Psychological Richness and Difficulty:
Degrees of difficulty of movies and coursework predict psychological richness

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INTRO: What is a psychological rich life?

Happy Life	Meaningful Life	Psych. Rich Life
Features		
Comfort	Significance	Variety, Interest
Joy	Purpose	Perspective-Change
Security	Coherence	
Facilitators		
Money, Time, Relationships, Positive mindset	Moral principles, Consistency, Relationships	Curiosity, Time, Energy, Spontaneity
Outcomes		
Personal Satisfaction	Societal contribution	Wisdom
Measures		
SLWS, PA	MLQ	PRLQ

(Table was adapted from Oishi & Westgate, 2021)

- **Complex and Perspective-changing experiences**
  - Previous findings: Study abroad; escape room; artistic engagement predicted psychological richness.
  - Study 1- Are ratings of movies affected by the complexity of movies?
  - Study 2- Do students really experience psychological richness from taking complex coursework?

METHODS

- **Study 1**
  - Natural-language processing on 14,775 movie reviews
  - Concept mover's distance measures a semantic distance between a conceptual word ('difficulty') and a text ('review')

- **Study 2**
  - 247 UVA students
  - Predictors: Perceived Difficulty
  - Mediators: reflection, Aha/insight
  - Outcomes: Happiness, Meaning, <u>Richness</u>

When people rate mystery movies, they highly rated a movie when it was difficult
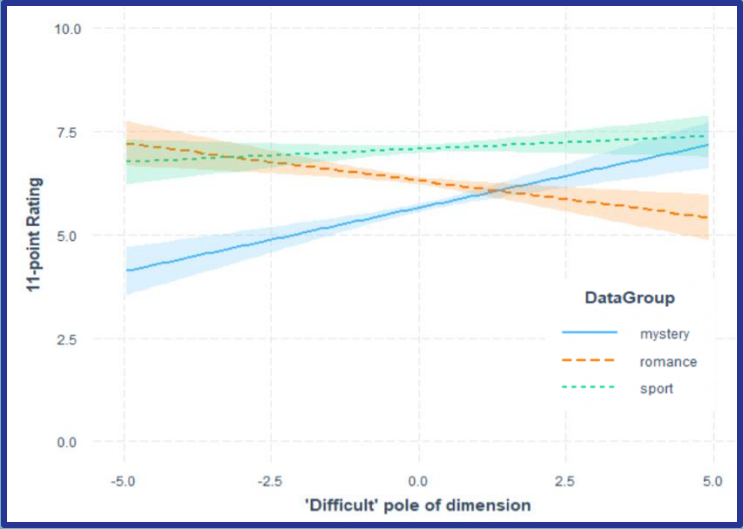
b = .06, SE = .03, t = 2.00, p =.045

Coursework difficulty predicted felt psychological richness, via perspective-changing experiences

	B (SE)	t	df	p
Coursework-level variables				
(Intercept)	.71	.14	245	.89
Difficulty	.03	3.34	1075	<.001**
Happiness	.03	2.57	1075	.01*
Meaning	.03	16.17	1075	<.001**
Reflection	.03	16.17	1075	<.001**
Aha	.03	-.22	745	.83
Individual-level variables				
# Class	.02	-.25	190	.80
Age	.03	-.14	243	.89
Female	.08	.83	208	.41
SES	.03	-.55	212	.58
Conservatism	.02	-.61	208	.54
Big5: Openness	.07	1.55	213	.12
Big5: Conscientiousness	.07	-.09	215	.93
Big5: Extroversion	.05	-.53	207	.60
Big5: Agreeableness	.07	.38	222	.70
Big5: Neuroticism	.04	.37	213	.71

Note: Mean # Class was 5.29; SD was 1.69. Survey was done in late Nov. 2021, when participants were still taking the coursework
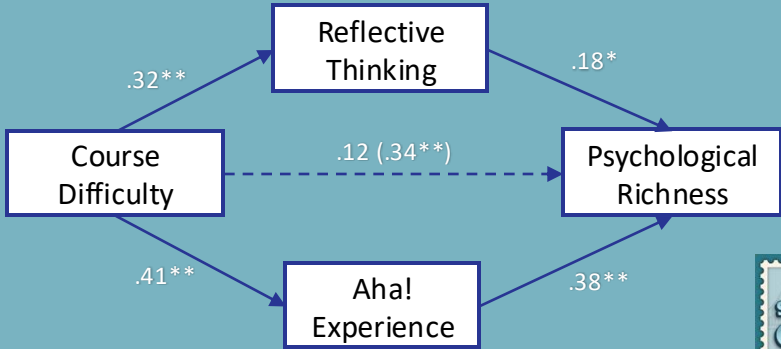
DISCUSSION

- Study 1 used a pseudo-document that aggregates vector differences between antonym pairs (i.e., "difficult", "complex", "confusing" vs. "easy", "simple", "clear").
- Study 2 show that the coursework difficulty predicted psychological richness in students which was not correlated with, # Coursework, Age, Gender, Race, SES, Political Conservatism.
- In terms of "richness" study, this study provides a unique predictor (perspective-changing experience).
- in terms of well-being study, we can extend the life experiences including difficult/complex ones, and say they are also constituting a good life.

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