one other possible limitation of this study is the rating of the fathers' wellbeing. This decision has been made intentionally, as it would have been economically unrealistic to find the required number of participants *and* get each of their fathers to participate as well. While there are many known flaws in both self-reported measures and peer ratings, (e.g., social-desirability bias, halo bias; see for example, Epkins, 1994; Holtgraves, 2004; Krumpal, 2011), the used wellbeing questionnaire has been validated for self-reporting usage only. Therefore, it cannot be said with any certainty whether the questionnaire measured the actual wellbeing of the fathers or just their perceived wellbeing. In any case, a point can also be made for intentionally using the fathers' perceived wellbeing, since for the child, it should not really matter whether the father is actually happy, as long as the child thinks the father is happy in order to affect the child's own happiness.

Another limitation concerns the measure of the actual-ought discrepancy. On the one hand, the used instrument did not allow to measure what self-guide is dominant for each participant. The reason for that is that every item would have had to be weighted in order to make conclusions on whether the ideal- or the ought-self is more important. This is not featured in the S-DS (Philippot et al., 2018) and therefore, the instrument would have needed

to be newly validated after adding such a rating. However, this was not within the scope of this study. On the other hand, the values of actual-ought and actual-ideal discrepancy correlated to such an extent ($r(201) = .43, p < 0.01$) that it cannot be said with certainty that the two separate constructs were measured and not some mixed form. Further analysis however, showed, that the ideal-discrepancy might take away a big portion of the by the ought-discrepancy directly explained variance of the subject's wellbeing, though at the same time the indirect effect of actual-ought discrepancy via the father's wellbeing on the subject's wellbeing was almost not affected at all. This might be interpreted as actual-ideal and actual-ought discrepancy being similar in their direct effect on the own wellbeing, but when it comes to affecting the wellbeing through others, the two discrepancies are two separated constructs.

Since the survey already took the participants a lot of time, for reasons of practicability and because affective wellbeing has already been shown to be correlated with self-discrepancies (Mason et al., 2019), no other dimensions of wellbeing (e.g., cognitive wellbeing or collective wellbeing) have been included in this study. This limits the generalizability of the results to only the affective wellbeing. Future research might incorporate those as well as cultural background information to test whether there are cultural differences.

Finally, there were not enough male and diverse participants to investigate any gender differences, which would have been interesting, because of the already shown effect of gender on connectedness (Zupančič et al, 2014). Moreover, because of the high levels of education the sample was not representative of the Austrian population, which limits the generalizability of the study's findings on a small Austrian subpopulation.

In conclusion, future research efforts may comprise better measurement tools and methods as well as a more representative sample. Furthermore, other predictor and moderator variables might be of interest.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Survey

Fragebogen

1 Informed Consent

Liebe Teilnehmerin, lieber Teilnehmer,

herzlichen Dank für Ihre Bereitschaft, an dieser Studie für meine Masterarbeit teilzunehmen. Sie wird im Rahmen des **Instituts für Arbeits-, Wirtschafts- und Sozialpsychologie der Universität Wien** durchgeführt.

Im Rahmen dieser Studie beschäftigen wir uns mit Diskrepanzen im Selbstbild und den Zusammenhängen mit Wohlbefinden und Individuation, im Kontext der Vater-Kind-Beziehung. Ihre Aufgabe wird es sein, einige kurze Fragen zu Ihrem und Ihres Vaters Wohlbefinden, Ihrer Individuiertheit und Ihrem Selbstbild zu beantworten.

Die Studie wird ungefähr **10-15 Minuten** dauern.

Es ist für uns wichtig, dass Sie alle Fragen beantworten. Wenn Sie sich bei einer Frage nicht ganz sicher sind, kreuzen Sie einfach das Feld an, das am ehesten zutrifft. Es geht um Ihre persönliche Einschätzung, es gibt keine richtigen oder falschen Antworten.

Die Studie dient **ausschließlich wissenschaftlichen Zwecken**. Alle Informationen, die wir von Ihnen erhalten, werden **vertraulich behandelt und anonymisiert ausgewertet**, sodass keine Rückschlüsse auf Ihre Person möglich sind.

Die Teilnahme an dieser Studie ist **freiwillig**, Sie können sie jederzeit und ohne Begründung abbrechen. Eine Löschung Ihrer Antworten zu einem späteren Zeitpunkt ist nicht möglich.

Ich habe die oben genannten Informationen gelesen und verstanden und erkläre mich mit den Teilnahmebedingungen einverstanden.

Außerdem bin ich mindestens 18 Jahre alt.

- ☐ Ja
☐ Nein

1.1.1 Consent

Danke für Ihre Zeit!

Fenster schließen

2 Father Figure

In dieser Studie werden Sie einige Fragen zu Ihrem Vater beantworten.

Sollten Sie keine Beziehung zu Ihrem leiblichen Vater haben, denken Sie bitte stattdessen an eine Person, die einer Vaterfigur am nächsten kommt.

- ☐ Ich habe eine Beziehung zu meinem leiblichen Vater
☐ Ich habe andere Vaterfigur in meinem Leben und zwar:
☐ Ich habe keine Vaterfigur in meinem Leben

2.1.1 Vaterfigur

Danke für Ihre Zeit!

Leider werden Sie die nachfolgenden Fragen nicht beantworten können.

Fenster schließen

3 Demographie

Im Folgenden stellen wir Ihnen einige Fragen zu Ihrer Person.

Welches Geschlecht haben Sie?

- ☐ weiblich
☐ männlich
☐ anderes

Welche Staatsangehörigkeit haben Sie?

Mehrfachauswahl möglich.

- ☐ Deutsch
☐ Österreich
☐ Schweiz
☐ andere EU
☐ Andere Nicht-EU

Ist Deutsch ihre Muttersprache?

- ☐ Ja
☐ Nein

Wenn Deutsch nicht Ihre Muttersprache ist, wie gut sprechen Sie deutsch?

- ☐ So gut wie meine Muttersprache
☐ Sehr gut
☐ Gut
☐ Mäßig
☐ Nicht so gut
☐ Sehr schlecht

Wie alt sind Sie?

Bitte geben Sie ihr Alter in 2 Ziffern an (z.B. 57).

Alter

Welchen Familienstand haben Sie?

- ☐ Ich bin in einer Beziehung
☐ Ich bin verheiratet oder in einer eingetragenen Partnerschaft
☐ Ich bin ledig
☐ Ich bin geschieden
☐ Ich bin verwitwet

Welchen höchsten allgemeinbildenden Schulabschluss haben Sie?

- ☐ Ich bin ohne Abschluss von der Schule abgegangen
☐ Ich habe einen Abschluss einer Pflichtschule (z.B. Hauptschule oder entsprechende Stufe einer anderen Schulform)
☐ Ich habe einen Realschulabschluss oder einen vergleichbaren Abschluss
☐ Ich habe einen Abschluss einer Fachschule oder berufsbildenden Schule
☐ Ich habe die allgemeine oder fachgebundene Hochschulreife / Abitur / Matura oder die Fachhochschulreife
☐ Ich habe einen Universitäts- oder Fachhochschulabschluss (Bachelor, Master, Diplom, Magister, Lizentiat, Staatsexamen, Promotion, Habilitation oder andere)
☐ Ich habe einen anderen Schulabschluss und zwar

4 ITEA-S

Bitte geben Sie im Folgenden an, inwiefern die Aussagen in Bezug auf Ihren Vater zutreffen.

	sehr unzutreffend	unzutreffend	teils-teils	zutreffend	sehr zutreffend
Er respektiert meine Wünsche.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ich glaube, dass er zu viel über mich wissen will.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wenn ich Probleme in meinen Beziehungen mit anderen habe, frage ich ihn um Rat.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wenn ich etwas falsch mache, mache ich mir Sorgen um seine Reaktion.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Ich glaube, dass er zu viel über meine Freunde/Freundinnen wissen möchte.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wenn etwas schief geht, rufe ich ihn an.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wenn ich in meiner Ausbildung oder in der Arbeit Probleme hätte, dann hätte ich Angst ihn zu enttäuschen.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	sehr unzureichend	unzureichend	teils-teils	zureichend	sehr zureichend
Wenn ich bei wichtigen Entscheidungen Zweifel habe, dann wende ich mich an ihn.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ich mag es mit ihm zu plaudern.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wenn ich ein Problem habe, dann versuche ich ohne seine Hilfe zu einer Lösung zu finden.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ich denke, dass er mir zu viele Fragen zu meiner Arbeit oder meiner Ausbildung stellt.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ich kann wichtige Entscheidungen ohne seine Hilfe treffen.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Er versteht meine Probleme.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ich habe Angst, ich könnte ihn enttäuschen.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	sehr unzureichend	unzureichend	teils-teils	zureichend	sehr zureichend
Wenn ich in Not bin, wende ich mich an ihn.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ich denke, dass er zu viel Kontrolle über mein Leben ausübt.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ich komme ohne seine Hilfe zurecht.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ich kann offen mit ihm reden.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wenn ich persönliche Probleme habe, löse ich diese unabhängig von ihm.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Er fragt mich mehr Privates, als ich preisgeben möchte.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wenn ich Probleme habe, verlasse ich mich gewöhnlich auf seine Hilfe.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	sehr unzureichend	unzureichend	teils-teils	zureichend	sehr zureichend
Um zu sehen, dass Sie die Fragen aufmerksam lesen, wählen Sie hier bitte "unzureichend".	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5 SPANE subject

Nun denken Sie bitte daran, was Sie in den letzten vier Wochen gemacht und erlebt haben.

Geben Sie an, wie oft Sie jedes der folgenden Gefühle in den letzten 4 Wochen erlebt haben.

	sehr selten oder nie	selten	manchmal	oft	sehr oft oder immer
Positiv	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Negativ	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Gut	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Schlecht	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Angenehm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Unangenehm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Glücklich	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Traurig	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ängstlich	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fröhlich	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wütend	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Zufrieden	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

6 haltime_praise

Sie sind bereits bei der Hälfte - vielen Dank!

7 perspective_shift

Als nächstes versuchen Sie sich bitte vorzustellen, wie es **Ihrem Vater** in den letzten vier Wochen vermutlich ergangen sein wird.

8 SPANE father

Nun denken Sie bitte daran, was **Ihr Vater** in den letzten vier Wochen vermutlich gemacht und erlebt hat.

Geben Sie an, wie oft **er** jedes der folgenden Gefühle Ihrer Einschätzung nach in den letzten 4 Wochen erlebt hat.

	sehr selten oder nie	selten	manchmal	oft	sehr oft oder immer
Positiv	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Negativ	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Gut	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Schlecht	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Angenehm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Unangenehm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Glücklich	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Traurig	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ängstlich	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fröhlich	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wütend	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Zufrieden	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Wie häufig nutzt Ihr Vater öffentliche Verkehrsmittel?

	sehr selten oder nie	selten	manchmal	oft	sehr oft oder immer
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

9 SD-S ideal

Bitte denken Sie für einen Moment nach und erstellen Sie eine Liste mit den Eigenschaften, die Sie idealerweise besitzen wollen würden (unabhängig davon, ob Sie glauben, dass Sie diese besitzen).

Falls Sie dabei Hilfe benötigen, finden Sie hier eine Liste mit einigen Beispiels-Eigenschaften:

aggressiv	hinterlistig	ruhig
ambitioniert	indiskret	scharfsinnig
autoritär	kindisch	schlau
beleidigend	klarsichtig	schlicht
berechnend	klug	schroff
bescheiden	knausrig	schüchtern
boshaft	komisch	sentimental
brillant	konformistisch	spirituell
dankbar	kreativ	stur
diskret	kultiviert	süß
dominant	künstlerisch	tolerant
effektiv	lässig	töricht
ehrlich	lebendig	überschwänglich
eigensinnig	lebhaft	unabhängig
einzelgängerisch	leichtfertig	unberechenbar
eitel	listig	unehrlich
empfindlich	logisch	unempfindlich
energisch	lustig	uninteressiert
enthusiastisch	methodisch	unordentlich
ernst	moderat	unterhaltend
faul	modern	unterwürfig
fies	modisch	unverträglich
fleißig	moralisch	unvoreingenommen
folgsam	nachahmend	unzuverlässig
gefestigt	neidisch	verächtlich
geistreich	nett	verletzlich
gutgläubig	neugierig	vernünftig
gütig	neurotisch	verträglich
hart	pessimistisch	vorlaut

herablassend	philosophisch	vorsichtig
heruntergekommen	radikal	wohlwollend
herzlich	raffiniert	zuverlässig
hilfsbereit	respektlos	zwanghaft

In den ersten fünf Feldern tragen Sie bitte Eigenschaften ein, die Sie besitzen wollen. In den letzten fünf, die die sie *nicht* besitzen wollen.

Geben Sie bitte für jede Eigenschaft an, zu wie viel Prozent Sie sie besitzen.

Bei den erwünschten Eigenschaften ist der ideale Wert 100%.
Beispiel: Wenn Sie idealerweise großzügig wären und Sie denken, dass Sie die Eigenschaft zu 80% besitzen, bitte schreiben Sie in die entsprechenden Spalten *großzügig* und *80*.

Bei den unerwünschten Eigenschaften ist der ideale Wert 0%.
Beispiel: Wenn Sie idealerweise nicht geizig wären, Sie aber denken, die Eigenschaft zu 20% zu besitzen, schreiben Sie bitte in die entsprechenden Spalten *geizig* und *20*.

Eigenschaft, die ich gerne besitzen würde:

Eigenschaft, die ich gerne besitzen würde:

Prozentsatz, zu dem ich dieses Ideal erfülle:

Betätigen Sie den Schieberegler

Eigenschaft

Eigenschaft, die ich gerne besitzen würde:

Prozentsatz, zu dem ich dieses Ideal erfülle:

Eigenschaft

Eigenschaft, die ich gerne besitzen würde:

Prozentsatz, zu dem ich dieses Ideal erfülle:

Eigenschaft

Eigenschaft, die ich gerne besitzen würde:

Prozentsatz, zu dem ich dieses Ideal erfülle:

Eigenschaft

Eigenschaft, die ich gerne besitzen würde:

Prozentsatz, zu dem ich dieses Ideal erfülle:

Nun tragen Sie bitte die Eigenschaften ein, die sie **NICHT** besitzen möchten.

Eigenschaft, die ich nicht besitzen möchte:

Eigenschaften, die ich nicht besitzen möchte:

Prozentsatz, zu dem ich dieses Eigenschaft trotzdem besitze:

Eigenschaft:

Eigenschaften, die ich nicht besitzen möchte:

Prozentsatz, zu dem ich dieses Eigenschaft trotzdem besitze:

Eigenschaft:

Eigenschaften, die ich nicht besitzen möchte:

Prozentsatz, zu dem ich dieses Eigenschaft trotzdem besitze:

Eigenschaft:

Eigenschaften, die ich nicht besitzen möchte:

Prozentsatz, zu dem ich dieses Eigenschaft trotzdem besitze:

Eigenschaft:

Eigenschaften, die ich nicht besitzen möchte:

Prozentsatz, zu dem ich dieses Eigenschaft trotzdem besitze:

Wie groß ist der insgesamte Unterschied zwischen Ihrer Idealvorstellung und Ihrer eigenen Selbsteinschätzung?

☐ Ich fühle mich sehr nahe am Ideal

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐
☐ Ich fühle mich sehr fern vom Ideal

Wie stark bekümmert Sie dieser Unterschied?
☐ Der Unterschied bekümmert mich nicht

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐
☐ Der Unterschied bekümmert mich sehr

10 perspective_shift_2

Achtung: Die nächste Aufgabe unterscheidet sich von der eben abgeschlossenen. Bitte lesen Sie die Anweisungen aufmerksam.

Danach haben Sie es geschafft!

11 SD-S ought

Bitte denken Sie für einen Moment nach und erstellen Sie eine Liste mit den Eigenschaften, die von Ihnen von Ihrem Vater erwartet werden (unabhängig davon, ob Sie glauben, dass Sie diese besitzen).

Falls Sie dabei Hilfe benötigen, finden Sie hier eine Liste mit einigen Beispiels-Eigenschaften:

aggressiv	hinterlistig	ruhig
ambitioniert	indiskret	scharfsinnig
autoritär	kindisch	schlau
beleidigend	klarsichtig	schlicht
berechnend	klug	schroff
bescheiden	knausrig	schüchtern
boshaft	komisch	sentimental
brillant	konformistisch	spirituell
dankbar	kreativ	stur
diskret	kultiviert	süß
dominant	künstlerisch	tolerant
effektiv	lässig	töricht
ehrlich	lebendig	überschwänglich
eigensinnig	lebhaft	unabhängig
einzelgängerisch	leichtfertig	unberechenbar
eitel	listig	unehrlich
empfindlich	logisch	unempfindlich
energisch	lustig	uninteressiert
enthusiastisch	methodisch	unordentlich
ernst	moderat	unterhaltend
faul	modern	unterwürfig
fies	modisch	unverträglich
fleißig	moralisch	unvoreingenommen
folgsam	nachahmend	unzuverlässig
gefestigt	neidisch	verächtlich
geistreich	nett	verletzlich
gutgläubig	neugierig	vernünftig
gütig	neurotisch	verträglich
hart	pessimistisch	vorlaut

herablassend	philosophisch	vorsichtig
heruntergekommen	radikal	wohlwollend
herzlich	raffiniert	zuverlässig
hilfsbereit	respektlos	zwanghaft

In den ersten fünf Feldern tragen Sie bitte Eigenschaften ein, die Ihr Vater von Ihnen erwartet. In den letzten fünf, die die er *nicht* an Ihnen schätzen würde.

Geben Sie bitte für jede Eigenschaft an, zu wie viel Prozent Sie sie besitzen.

Bei den erwünschten Eigenschaften ist der ideale Wert 100%.

Beispiel: Wenn Ihr Vater Großzügigkeit von Ihnen erwartet und Sie denken, dass Sie die Eigenschaft zu 80% besitzen, bitte schreiben Sie in die entsprechenden Spalten *großzügig* und *80*.

Bei den unerwünschten Eigenschaften, ist der ideale Wert 0%.

Beispiel: Wenn Ihr Vater an Ihnen nicht mag, dass Sie geizig sind, Sie aber denken, die Eigenschaft zu 20% zu besitzen, schreiben Sie bitte in die entsprechenden Spalten *geizig* und *20*.

Eigenschaft, die ich laut meinem Vater besitzen sollte:

Prozentsatz, zu dem ich dieses Ideal erfülle:

Betätigen Sie den Schieberegler

Eigenschaft

Eigenschaft, die ich laut meinem Vater besitzen sollte:

Prozentsatz, zu dem ich dieses Ideal erfülle:

Eigenschaft

Eigenschaft, die ich laut meinem Vater besitzen sollte:

Prozentsatz, zu dem ich dieses Ideal erfülle:

Eigenschaft

Eigenschaft, die ich laut meinem Vater besitzen sollte:

Prozentsatz, zu dem ich dieses Ideal erfülle:

Eigenschaft

Eigenschaft, die ich laut meinem Vater besitzen sollte:

Prozentsatz, zu dem ich dieses Ideal erfülle:

Nun tragen Sie bitte die Eigenschaften ein, die sie laut ihrem Vater **NICHT** besitzen sollten.

Eigenschaft, die ich laut meinem Vater nicht besitzen sollte:

Eigenschaft, die ich laut meinem Vater nicht besitzen sollte:

Prozentsatz, zu dem ich dieses Eigenschaft besitze:

Eigenschaft:

Eigenschaft, die ich laut meinem Vater nicht besitzen sollte:

Prozentsatz, zu dem ich dieses Eigenschaft besitze:

Eigenschaft:

Eigenschaft, die ich laut meinem Vater nicht besitzen sollte:

Prozentsatz, zu dem ich dieses Eigenschaft besitze:

Eigenschaft:

Eigenschaft, die ich laut meinem Vater nicht besitzen sollte:

Prozentsatz, zu dem ich dieses Eigenschaft besitze:

Eigenschaft:

Eigenschaft, die ich laut meinem Vater nicht besitzen sollte:

Prozentsatz, zu dem ich dieses Eigenschaft besitze:

Wie groß ist der insgesamt Unterschied zwischen der Idealvorstellung Ihres Vaters über Sie und Ihrer eigenen Selbsteinschätzung?

☐ Ich fühle mich sehr nahe am Ideal

☐
☐
☐
☐

☐☐ Ich fühle mich sehr fern vom Ideal**Wie stark bekümmert Sie dieser Unterschied?**☐ Der Unterschied bekümmert mich nicht☐☐☐☐☐☐ Der Unterschied bekümmert mich sehr

12 Endseite**Vielen Dank für Ihre Teilnahme!**

Die Studie ist nun beendet, Sie können das Browserfenster nun schließen.

Ziel dieser Studie ist es zu untersuchen, wie sich Diskrepanzen im Selbstbild auf das Wohlbefinden des sozialen Umfelds - in dem Fall dem des Vaters - auswirken.

Die Hypothese wäre, dass sich ein geringes Level an Diskrepanzen im Selbstbild positiv auf das Wohlbefinden des Vaters auswirkt. Dabei vermuten wir Zusammenhänge und Moderationseffekte mit dem Level an Individuation der Studienteilnehmerinnen und -teilnehmer, also dem Level an Eigenständigkeit / Abhängigkeit vom Vater.

Ziel ist es, Licht auf die teils komplizierten Verhältnisse zwischen Kindern und ihren Vätern zu werfen. Dazu haben Sie einen wertvollen Beitrag geleistet - danke!

Falls Sie weitere Fragen haben oder sich für die Studienergebnisse interessieren, wenden Sie sich bitte an: Simon Obereder, a01509944@unet.univie.ac.at.

Fenster schließen

Appendix B: Deutsche Zusammenfassung

Zahlreiche Studien haben untersucht, wie das Erreichen individueller Ziele zum persönlichen Wohlbefinden beiträgt. Dennoch ist wenig darüber bekannt, wie das Erreichen individueller Ziele das Wohlbefinden beeinflusst. Tatsächlich kann die Wahrnehmung von *actual-ought* Diskrepanzen als ein wichtiger Regulator gesehen werden, der Menschen dazu motiviert, mehr nach den Erwartungen anderer zu handeln. Deshalb scheint die Annahme legitim, dass die Höhe der *actual-ought* Diskrepanzen sowohl mit dem eigenen Wohlbefinden korreliert, da eine geringe Höhe davon die Wahrscheinlichkeit von stressvollen Konflikten reduziert, als auch gleichzeitig das Wohlbefinden anderer beeinflusst, was wiederum das eigene Wohlbefinden beeinflussen sollte. Deswegen wurde in dieser Querschnittsstudie ($n = 203$) untersucht, ob der Zusammenhang von der Stärke der *actual-ought* Diskrepanz und dem persönlichen, affektivem Wohlbefinden vom Ausmaß des Wohlbefindens des eigenen Vaters teilweise mediiert wird. Darüber hinaus wurde getestet, ob dabei der Grad der Verbundenheit zwischen Vater und Kind einen moderierenden Effekt hat. Zwar stützen die Ergebnisse der Studie die Annahme der Mediationshypothese, die Hypothese, dass der Zusammenhang zwischen *actual-ought* Diskrepanz und des Vaters Wohlbefinden von dem Grad der Verbundenheit moderiert wird, konnte jedoch nicht gezeigt werden. Die Ergebnisse weiterer, explorativer Analysen wiederum, zeigten einen signifikanten Moderationseffekt von Verbundenheit auf einerseits dem Zusammenhang zwischen der Höhe der *actual-ought* Diskrepanz und dem Wohlbefinden der Studienteilnehmer:innen und andererseits dem Zusammenhang zwischen dem Wohlbefinden der Väter und dem Wohlbefinden der Studienteilnehmer:innen. Diese unerwarteten Befunde verlangen nach weiterer Forschung in diesem Gebiet, um die komplexen Beziehungen zwischen Selbstdiskrepanzen, Wohlbefinden und der Qualität der Vater-Kind Beziehung besser zu verstehen.

Appendix C: Curriculum Vitae

Name: Simon Obereder

Born: January 9th, 1996, Linz

Nationality: Austria

Education

since 2021	Psychotherapeutisches Propädeutikum, APG Wien
since 2020	Master's degree in Psychology, University of Vienna
2019 – 2020	Bachelor's degree in Communication Science (not finished), University of Vienna
2016 – 2020	Bachelor's degree in Psychology, University of Vienna
2017	Fall semester as an exchange student at Washington & Jefferson College, PA, USA
2015 – 2016	Bachelor's degree in Biology (not finished), University of Vienna
2010 – 2014	Highschool, Adalbert Stifter Gymnasium (focus on natural sciences), Linz