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**Influence of Cognitive Fatigue, Personality and Mood on choices
of fictitious charity organizations**

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Abstract. The purpose of the current study was to examine how cognitive fatigue, personality factors and mood influence economical decision making in a fictitious single choice setting. Participants ($N=57$) were divided into two groups, one of which completed a personality inventory, whereas the other was instructed to watch a short video clip thought to be relaxing. Current mood was measured in both groups. Results imply a significant correlation between choice of charity organization and mood, level of cognitive fatigue and two personality facets. Subsequent discussion focuses on possible explanations of above mentioned relationships, as well as study limitations and future research.

The basic definition of an economic choice consists of a situation in which an individual is presented with more than one option and subsequently settles for one of these alternatives, based on his or her subjective evaluation (Padoa-Schioppa & Assad, 2006). The rapid progress of research concerning economic behavior have resulted in an interdisciplinary field of study, for example investigating the influence of gender, culture, generation and neural mechanisms on economic decision making (Churchill & Pavay, 2013; Mathur, Guiry, & Tikoo, 2008; Frydman & Camerer, 2016; Sar, 2013;). Evidence also suggests that inducing a certain mood in an individual has been seen to alter economic choices (Stanton, Reeck, Huettel & LaBar, 2014), personality traits appears to correlate with behavior in economic decision games (Clark, Thorne, Vann & Cropsey, 2014) and cognitive fatigue tends to result in inconsistent economic decisions (Mullette-Gillman, Leong & Kurnianingsih, 2015).

The objective of the present study is to contribute to current knowledge regarding the impact of mood, personality and cognitive fatigue on choices of economical nature. Hereafter, the present state of research concerning these relationships will be given a more comprehensive presentation. Consequently, methodology, results and discussion of a study conducted to test these relationships in a novel setting will follow.

Cognitive fatigue, decisions made with depleted mental resources

Cognitive fatigue can be defined as a depletion of mental resources severe enough to affect certain cognitive operations, such as decision making and information processing (Kostek & Ashrafion, 2013; Ma, Corell, Wittenbrink, Bar-Anan & Nosek, 2013; Mullette-Gillman et al., 2015). Thus, cognitive fatigue is separated from physical fatigue due to its psychological basis and function. Cognitive fatigue can be perceived as an everyday consequence of a demanding societal pace (Mullette-Gillman et al., 2015). Additionally, cognitive fatigue is a common symptom of several clinical and non-clinical physical conditions,

such as ageing (Holtzer, Shuman, Mahoney, Lipton & Verghese, 2011), traumatic brain injury (Clark et al., 2016) and multiple sclerosis (Barak & Achiron, 2006).

The implications of cognitive fatigue appears to be easily adapted to a practical setting. In a simulation of a potential violent situation, Ma and colleagues (2013) found a racial bias that increased among cognitively fatigued participants. In a similar real-life high-stress work situation, Parhizi, Steege and Pasupathy (2012) conducted a multi-factorial analysis among healthcare nurses, with results indicating mental as well as physical fatigue being linked to psychological capability. Relatedly, fatigued critical care nurses have been reported to show increased levels of decision regret (Scott, Arslanian-Engoren & Engoren, 2013). From a theoretical viewpoint, expanding current knowledge about cognitive fatigue is eligible to create a more productive climate within research regarding decision making and choice. As cognitive fatigue is not a bias, but rather a state, it constitutes a third variable in discussions of rational choice. Additionally, cognitive fatigue has been argued to be unsuitable for the dualistic approach to decision making, which consists of a quick and heuristically based “system 1” and a contrasting slow and calculating “system 2” (Johnson, 2008). From a neuroscientific perspective, cognitive fatigue has received attention due to linkage with self-control, and offers yet another way to study neural correlates of executive functions (Blain, Hollard & Pessiglione, 2015). Being in a state of cognitive fatigue appears to resemble the normal status of patients with damage to the ventromedial frontal lobe, which previously has been linked to economic valuation (Henri-Bhargava, Simioni & Fellows, 2012). Comparing results from fMRI-scans, participants in a heavy fatigue-inducing condition showed a significant decrease in activation in the lateral prefrontal cortex compared to controls (Blain et al., 2015). Such discoveries stresses the point that cognitive fatigue contains a strong link between psychological and neurological functions.

The main probe into how cognitive fatigue might influence economic decision making consists of a 2015 study conducted by Mullette-Gillman and colleagues. Using a between-subjects experimental design, the authors reports an increased test-retest variability in participants assigned to the fatigue condition in regards to an economic decision making task, administrated before and after the manipulation. These results indicate that cognitive fatigue acts as a disruptor of decision consistency, possibly decreasing decision quality according to the authors. No support was found for the initial hypothesis of the study, which formulated that an increased level of cognitive fatigue alters preference under uncertainty and choice strategy. The authors conclude that additional research should focus on expanding knowledge regarding which cognitive processes may interfere, and in what way, with economic decision making in a state of cognitive fatigue (Mullette-Gillman et al., 2015).

Personality, choice and decision making

Personality has been found to influence decision making in a variety of ways. Inquiries regarding the effect of personality on economic decisions have predominantly relied on the method of economic games (Clark et al., 2014; Nguyen et al., 2011; Zhao & Smillie, 2015). Derived from the experimental economic branch of game theory, such economic tasks, although uncomplicated in nature, is believed to reflect the complex social environment in which individuals make their daily decisions, providing high ecological validity (Sanfey, 2007). The results of such studies have been inconsistent, but of high interest due to the fact that personality clearly appears to influence decision and choice in an economic setting. The research situation

is complicated due to the issue of scientists applying different methods and instruments of measuring personality. In order to present a more concrete sense of the methods used, the ultimatum game serves as a good example. The game usually consists of two participants, a proposer and a responder. The proposer suggests a distribution of a given monetary sum (e.g. 60-40 % in favor of the proposer). The role of the responder is to either accept this proposal, or reject it, in which case the sum is lost and neither participant receives anything (Güth, Schmittberger & Schwarze, 2005). Thus, the rational option would be for responders to accept every offer, no matter how unfair, that is proposed in order to maximize gains (Chung, Lee, Jung & Kim, 2016). Using this experimental paradigm, researchers have found a significant difference in accepting the proposal due to the responders set of personality traits (Clark et al., 2014; Brandstätter & Königstein, 2001; Swope, Cadigan, Schmitt & Shupp, 2008).

In conclusion, although numerous studies have been conducted to explore the relationship between personality and economic decision making in the context of economic games, no definite consensus has yet been achieved. Inconsistent results can be exemplified by a study conducted by Takahashi and coworkers (2012), in which the results indicate personality traits commonly linked to a low tendency to reject proposals displayed an opposite relationship. Influence of personality on economic decision making has been investigated using methodology not derived from game theory as well. In a study examining correlations between economic environment and personality with financial decision making, personality was found to have a higher influence on decision regret than economic environment (Xiao, Wang & Liu, 2009). Personality traits furthermore seem to correlate with household financial behavior, specifically a correlation between the “big five” personality inventory trait extraversion, and an increased tendency to possess some form of uncertain debt in British households (Brown & Taylor, 2013). As with correlations found using game theory methods, the evidence of a personality variable influencing economic decisions shows an inconclusive but promising area of study.

Impact of mood on economic behavior

Similarly to examinations concerning personality influence on economic decision making, the ultimatum game has been exercised to find mood determinants of economic behavior. The central theme is to establish whether negative or positive affect can predict fair or unfair behavior in the game setting (Harlé & Sanfey, 2007). Results suggest that an induced mood of sadness can be linked to a higher rate of dismissing unfair offers (i.e. a distribution favoring the proposer), in contrast to a positive mood being linked to increased cooperation (Harlé & Sanfey, 2007; Mellers, Haselhuhn, Tetlock, Silva & Isen, 2010). In an attempt to induce negative or positive mood through the use of music, Chung, Lee, Jung and Kim (2016) found participants in the negative mood condition showed a significantly higher tendency to reject unfair offers in the ultimatum game setting compared to individuals in the positive mood condition, although they did not manage to capture this effect using subjective assertions of the current mood of the participants. In a different research environment, mood has been reported to predict decisions in an auction situation, slightly influencing willingness to pay, as well as displaying a relationship between a state of positive mood and an increase in upwards bidding bias (Capra, Lanier & Meer, 2010). However, positive mood does not necessarily result in an increased rational reasoning, but rather a more extensive tendency to cooperate (Capra, Lanier & Meer, 2010; Nguyen et al., 2011). Evidence also suggests that several emotional biases can

be related to decisions in the financial market, specifically through the affect heuristic resulting in a spill-over effect, whereas a positive or negative affective perception of a certain market escalates the tendency to focus on positive attributes of said market (Hedesström, 2015). In conclusion, a positive mood seems to promote trust (e.g Lount, 2010), rather than encouraging rational decision making. Indeed, Stanton and colleagues (2014) reported that inducing a positive mood resulted in a heightened tendency to gamble in a gains or losses experimental situation.

The present study

The current study sought to expand understanding of how cognitive fatigue, personality and mood can influence economical decision making in the setting of a single-choice between multiple alternatives. Keeping in mind that relationships between economical behavior and cognitive fatigue as well as personality, currently lacks scientific consensus and has produced contradicting results, no theoretical basis regarding characteristics of predicted results was formulated. Thus, investigating effects of cognitive fatigue and personality is by necessity explorative. In relation to mood, although having a more stable empirical foundation for predictions, the current choice setting is too different from those previously researched for any valid predictions to be made. The research topics can be formulated as following. Research Question I consists of testing in what manner cognitive fatigue can influence decision making. Research Question II has the objective of assessing whether any influence of personality on choice can be detected. Research Question III attempts to investigate whether current mood influence choice.

Method

Participants

A total of fifty-seven individuals participated in the study, with a distribution of twenty males (35.1 %) and thirty-seven females (64.9 %). Subjects' age ranged from nineteen to seventy-seven years old ($M = 45.2$, $SD = 13.6$). Participants were recruited through social media platforms, utilizing proxy recruiters (i.e. the participants were not directly recruited by the researcher in order to minimize the risk of dependency influence). Six participants did not complete the survey, likely due to reported technical difficulties, and are consequently not present in the analysis. As an incentive to participate, subjects were offered 10SEK to donate to an existing charity organization of their choice.

Study design

The design of the study mainly focused on correlations, using two study groups with certain variables being subject to between-group comparisons. Measurements within Group 1 included independent variables mood (before and after manipulation), cognitive fatigue (before

and after manipulation) and personality traits. Measurements of Group 2 consisted solely of initial measured mood and cognitive fatigue. In both groups the dependent variable consisted of an economical choice of charity organization. Figure 1 provides a basic visualization of measurements implemented in each group.

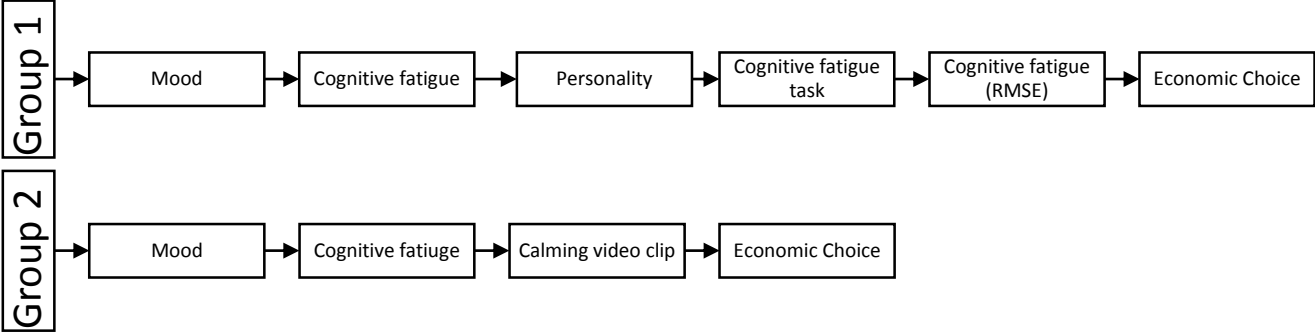


Figure 1. Study design, chronologically presenting the measurements of key variables in each group respectively.

Procedure

The web based survey tool Qualtrics was used to construct and administer a total of eight different versions of a survey to participants (see appendix 1 and 2 for one of the surveys applied to Group 2, and the Rating Scale Mental Effort (RSME) as well as a portion of the personality inventory respectively). The participants were randomly assigned to (I) a total of four conditions with differing presentation order of choice, and (II) two study groups. All surveys started with a guarantee of anonymity, the participant providing informed consent and filling in demographical information. The items and conditions varied significantly between the study groups. Group 1 was subjected to measurement of initial cognitive fatigue and mood, completed personality assessment using International Personality Item Pool Neuroticism Extraversion Openness Personality Inventory (IPIP NEO-PI) and a task sought to increase cognitive fatigue. Subsequently, Group 1 participants answered a second set of items used to measure level of cognitive fatigue before finally being presented with information regarding four different fictive charity organizations, given the option to donate 30SEK to a single organization. Group 2 completed the scales measuring initial fatigue and mood, after which they watched a two minute long video clip showing a cat nurturing a baby squirrel in order to induce a state of calmness. As within Group 1, participants in Group 2 were then presented with information about four different fake charity organizations, prompted to choose one which would receive a donation of 30SEK. The low amount was used in order to not make participants overthink the decision, albeit not being completely negligible and thus risk provoking a sense of indifference towards the information presented. In the concluding segments of the survey, the participant were presented with a number of existing charities, having the option to choose one to receive an

actual donation of 10SEK. The participant were finally given the possibility to write questions regarding the study, as well as requesting the results of the study and a receipt of the donations.

Measurements

Choice of charity foundation. Four different fictitious charity organizations were constructed (see appendix 1). Participants were given the option to donate 30SEK to a single charity. The organizations were selected on being most prevalent in a pilot study, and aside from verbal descriptions, contained various forms of information such as graphs and references to real events and organizations. The charities differed in nature. Organization 1 contained a large amount of credible information, Organization 2 was constructed to include a lot of information, but with a more dubious character, Organization 3 was short in regards to information, and what was provided was generally neutral and Organization 4 was constructed as being rich in information, but lacking in credibility. The reliability of labeling the charities as positive-neutral-negative cannot be determined due to the fact that no general test was conducted in order to investigate this. However, as each participant had access to information about every organization, the one containing references and statistics rather than self-proclaimed success is plausibly the most rational option. Measures of charity foundation choice included the property of the foundation (i.e. positive, negative or neutral), the amount of information in the charity chosen (short-long) as well as a combined property variable, in which neutral and positive foundations were combined into a single level, opposed only by the negative options. The characteristics and positions of the charities in the survey variations are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

The characteristics and place in the order of presentations of the four charity organizations

Charity Organization	Characteristics	Position in surveys
Organization 1	Extensive and credible information	2 ND , 2 ND , 3 RD , 4 TH
Organization 2	Extensive and dubious information	1 ST , 2 ND , 3 RD , 4 th
Organization 3	Limited and neutral information	1 ST , 2 nd , 3 RD , 3 RD
Organization 4	Limited and dubious information	1 ST , 1 ST , 4 TH , 4 th

Cognitive fatigue. To determine cognitive fatigue, repeated measures was used pre and post manipulation in Group 1. However, the only validated measure of cognitive fatigue utilized was the RSME, not applied to Group 2, nor pre-manipulation. This due to fear that participants would guess the purpose of the study if exposed to the same item at several points during the procedure, which might also have caused confusion. The RSME consists of a single item, asking the participant to rate how much effort he or she put into the previous task, on a scale from 0 to 150, using seven verbal anchors such as “Slightly effortful” (Mullette-Gillman et al., 2015). Due to its simplicity, the RSME was not subject to a translation check. Considering its focus on mental activation, parts of the SCAS (see below) was thought to capture some aspects of cognitive fatigue as well.

Mood. The current mood of the respondent was calculated using the six item bipolar 11 level Swedish Core Affect Scale (SCAS), validated on a Swedish population by Västfjäll & Gärling (2007). The purpose of the scale is to ascertain two core affective statuses, namely Activation (Activation – Deactivation) and Valence (Pleasantness – Unpleasantness). Among others, examples of statements included in SCAS are “I currently feel: dissatisfied/pleased, sad/happy, and passive/active”. Completing the personality inventory might produce some form of affective response, requiring a safeguard manipulation check. In order to increase the reliability of the results, the personality inventory contained additional items pertaining to the same mood-related constructs, albeit differently expressed. On a side note, the IPIP NEO-PI contains several affective items in itself, e.g “I tend to focus on the bright side of life”. Thus, it is a reasonable assumption that every participant in Group 1 were at risk for affective priming in either direction.

Personality. Personality was measured using a short version of the IPIP NEO-PI, an open source bipolar personality inventory built on the five-factor model of personality (Johnson, 2014). The inventory was translated to Swedish, and an independent individual consequently provided a translation back to English to secure translation reliability. The current version includes 120 items meant to measure each and every one of the five factors, as well as the six underlying facets of every factor. The inventory is rather short compared to other personality inventories. For example, the original version of the IPIP NEO-PI contains 300 items, compared to the current version of 120 (Johnson, 2014). Nonetheless, the version consisting of 120 items has been reported to accurately catch the contents of the longer version (Johnson, 2014). The reason the shorter version was used was to maximize the number of participants completing the survey, as well as minimizing the risk of unreliable results due to respondents becoming too tired and thus replying less truthfully or in an indifferent manner. The IPIP NEO-PI have shown good convergence with the more commonly used NEO PI-R (Maples, Guan, Carter & Miller, 2014; McCrae & John, 1992). The NEO PI-R, and subsequently IPIP NEO-PI, builds on the five factor model of personality, consisting of five main factors, each with six facets. Each item of the IPIP NEO-PI consists of a 5 point scale, asked in the form “I (statement used to asses personality)”, with verbal description above every option, consisting of “Very inaccurate, Moderately inaccurate, Neither accurate nor inaccurate, Moderately accurate and Very accurate” (Johnson, 2014). Goldberg (1990) lists some main characteristics of each of the main factors, and Johnson (2014), provides example of items for each personality factor. A brief presentation of each personality factor and examples of how it was measured built on the articles of Goldberg (1990) and Johnson (2014) will consequently be presented.

Extraversion is sought to capture aspects of personality such as talkativeness, assertiveness, outspokenness and a general extraverted approach. Contrary, individuals with

low scores in this domain are thought to be shy, introverted, and bashful as well as inhibited. An example of an item measuring Extraversion is “I easily make friends”. Agreeableness is a trait composed of sympathy, warmth, kindness, sincerity and an ability for understanding. In contrast, a low score on this factor indicates a tendency to lack sympathy, acting cruel, unkind and harsh. To capture this trait, one item is formulated as “I love to help others”. Conscientiousness describes individuals who are organized, orderly, practically orientated, prompt and meticulous. Low-scores tend to behave disorderly and careless, with a tendency towards being disorganized, sloppy and impractical. To measure degree of conscientiousness, participants were among other asked “I complete tasks successfully”. Neuroticism portrays persons who are moody, anxious and generally insecure. Those with low scores in this domain tend to be calm and relaxed. An example of an item testing level of neuroticism is “I dislike myself”. Openness to experience indicates creativity, imagination, and a high degree of intellect. A low score indicates the opposite, i.e. uncreative, unimaginative and a low degree of intellect.

Additional measurements

As part of the personality inventory, an item designed as a question about personality investigated current life satisfaction. Additionally, participants in Group 1 completed a task sought to increase cognitive fatigue, previously used by Kostek and Ashrafioun (2013), in which they were instructed to describe a recent event or trip without using the letters “n” or “a”. The amount of errors in this task, or lack thereof, was recorded. However, neither of these measures are to be considered validated, but rather used to gain additional data to exclude influence of potential confounding variables (e.g. life satisfaction influencing choice more than current mood). In order to control for possible effects of presentation order, the participants were presented with the information regarding the charity organizations in 4 different sequences. Varying order of presentation was implanted equally in both groups, and could for example consist of presenting organizations with a large amount of information first in one variant, and the reverse in another. Additionally, it was investigated whether different items meant to measure the same construct at different points in the survey successfully did so. Not specifically related to research questions, presentation order and item correlation was applied to discover potential confounding influence.

Analysis

The main outcome variable of interest consisted of the choice made by participants about which charity to donate to. The key goal was to find eventual correlates and predictors of choice, namely personality traits, current mood and level of cognitive fatigue. Statistical analysis was utilized in both a within-group and between-group manner, as numerous variables were not measured in Group 2. Due to suspicion that several variables may violate the assumption of being normally distributed, Shapiro-Wilks test for normality was applied to every variable of analytical interest. The results show that all variables related to measures of mood and cognitive fatigue failed to achieve normality, as did most personality factors and facets. No attempts to transform the data were performed due to the large degree of both skewness and

kurtosis of core variables. Therefore, non-parametric methods of analysis was generally preferred. Specifically, Pearson Chi-square was applied to determine influence of sex, education, presentation order and group on economic choice. Spearmans Rho was used to test correlations between items, as influence of age, personality, mood and cognitive fatigue. Statistical inference was carried out at an alpha level of .05. SPSS version 22.0 was used in all statistical analyses.

Results

Demographical variables and reliability of measurements

Analyzing the entire sample ($n = 57$), a significant difference in choice in regards to gender was discovered using Pearson Chi-square, $\chi^2 (3, n = 57) = 10.58, p < .05$. Furthermore, level of education did not appear to influence choice, $\chi^2 (3, n = 57) = .48, p = .922$. Order of presentation regarding information about the charities did not seem to impact choice, $\chi^2 (3, n = 57) = 14.20, p = .115$. Applying Spearmans Rho showed no difference in choice in terms of the participants' age, $r_s (55) = .25, p = .059$. Testing the different methods of measuring mood and cognitive fatigue in Group 1 generally showed good between-measures test-retest reliability between the SCAS-items and items constructed in the current study for measuring mood and cognitive fatigue. However, testing correlations between the validated RSME-instrument and previous measurements sought to capture cognitive fatigue, did not support the assumption that the cognitive fatigue items made for the purpose of the current study, did indeed measure level of cognitive fatigue in a reliable manner. Spearmans Rho coefficients regarding SCAS-items and similar questions regarding mood activation and valence, as well as correlations between the RSME and other items thought to measure cognitive fatigue are displayed in table 2.

Table 2

Spearmans Rho correlations between initial SCAS-items and later implemented similar questions, and correlations between the RSME-instrument and additional cognitive fatigue items

Measurement	SCAS-Valence	SCAS-Activation	RSME
Dissatisfied or Pleased	.68***	-	-
Sad or Happy	.74***	-	-
Downhearted or Cheerful	.77***	-	-
Sleepy or Alert	-	-.46*	-
Dull or Awake	-	-.48**	-
Passive or Active	-	-.67***	-
SCAS Activation Items	-	-	-.14
Cognitive fatigue 1	-	-	-.13
Cognitive fatigue 2	-	-	-.29

$n = 29$

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Relationship between cognitive fatigue and choice of charity

In order to assess whether level of cognitive fatigue correlated with choice of charity organization, Spearman's Rho was applied. Analyzing the whole sample ($n = 57$), only one SCAS item in the Activation part (Sleepy or Alert) related to fatigue showed a significant correlation with choice, $r_s(55) = .27, p < .05$. Assuming that Group 1 is more likely to experience cognitive fatigue due to a more extensive set of tasks applied than in Group 2, Pearson Chi-square was utilized to test difference between groups in regards to choice. The results shows a significant difference, $\chi^2(3, N = 57) = 8.02, p < .05$, between the two groups, in the direction of Group 1 tending to choose more negatively described charity organizations. In Group 1 ($n = 29$), value on the RSME-instrument showed a significant negative correlation with choice outcome, thus implying fatigued individuals tended to choose more dubious alternatives, $r_s(27) = -.37, p < .05$. Research Question I thus receives some support for a correlation, specifically from the only measurement validated for the purpose of assessing cognitive fatigue.

Influence of personality on choice

Spearman's Rho was used to discover correlations between personality factors and choice. Due to the likelihood of a small influence, choices were combined according to valence (Positive and Neutral versus Negative). Solely two facets of the IPIP NEO-PI factor Openness were found to be correlated with choice, namely Imagination, $r_s(27) = .38, p < .05$, and Artistic Interests, $r_s(27) = .48, p < .01$. The correlations represents an increased tendency for participants with a high score on previously mentioned personality facets to choose the negatively portrayed organizations, rather than the positive or neutral alternatives. The results provide partial support for a correlation regarding Research Question II, showing choice to correlate with only two personality facets, none of the main personality factors, and only when choice had been compressed in the described manner.

Effects of mood on economic choice

As previously determined, the measures of mood after the cognitive fatigue tasks strongly correlated with previous scores on the SCAS. Consequently, it is likely that the groups did not differ in regards to Activation and Valence due to their different tasks, and were thus analyzed together ($n = 57$), using the validated SCAS. Spearman's Rho was utilized to study difference in choice related to current mood. The results imply a significant correlation between choice and all the items related with Valence, namely Dissatisfied or Pleased, $r_s(55) = .27, p < .05$, Sad or Happy, $r_s(55) = .38, p < .01$, and Downhearted or Cheerful, $r_s(55) = .338, p = .010$. Concerning the SCAS activation items, a significant correlation was discovered between choice and value in terms of Sleepy or Alert, $r_s(55) = .27, p < .05$, but not regarding items Dull or Awake, $r_s(55) = .18, p = .159$, and Passive or Active, $r_s(55) = .24, p = 0.71$. As such, Research Question III can be regarded as supported concerning correlations, but mainly in terms of measurements of Valence.

Additional measurements

In order to address possible influence of ratings of current life satisfaction and the extent to which the participant made errors in the cognitive fatigue task, Spearman's Rho was used. Results show no significant correlation between participants' choice and neither life satisfaction, $r_s(27) = .15, p = .431$, nor the amount of errors in the cognitive fatigue task, $r_s(27) = -.30, p = .106$.

Discussion

Using several findings from different fields of research regarding economical decision making as point of departure, this study set out to test the influence of cognitive fatigue, personality and mood in a novel setting. The results implies certain correlates of participants' choice of charity from all of these areas. Notably, value on the RSME was found to correlate with choice, in a manner which suggest that cognitively fatigued individuals preferred alternatives with less demanding information, even if the information in question was of less favorable character. Personality facets Imagination and Artistic Interest also tended to correlate with choosing charities with a less positive description. Mood appeared to heavily influence choice as well, primarily in the direction of individuals with a positive valence preferring charity foundations with less information, described in a more negative manner. The questions addressed by the current study, has hence received some support.

Apart from the main results, a strong influence of gender was also discovered. Splitting the sample according to gender implied stronger effects of the main independent variables, mood, cognitive fatigue and personality, on women, although this is not ground enough for any reliable conclusions, as other demographical aspects differed in regards to sex as well, specifically age and occupation. It is possible that gender acted as a mediating variable, as proposed by Whitaker, Bokemeiner and Loveridge (2013), albeit the current sample is too small, and demographical factors were not initially thought to influence choice, lowering the possibility for any conclusions to be drawn from this finding. Additionally, none of the most central previous studies, which outlined the ground for the current investigation, reported gender at all. Nevertheless, the strong effect of participants' gender urges further research to consider including sex as a main variable. In contrast, neither any other demographical variable, nor current life satisfaction did provide a significant result in regards to choice. Similarly, the amount of errors in the fatigue task did not correlate with subsequent choice. These results strengthens the implications of the significant relationships, indicating that it was indeed mood, cognitive fatigue as measured by the RSME and personality that had the most extensive influence on choice of charity.

Cognitive fatigue

The influence of cognitive fatigue on choice was, as will later be discussed, flawed by different measurements lacking in validity, appearing to capture different constructs, although ratings on the commonly used (e.g Mullette-Gillman et al., 2015) RSME showed a significant correlation with choice. Taking the results as reliable, it is of high interest if cognitive fatigue

can actually be induced with such a weak manipulation. In contrast, Blain and coworkers (2015) argues that cognitive fatigue needs around 6 hours of active effort to alter brain activity, and Mullette-Gillman and colleagues had participants in the fatigue condition perform tasks during 90 minutes. However, as the survey was completed on any given time of the day, participants' threshold for experiencing a depletion of cognitive resources might already have been low, thus increasing the effects of the personality inventory and cognitive fatigue task.

As previously mentioned, a higher score on the RSME correlated with participants choosing to donate to organizations presented with less information, as well as information constructed to sound less positive and convincing. This data might be interpreted as an indication that cognitively fatigued individuals make inferior decisions, as suggested by Ma and colleagues (2013). It also makes sense that depletion of mental resources results in a decreased willingness to analyze larger amounts of information, and perhaps a state of indifference towards an obviously fictitious choice. The latter could also be viewed as a form of risk-taking behavior, opposing findings that individuals who are experiencing cognitive fatigue are risk-averse (Kostek & Ashrafion, 2013). Alternatively, the results that participants making poorer choices when experiencing cognitive fatigue could also be interpreted as an example of irrational decision making. Commonly, researchers distinguish between rational and irrational choices, attempting to find methods of making a distinction of what constitutes a rational or irrational choice, and what predicts one or the other. A method used to classify a rationally based decision is known as choice modeling, which states that an individual choosing rationally, will prefer the alternative which is as least as good in every relevant characteristic to the second best option (Bennett & Blamey, 2001). A basic proposal is that a rationally based choice should be consistent in regards to how the information is presented, and all things being equal, the individuals' choice should not change with time, but as reported by Tversky and Kahneman (1985), framing information in a certain way may produce related decisions. Thus, due to the fact that the presentations of the organizations was constructed in such a way that the worst option had nothing to offer that the best did not, it can be argued that cognitive fatigue correlated with a tendency to make irrational decisions. It should be noted that this conclusion is highly uncertain, mostly due to the fact that no objective measure can be made of whether it is rational to choose any of the respective organizations over the others. In other words, even if described in a worse fashion, individuals might not consider any of the information presented as credible, or have personal reasons for their choice. The current study did not investigate a clear losses versus gains-situation, and hence discussion regarding rationality of choice cannot be more than speculative in nature.

Finally, the two groups differed in regards to choice, implying that participants who underwent the more comprehensive survey were more inclined to choose the dubious charity organizations. This mostly applies to whether the charity was constructed to appear as suspicious or not. In fact, all participants who choose the "worst" option, the charity containing a lot of information lacking credibility, was found in Group 1, which completed the extensive version. However, due to the lack of experimental manipulation control, and apparent flaws in all measurements of cognitive fatigue except the RSME, which was not administered in Group 2, definite conclusion regarding what exactly made the groups choose differently cannot be safely determined. Nonetheless, the fact that the groups did indeed differ makes it a plausible assumption that the participants in Group 1 were more cognitively fatigued than those in Group 2, hence suggesting that filling in the personality inventory and completing the fatigue task did actually increase levels of cognitive fatigue.

Personality

A significant correlation between a combined measurement of choice, and two facets of the personality factor Openness was discovered, specifically Imagination and Artistic Interests. The combination of economical choice took the form of neutral or positive versus negative information, instead of analyzing all three categories separately. Albeit personality did not seem to heavily influence choice outcome, it did in fact show a significant correlation in regards to previously mentioned facets. Hitherto, links between economic behavior and personality have heavily relied on the use of economic games, such as the ultimatum game (Brandstätter & Königstein, 2001; Sanfey, 2007; Zhao & Smillie, 2015). Conversely, the current study in many ways differs from such situations, as there are no personal gains or losses, the decision making is not made in a social environment and there is not a clearly rational or irrational alternative. A more in-depth discussion of what constitutes the relationship between the personality facets found to significantly influence choice, as well as possible reasons for the discovered relationship with choice is therefore warranted.

Imagination assesses a persons' tendency to substitute a reality perceived as lacking in excitement, with a richer and more interesting inner fantasy world, and consequently, low scorers tend to prefer hard facts rather than imaginative explorations (Watson, 2003). This might explain why high-scorers in the current study were prone to make choices with less concern for the facts about the organizations presented. Possibly, these individuals experienced boredom when confronted with the graphs and references to international actors, whereas low-scores tended to focus even more on the plausibility of the facts presented than the average participant. Indeed, none of the organizations presented a very fantastical description (i.e. containing mostly facts), possibly resulting in imaginative individuals ignoring the content altogether. Nevertheless, an explanation due to low-scores focusing more on facts appears superior to the proposition that imaginative individuals ignore them.

The Artistic Interests facet contains high-scores who have a large interest in beauty, both in art and nature, and are consequently searching for and enjoying being immersed in various forms of splendor. It is worth noting that a high score on this facet does not necessarily imply actual artistic strivings, but rather a high level of enjoyment regarding art, in a broadly defined way. Contrary, low-scorers are not particularly interested in art, and tend not to make the pursuit of beauty a central theme in their lives (Proctor & McCord, 2009). In comparison to Imagination, the relationship between a high level of Artistic Interests and an inclination to choose organizations presented as less trustworthy, is hard to explain. The most straightforward interpretation is rather similar; there is neither beauty nor any aesthetic element to be found in any of the charities presented, hence individuals with a high level of Artistic Interests conceives them to be equally lacking in appeal, resulting in indifference. Applying the same explanation to low-scores as regarding Imagination, they might find it easier to stay focused processing larger amounts of information, as they are less concerned about its lack of artistic attractiveness.

Taken together, the personality correlates of choice is likely to be related to individual differences regarding the interest in, and ability to process, rather dull information. At the time of writing, no similar relationship between personality and economical choice and decision making appears to have been presented. The main subject of interest for further studies concerning this phenomena should be to determine if this is due to plain personality related boredom and indifference, or an increased ability among low scores to successfully process, and utilize, unexciting information, or possibly both.

Mood

As previously mentioned, participants' mood appeared to influence consecutive choice of charity foundation. Specifically, a positive valence appeared to correlate with choosing charities described in a more doubtful and negative way. Current mood having an impact on economic decisions is not a novel finding (e.g Capra et al. 2010). Stanton and coworkers (2014) reports that inducing a happy mood in respondents increased gambling behavior. The current study seems to support this claim, as choosing a fictitious charity to donate fictitious money to, can be conceived as a sort of lossless gamble. In other words, individuals currently in a state of positive mood are more likely to make risky donations, possibly from being less prone to interpret any information in a negative manner. Additionally, being in a state of negative mood might promote general suspicion, which in the current setting can be considered an asset. On the contrary, Nguyen and colleagues (2011) found that a positive mood increased rational decision making in the ultimatum game, i.e. accepting every offer proposed. Thus, one might argue that the influence of valence on the outcome of economic decisions is situation bound, in which suspicion due to negative mood appears gainful in the current study, but cooperation due to positive mood can be just as valuable under other circumstances. Capra and coworkers (2010) investigated the effects of mood on willingness to pay and bidding behavior in an auction setting, and found only a weak effect of mood on willingness to pay. Due to the similarity to the current study, which also focused on evaluation of certain objects (charity organizations) and subsequent economical behavior, the present results might be viewed as strengthening the hypothesis that a positive mood increases the tendency for a generous, or at least less distrustful, economic behavioral pattern.

In contrast to valence, the current affective activation of the respondents did not prove to influence choice in such an extensive manner, showing only one item with a significant correlation to choice of charity. This implies that activation, as measured by the SCAS-items, differs in construct content from the RSME, and consequently suggests an important difference between activation and cognitive fatigue. Most importantly, the two states do not seem to overlap according to the results of the current study. In conclusion, the effect of mood on choice appears to be strong, with a positive mood resulting in poorer choices. This relationship might be due to the affective elements of the study, as charity organizations might be associated with suffering and pain, which possibly gives affective influences a boost. In accordance with previous research, it is more likely that participants being in a positive mood choose differently from those in a neutral or negative mood (e.g Stanton et al., 2014). Finally, it is worth mentioning that SCAS is generally meant to be used as measuring only two, core affective states (Activation and Valence), rather than single items. However, due to the significance of the Valence items, and the interest of investigating whether Activation-items were related to cognitive fatigue, a combined measurement of the two main indexes were not presented in the current paper.

Study limitations and future research

Although the current study did achieve its general purpose, it was nonetheless plagued by several flaws in regards to method, which needs to be addressed. First of all, dividing the sample in two groups doubtlessly contributed to a much less extensive set of data, effectively

cutting the basis for analysis of the relationship between choice outcome and personality as well as cognitive fatigue in half. The reason for this was the initial experimental design, but due to the use of different scales for measuring cognitive fatigue, the results cannot be treated as experimental. The rationale behind this was to decrease the risk of participants guessing the study purpose, and thus becoming too aware of their own level of cognitive fatigue. However, this backfired, mainly due to the use of scales not validated for measuring cognitive fatigue (i.e. RSME). As items thought to measure cognitive fatigue did not correlate with the RSME, they were excluded from further analysis. Additionally, using a categorical variable as outcome variable, and almost exclusively non-parametric data, resulted in a major limitations in terms of suitable statistical method of analysis. In hindsight, it appears obvious that either a valid experimental procedure, or a correlational study with the entire sample completing the personality inventory would have been preferable. Because of the method of administering the survey through the internet, several important factors found to influence cognitive fatigue could not be controlled for (i.e. drug use, hunger, lack of sleep), neither could the participants' level of fatigue be measured in an objective manner, such as known physiological or neurological correlates. In a similar vein, the actual time used to complete the survey could not be accurately measured. However, even if a considerable amount of data and method of analysis were made unavailable due to procedure flaws, the results reported do show several interesting correlations, using validated items and scales. In addition, if the RSME would have been used to assess cognitive fatigue before and after manipulation in both groups, it would certainly appear strange and confusing for respondents, especially in the control group, having to answer the same question regarding effort before and after watching a short video meant to be relaxing. Some concern might arise from usage of the low monetary value in the economic choice. Indeed, in several somewhat similar settings such as the ultimatum game, a higher amount is commonly used (e.g. Nguyen et al., 2011). However, the current procedure design is likely to be unique, resulting in an inability of using previous studies as guidelines. Finally, the fact that participants were aware that the donations were fictive, any effect from the amount of money used would likely be minor.

Perhaps constituting the main novel finding of the present study, two personality facets were shown to correlate with economical choice. As argued by Nguyen and colleagues (2011), it seems of utmost importance to continue to unravel how personality influences economic decision making, and as implied by the current study, this relationship can be replicated in another setting than that of economic games. Although the relationships between decision making and cognitive fatigue has been shown to produce mixed results (Blain et al., 2015), and the results of the current study, partly depending on interpretation, opposes some findings regarding mood and economic behavior (Nguyen et al., 2011), the central directive for future research is to further investigate the role of personality structure in an economic choice environment. Nevertheless, the other findings should not be ignored. If a similar investigation was to be conducted, insights from the current study suggest using a laboratory setting, which would offer more control over likely confounding variables, as well as administering more extensive fatigue tasks.

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Appendix 1

Psykologisk undersökning

Sebastian Eklund, guseklse@student.gu.se

Hej! Stort tack för Ditt deltagande i denna studie! Mitt namn är Sebastian Eklund, och detta är en del av min masteruppsats i psykologi vid Göteborgs Universitet. Nedan följer några viktiga punkter att ha i åtanke när Du genomför undersökningen. Allt som samlas in är helt anonymt. Undersökningen tar mellan 10 och 25 minuter. Diskutera inte innehållet med någon medan Du fyller i formuläret. Du kan inte fråga mig, eller någon annan om förklaringar av frågorna innan du avslutat undersökningen. Försök att svara på alla frågor som ställs. Försök att inte spendera för mycket tid på en enskild fråga, men också att svara så korrekt som möjligt. Försök att genomföra hela undersökningen utan avbrott. Det är inte möjligt att återgå till föregående sida. Efter genomförd undersökning får Du som tack för hjälpen välja en välgörenhetsorganisation som jag donerar 10kr till. Du får gärna ställa frågor rörande undersökningen till mig på ovan angiven mail, eller i slutet på denna enkät.

/Vänliga Hälsningar, Sebastian Eklund

Jag är medveten om att deltagande är frivilligt, och att jag när som helst kan avbryta min medverkan utan konsekvenser.

- Markera och tryck på "nästa" för att starta undersökningen.

Nedan ber jag Dig fylla i lite bakgrundsinformation om Dig själv.

Kön

- Man
- Kvinna
- Annat
- Vill ej uppge

Födelseår:

Huvudsakliga sysselsättning

- Förvärsarbetar
- Studerar
- Annat

Högsta avslutade utbildning

- Grunskola
- Gymnasium
- Högskola/Universitet
- Vill ej uppge

Hur känner du dig just nu?

Bedöm på skalorna nedan hur du känner dig just nu. Markera in den siffra som stämmer bäst. Om du markerar in 0 betyder det att du varken känner på det ena eller det andra sättet.

Del 1

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Missnöjd:Belåten	<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"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ledsen:Glad	<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"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nedslagen:Munter	<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"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Del 2

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Sömnig:Pigg	<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"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Slö:Vaken	<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"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pasiv:Aktiv	<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"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I denna delen ber vi Dig att titta igenom videoklipppet som länkas nedan. Det är viktigt att du ser igenom hela klippet. Inga frågor kommer ställas kring innehållet.

Val av välgörenhetsorganisation.

Härnäst följer information om fyra olika välgörenhetsorganisationer. Föreställ Dig att du får 30kr att spendera på en valfri organisation.

1. Vi är en välgörenhetsorganisation som står över andra. När vi är ute i fält räknas enbart en sak: resultat. Vår organisation är uppbyggd, och styrs som, ett företag med vinstintresse, men för oss ligger den primära vinsten i att hjälpa människor i nöd. I denna uppgift skiljer vi på de som våra medarbetare lättast kan hjälpa, och de som kan anses mer svårtillgängliga. Däri ligger även orsaken till vår framgång, och denna framgång fyller våra medarbetare med

stolthet och incitament att utvecklas i sina respektive professioner. I decennier har vi kämpat för att nå dit vi är idag. Vår organisations historia är kantad av såväl framgångar som nedslående motgångar. Vi har uthärdat grundlöst ifrågasättande från diverse överhögheter, där vår organisations uppbyggnad och värderingar har ifrågasatts. Inte desto mindre har vi alltjämt tagit oss tillbaka till toppen på grund av den djupt rotade kämparglöd som återfinns i vår ledning. Outtröttligt kämpar vi med att fatta de svåra besluten, inte bara för vår egen skull utan även för andra människor. Alltid med ett konkret mål i sikte, att förändra världen till det bättre! Och beviset för våra fenomenala framgångar inom välgörenhetsarbete framgår av nedanstående graf! Om inte detta är bevis nog, betänk den fruktansvärda situation som många individer befinner sig i, och att ingenting ändras! Vi menar att detta beror på att välgörenhetsorganisationer har fel synsätt och är alltför idealistiska i sitt sätt att arbeta. Våra okonventionella metoder ger resultat! Så donera till oss, det kommer du inte ångra.

2. Vi har sedan 1963 arbetat med att förebygga och bekämpa orättvisor. Med en global utgångspunkt har våra hängivna fältarbetare jobbat natt och dag med att minska lidande och nöd för hundratusentals människor. Vi är en politiskt och religiöst oberoende organisation som flitigt arbetar med att förbättra förhållanden för de som har det värst, i såväl Burma som här hemma i Sverige. Vår breda ansats gör att vi inkluderar både hemlösa missbrukare och undernärda barn i våra insatser. Och vi är duktiga på vad vi gör. UNDP (United Nations Development Programme, 2012) genomförde en omfattande undersökning av hur väl icke-statliga välgörenhetsorganisationer presterar, i vilken vi erhöll ett betydelsefullt erkännande. Enligt FN-kommissionen har vårt arbete resulterat i konkreta åtgärder, vilket visas i diagrammet nedan. Relativt HDI-värde (Human Development Index) ökar markant i takt med vår resursfördelning till det aktuella området. Vi har vidare prisats av JWB (Journalister utan gränser) för vår enastående förmåga att förhålla oss neutrala även i områden med en pågående konflikt. Vår kamp för mänskliga rättigheter har en idealistisk grund, men ett konkret förfarande. Vår enda uppgift är att bistå människor i nödsituationer, och det är också det vi gör bäst. Så bli donator idag, och uppskatta vetskapen som har belagt att det du ger faktiskt gör skillnad!

3. Vårt engagemang kommer från att hjälpa människor. Så enkelt är det. Det är vår passion för humanism som utgör kärnan för våra medarbetares livslånga engagemang. Vi är på plats i fält där vi behövs, där sjukvård och mat verkligen behövs. Varje bidrag gör skillnad!

4. Vi är inte som andra välgörenhetsorganisationer. Vi fungerar annorlunda, och genom att vi förmedlar donationer till andra aktiva parter undviker vi att betalningsmedel går till instanser vi inte betecknar som säkra eller moraliskt uppriktiga. Således har vi full kontroll över Din donation. Anslut dig idag och stöd vår gemensamma sak!

Vilken organisation skulle du välja att donera till?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

Avslutande information

Nu är undersökningen över! Vänligen diskutera inte innehållet med andra deltagare, eller potentiella deltagare, förrän de också har avslutat undersökningen. Nedan har du möjlighet att välja att skänka 10 kr till en verklig välgörenhetsorganisation som tack för din tid. Om du önskar donera till en organisation som inte är med i listan är kravet att den ska vara religiöst och politiskt oberoende.

Verklig välgörenhetsorganisation som du önskar donera Dina 10kr till:

- UNHCR (1)
- WWF (2)
- Läkare utan gränser (MSF) (3)
- Annan: (4) _____

Mailadress, om du vill få resultatet av:

- Kvitto på donation till välgörenhet (3)
- Studien (2) _____

Har du några frågor angående studien?

Tryck på nästa för att lämna in undersökningen. Återigen, stort tack för ditt deltagande!

/Sebastian Eklund, guseklse@student.gu.s

Appendix 2

Vänligen uppskatta hur ansträngande det var att genomföra personlighetsmätningen enligt nedanstående skala.

150	
140	
130	
120	
110	<i>Extremt ansträngande</i>
100	
90	<i>Mycket ansträngande</i>
80	
70	<i>Rätt så ansträngande</i>
60	
50	<i>Ansträngande</i>
40	
30	<i>Lite ansträngande</i>
20	<i>Knappt ansträngande alls</i>
10	
0	<i>Inte ansträngande överhuvudtaget</i>

Personlighetsinstrument

Jag:
1. Oroar mig ofta.
Stämmer inte alls [] Stämmer dåligt [] Ingetdera [] Stämmer bra [] Stämmer mycket bra []
2. Har lätt att skaffa nya vänner.
Stämmer inte alls [] Stämmer dåligt [] Ingetdera [] Stämmer bra [] Stämmer mycket bra []
3. Har en livlig fantasi.
Stämmer inte alls [] Stämmer dåligt [] Ingetdera [] Stämmer bra [] Stämmer mycket bra []
4. Har lätt att lita på andra.
Stämmer inte alls [] Stämmer dåligt [] Ingetdera [] Stämmer bra [] Stämmer mycket bra []
5. Utför uppgifter framgångsrikt.
Stämmer inte alls [] Stämmer dåligt [] Ingetdera [] Stämmer bra [] Stämmer mycket bra []
6. Har lätt att bli arg.

Stämmer inte alls [] Stämmer dåligt [] Ingetdera [] Stämmer bra [] Stämmer mycket bra []
7. Gillar stora fester.
Stämmer inte alls [] Stämmer dåligt [] Ingetdera [] Stämmer bra [] Stämmer mycket bra []
8. Anser att konst är mycket värdefullt.
Stämmer inte alls [] Stämmer dåligt [] Ingetdera [] Stämmer bra [] Stämmer mycket bra []
9. Använder andra för mina egna syften.
Stämmer inte alls [] Stämmer dåligt [] Ingetdera [] Stämmer bra [] Stämmer mycket bra []
10. Gillar att städa.
Stämmer inte alls [] Stämmer dåligt [] Ingetdera [] Stämmer bra [] Stämmer mycket bra []