HAIGAZIAN UNIVERSITY

The IDRlabs Toxic Positivity Test (IDR-TPT), Validation Study in Lebanon

Zakia M. Kahhoul

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Social and Behavioral Sciences in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Art in Psychology – Emphasis: Clinical Psychology at Haigazian University

Beirut, Lebanon

May, 2023

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By

Zakia M. Kahhoul

is accepted by the Graduate Thesis Committee as satisfying the thesis requirements for the degree Master of Arts.

Date 04 – May – 2023

Signature of Thesis Committee Chairperson

Hanine Hout

Date 04 – May – 2023

Signature of Thesis Committee Member

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Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to my thesis advisor, Ms. Lucy Tavitian, for the immense support she provided me with, both academically and emotionally, throughout this journey. Lucy not only taught me how to do research but also inspired me to do what I love and to do it right. Her unwavering passion for research and her high standards for students have been truly inspiring. She encouraged me to give my all and always strive for excellence, and I will always be grateful for her guidance, feedback, and support. Lucy's dedication to research and her continuous drive to excel are a rare commodity that I am truly lucky to have experienced.

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Abstract

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this could be explained through the choice of the tool for Emotional Intelligence (SEIS) and the level of insight and intentionality for Surface Acting. Finding suggests that further research is needed to fully understand the relationships between Toxic positivity, Emotional Intelligence, and Surface Acting.

Keywords: Toxic positivity, surface acting, emotional intelligence, validation, emotional distress

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The IDRlabs Toxic Positivity Test (IDR-TPT), Validation Study in Lebanon

The battle between the "good vibes only" movement, and the "it is okay not to be okay" movement is raging on social media platforms (Álvarez, 2021; Cherry, 2021; Labranche, 2021; Princing, 2021; Quintero & Long, 2019; Villines, 2021). The former is the pro-generalization of a cheerful, optimistic, and happy state across all situations (Toxic Positivity); the latter is a call to express emotions, even painful ones, depending on the experience a person is going through. Hiding/Masking a person's true feelings, trying to "just get on with it" by dismissing an undesirable feeling(s), feeling guilty about experiencing an emotion, lessening other people's experiences with quotes and sayings, imposing a perspective on someone (e.g., "it could be worse") as an alternative of validating their emotions, shaming others for voicing frustration, and dismissing frustrating experiences are some of the signs of Toxic Positivity (Quintero & Long, 2019). In his book, Breaking Down Joker, Redmond (2021) illustrated the Lebanese people using a phrase he documented during the October Movement, saying, *"the Happiest depressed People you will ever meet."* This expression says a lot about the possible high level of Toxic Positivity among the Lebanese. This novel concept is discussed within the clinical environment, it is speculated that Toxic Positivity is similar to the concept of Surface Acting Behavior (a form of Emotional Labor and a concept borrowed from industrial and organizational psychology) which, in a nutshell, is the discrepancy between the authentic emotions and the displayed emotions of employees (Hochschild, 2012). Toxic Positivity, however, is not restricted to the workplace and is more associated with reactions to life adversities and stressors. The literature suggests that Surface Acting Behavior is associated with numerous negative outcomes like psychological strain, emotional exhaustion, physical illnesses, poor job performance, and antisocial behaviors (Hu & Shi, 2015). However, those outcomes are reduced by the level of Emotional Intelligence of

an individual since it allows them to adopt Deep Acting Behavior, a more positive form of Emotional Labor (Wen et al., 2019). Since there is a theoretical similarity between Toxic Positivity and Surface Acting Behavior, the outcomes of the latter could be observed in the case of the occurrence of the former. In this paper this hypothesis will be tested, if it is supported by data, it will contribute to the establishment of convergent and discriminant validity.

Toxic Positivity is not yet examined by the scientific community; the IDRlabs (n.d.) created a test, the IDRlabs Toxic Positivity Test (IDR-TPT), to measure Toxic Positivity based on the definition of Quintero & Long (2019); however, the psychometric properties of this tool are currently unknown. Given the lack of a valid tool to assess toxic Positivity – a concept already discussed among clinicians – this study will address the gap between the clinical and research communities giving clinicians the adequate tool to accurately assess Toxic Positivity by validating the IDR-TPT test in the Lebanese community using Multigroup covariance structural equation modeling (Byrne, 2004); convergent and discriminant validity will also be examined.

Rationale and Significance

Toxic Positivity is already being discussed among mental health professionals on social media (Quintero & Long, 2019; Goodman, 2022), it refers to the overgeneralization of a cheerful, optimistic state across all contexts, resulting in the nullification and invalidation of unpleasant experiences (Quintero & Long, 2019). According to Hensley (2021), negating said experiences will leave them unprocessed, which will lead them to be stored difunctionally and become aggravated when the triggers are evoked (Hensley, 2021). Toxic Positivity may force an individual to display socially desirable “positive emotions” and mask/hide his/her authentic emotions, this inability to be true to oneself can increase the feeling of

inauthenticity (Simpson & Stroh, 2004) and lead the person to feel shame and guilt (Goodman, 2022) inauthenticity is also believed to cause psychopathology and distress by forcing individuals to engage in unnatural behavior, leaving them feeling unfulfilled or devalued (Leary, 2003). Since Toxic Positivity possibly can have potent consequences on our well-being, it is crucial for the scientific community to be able to examine it, unfortunately, this construct is fairly novel and is yet to be investigated.

The IDRLabs developed and published an online test (IDRLabs - TPT) to assess Toxic Positivity, based on the definition of two Mental Health professionals (Quintero & Long, 2019). However, these tools' psychometric properties are not studied yet; The objective of this study is to examine the psychometric properties of the IDR-TPT test in the Lebanese community. Creating an entry point for Toxic Positivity in the literature and enabling interested scholars to examine this novel construct and its relation to other psychological variables and its effect on our behaviors and reactions. This proposed study can provide clinicians with the proper tool to assess Toxic Positivity, allowing them to better tailor their intervention to the patients' needs and best interests. On the Societal and Individual levels, this study could contribute to spreading awareness regarding Toxic Positivity and encouraging people to adopt a healthier attitude when dealing with negatively viewed emotions.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The Lebanese context

The Lebanese are no strangers to violence, political instability, and military warfare. Following a vicious 15-year civil war that ended in 1990, the Lebanese people have had to endure even more conflict: two wars with Israel in 2000 and 2006; a string of political assassinations targeting politicians and journalists critical of the Syrian regime between 2004 and 2008; internal armed fighting in May 2008 between major Lebanese factions; and infighting in Palestinian refugee camps between warring Islamist groups. Most notably, in November 2015, an ISIS-orchestrated twin suicide attack in Beirut's southern suburbs (El Masri, 2018). Continuous traumatic stress is a term used in the literature to describe prolonged exposure to a constant hazard (Nuttman-Shwartz & Shoval-Zuckerman, 2016; Stevens, Eagle, Kaminer, & Higson-Smith, 2013). The CTS conceptualization distinguishes this type of exposure from single traumatic incidents and dangers that have previously occurred but no longer exist (Hoffman, Diamond, & Lipsitz, 2011; J. Y. Stein, Wilmot, & Solomon, 2016). Although the notion of CTS was created three decades ago (Straker & the Sanctuaries Counseling Team, 1987), little study has been done on it since then. As a result, much remains unknown about how people react to long-term exposures, particularly to situations with the potential for mass fatalities and traumatization (Besser, Zeigler-Hill, Weinberg, Pincus, & Neria, 2015; Diamond, Lipsitz, & Hoffman, 2013). The possible disparities between prior traumatic exposure and CTS in the development and maintenance of posttraumatic stress disorder and its symptomatology are of particular interest. Some evidence suggests that repeated exposure to ongoing ecological and contextual stressors results in a numbing of psychological and behavioral responses (Bushman & Anderson,

2009), suggesting that individuals become desensitized to it through habituation (Aiyer et al., 2014; Gaylord Harden, So, Bai, & Tolan, 2017). The consequences of the prolonged exposure of the Lebanese people to adversities are felt far and wide. Many times, they have had to rebuild from the ruins. The Lebanese, renowned for their tenacity and capacity to withstand adversity, have seen enough (Nuwayhid et al., 2011). Their fortitude does not justify the lack of political responsibility and reform (Abouzeid et al., 2020).

In the past couple of years, the country's situation deteriorated even more; the Lebanese are experiencing one of the worst economic crises in recent history characterized by hyperinflation and devaluation of the Lebanese Pound (World Bank, 2021). Since October 2019, the Lebanese Pound has lost 80% of its value, making essential items such as food, housing, and healthcare challenging to obtain (Human Rights Watch, 2020). Financial instability was associated with PTSD development (El Hajj, 2020). Individuals living in economic hardship may become more vulnerable to adverse mental outcomes. According to Shaar (2013), the impact of financial distress on PTSD development was somewhat expected, as those with limited financial resources may perceive a traumatic event as more severe. The medical sector was also severely impacted by the economic crisis and the Covid-19 outbreak, putting hospitals' ability to offer life-saving care in jeopardy (Human Rights Watch, 2020). According to Kira et al. (2021) COVID-19 alone, is a new form of traumatic stress and can seriously impact mental health, let alone the combination with a crippling economic crisis and political instability (MSF, 2020).

Furthermore, the horrific Beirut port explosion on August 4, 2020, claimed over 200 lives, injured over 7500 people, and displaced over 300,000 people. This tragic event is projected to increase the frequency of PTSD in the general population of Lebanon (Kerbage and Elbejjani, 2021; El Hayek and Bizri, 2020). According to Farran (2021), millions of

Lebanese people have fallen victim to a terrible sort of hopelessness. The psychological toll of the recent hardships in Lebanon has yet to be thoroughly assessed.

According to Jaafar (2020), she witnessed a great deal of criticism directed at concerned Lebanese when they revealed the injustices occurring in their country. They have been accused of propagating a negative image and being told to focus on the positive aspects instead. This trend, which has also gained traction on social media, is risky. It rejects and violates the feelings of individuals who are tired of the chaos they were forced to endure. It also asks people to suspend disbelief in the face of reality. Toxic Positivity is a term that describes this kind of behavior (Quintero & Long, 2019). This proposed study may provide the scientific community in Lebanon with a tool to further their understanding of said Toxic Positivity. This paper could also provide helpful information to individuals like Rowaida Abdelaziz, an expatriate reporter based in NYC, to better understand the seeds of the shift in the Lebanese people's behavior they are advocating for. One day after the Beirut Explosion, Abdelaziz (2020) wrote that the explosions might be the final straw for a traumatized community – many are fed up with the failed political elite and have reignited calls for government reform, economic and social transformation. The Lebanese have perfected coping with and adapting to new circumstances, but the Beirut Blast is "beyond any definition of resiliency."

Toxic Positivity

Since the early twentieth century, the self-help industry has promoted the positivity movement. One of the positivity movement pillars is that psychological well-being is primarily under one's control. With the rise of Positive Psychology (PP) in the late 1990s, these beliefs became a topic of scholarly attention (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Happiness (subjective well-being), according to Lyubomirsky (2001, 2014), is just ten

percent dependent on external conditions on average, with a far higher percentage within one's capacity to modify by altering one's thinking and behavioral habits. According to Held (2002), This' tyranny of Positivity puts pressure on individuals by saying that they are responsible for their happiness. PP should not be used to "blame the victim for not having the right hopeful attitude to pursue self-improvement in the face of tremendous social oppression," according to Bohart and Greening (2001). When the media broadcasts far-fetched promises about the power of Positivity, Coyne & Tennen (2010) express concern about the pressure that is created, which could be particularly destructive in the setting of a terminal disease. It can also cause people to avoid or dismiss negative emotions like sadness or rage, making it difficult to assess their situation honestly.

Toxic Positivity is a novel concept widely used in social media but not yet tackled by the scientific community; it is defined as the overgeneralization of a cheerful, optimistic state in all situations, which is excessive and impractical. Toxic Positivity leads to denial, minimization, and invalidation of genuine human emotional experience (Quintero & Long, 2019). When Positivity is used to mask the human experience, it becomes toxic, for a person may enter a form of denial and inhibition of negatively viewed sentiments; this can prevent them from obtaining the validation and support they need (Cherry, 2021). Humans are flawed: Jealousy, rage, resentment, and greed are all emotions that human beings experience. A person will undermine the legitimacy of an authentic human experience by pretending that a person has "good vibes all day" (Quintero & Long, 2019; Villines, 2021). Denying negative or unpleasant feelings will leave them unprocessed, and they will be stored difunctionally and become aggravated when the triggers are evoked (Hensley, 2021).

Many speculated about the consequences of Toxic Positivity; ignoring harm, demeaning loss, shame and guilt, avoidance of authentic emotions, communicational and

relational issues, and a stunt of growth were the most discussed concerns (Cherry, 2021; Princing, 2021; Villines, 2021). For instance, A narrative review of 29 research about domestic violence published in 2020 showed that a positive bias may cause abuse victims to downplay the severity of their abuse and remain in abusive relationships. Cheer, optimistic, and forgiving people were more likely to stay with their abusers and be subjected to increasing violence. (Sinclair et al., 2020). It is also worth mentioning that people under pressure to maintain a positive attitude in the face of hardship are less likely to seek help. They may feel isolated or ashamed of their emotions, making treatment challenging to obtain; Stigma can deter people from seeking mental health therapy (Oexle et al., 2018; Pescosolido, 2013). Adversities and trauma offer the prospect of constructive development and more significant long-term wellbeing, a process called Post Traumatic Growth. An experience that shatters personal beliefs causes them to be reexamined, allowing for the reformation of a complete set of beliefs (Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2012), a growth process that Toxic Positivity, with its negative emotions' inhibition or emotional incongruence, may prevent.

Surface Acting Behavior

Toxic Positivity serves as a defense mechanism; when others engage in this type of behavior, they can avoid emotional circumstances that make them uncomfortable, leading to emotional invalidation. Many studies examining the impact of emotional invalidation argue that such behavior is highly detrimental to mental health. Depressive symptoms are more likely to occur in people who have experienced emotional invalidation (Leahy et al., 2012). However, sometimes people exposed to emotional invalidation caused by Toxic Positivity tend to internalize these harmful notions and turn them on themselves. They ignore, disregard, and deny painful feelings when they arise (Cherry, 2021), leading to a discrepancy between the emotions they are feeling and those they display. Surface-Acting Behavior

(SAB) focuses on modifying one's external emotional display rather than influencing one's genuine interior feelings (Abraham, 1998; Grandey, 2000), essentially it imitates the display of emotions that are not truly experienced, which can challenge one's perceived Authenticity (Grandey, 2000; Hochschild, 1983). According to positive psychology literature (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003; Snyder & Lopez, 2002), Authenticity refers to embracing one's values, emotions, and beliefs and acting according to one's true self (Harter, 2002). As a result, to be authentic, people must communicate their true sentiments and emotions rather than repress or fake them (Harter, 2002).

Surface-Acting Behavior (SAB) is a form of emotional dissonance (Yozgat et al., 2012) that falls under Emotional Labor; SAB is related to emotional dissonance, a psychological state in which a person goes through a discrepancy between the authentic self and socially presented self, resulting in an unfavorable moral judgment of oneself (Hochschild, 2012). Emotional Labor is a construct studied in organizational-related disciplines and is well-defined as "the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display," usually for a wage. Emotional Labor has three tactics: surface acting, deep acting, and genuine acting (Diefendorff et al., 2005**).** Theories related to Emotional Labor suggest that employees may display their genuine emotions; however, when their authentic feelings are not allied with what is required by their employer, they might engage in surface or deep acting (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Diefendorff & Gosserand, 2003). A significant number of authors tackling Emotional Labor postulate that to show appropriate emotions at work, at times, individuals should hide, or fake felt emotions by faking positive emotions and suppressing negative felt emotions (Surface Acting) or attempting to experience the desired positive emotion (Deep Acting) so that in both cases positive displays follow either forcibly or Spontaneously (Grandey, 2003). Therefore, Surface

and Deep Acting could be considered compensatory strategies that individuals use when they cannot naturally display the appropriate emotions.

The term "surface acting" refers to the practice of altering emotional displays in order to show suitable emotions that are not genuinely felt (Hochschild, 2012). As a result, surface acting and the resulting gap between experienced and portrayed emotion should cause feelings of personal inauthenticity (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Hochschild, 2012; Morris & Feldman, 1996), which is consistent with the findings of several studies (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Erickson & Ritter, 2001; Gross & John, 2003; Simpson & Stroh, 2004). Similar to what employers do in the workplace by establishing a set of desirable emotions for the employees to display, individuals under the influence of Toxic Positivity "impose" positive emotions on themselves and people in their social environment (Quintero & Long, 2019), which could lead some to Surface Act in contexts other than work and inevitably experience inauthenticity. The scientific community showed great interest in Authenticity and its effect on wellbeing (Kernis & Goldman, 2006; Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis, & Joseph, 2008). Authenticity, in counseling psychology, is considered an essential element of well-being; it is not just a part or requirement to attaining wellbeing; it is the core of wellbeing (Wood et al., 2008). Inauthenticity is believed to cause psychopathology and distress by forcing individuals to engage in unnatural behavior, leaving them feeling unfulfilled or devalued (Leary, 2003).

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence, defined as an individual's ability to recognize her/his own and others' emotions, and hence to develop positive relationships with others (Salovey and Mayer, 1990), is critical in the process of Emotional Labor (Goleman, 1998). Emotional Intelligence can help employees in occupations that require Emotional Labor modify their attitudes and behaviors, lowering stress and enhancing job satisfaction (Lee and Okay, 2012).

American psychologists Salovey and Mayer (1990) proposed Emotional Intelligence, they believe that Emotional Intelligence is a subset of Social Intelligence, which is defined as the ability of people to monitor their own and others' feelings. It also involves recognizing emotions and accurately using emotional information to guide thinking and behavior. Emotional Intelligence consists of three abilities: emotion evaluation and expression, emotion regulation ability, and the ability to use emotion to solve problems. The idea was refined, and the four-dimensional Emotional Intelligence model was born, including emotion recognition, integration, understanding, and management (Mayer et al., 2004). According to Goleman (1995), Emotional Intelligence is the ability to understand one's own and others' emotions, motivate oneself, manage emotions, and handle relationships. Since the notion of Emotional Intelligence was first introduced, there have primarily been two types of understanding: the first as defined by Salovey and Mayer (emotional ability), and the second as defined by Goleman (a mixture of ability and personality) (Zhan, 2012).

Employees with a high level of Emotional Intelligence are more likely to use deep acting tactics in the workplace instead of surface acting strategies (Lee and Okay, 2014). Emotional Intelligence was significantly and positively associated with the deep acting strategy and displaying genuinely felt emotions (Yin et al. 2013), but negatively associated with surface acting (Kim et al.2012). Surface Acting is perceived as "acting in bad faith," while Deep Acting is seen as "acting in good faith," for they respectively involve going through the motions and trying to experience the emotions (Grandey, 2003). Toxic Positivity is somewhat similar to Surface Acting Behavior; the "negatively" viewed Emotional Regulation strategy. As mentioned earlier, Toxic Positivity is a foreign concept to the scientific community and is yet to be examined; however, it is similar to imposing a pre-approved list of emotions that better serves the greater good of an organization. Such

similarity allows for the speculation that Emotional Intelligence could be negatively associated with Toxic Positivity.

Hypotheses

Following this brief review of the literature, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1- Toxic Positivity and Surface acting behavior will be positively correlated.

H2- Toxic Positivity and Emotional Intelligence will be negatively correlated.

H3- Toxic Positivity and Authenticity will be negatively correlated.

H4- Toxic Positivity and Perceived Emotional Distress will be positively correlated.

Chapter 3

Participants and Methods

Participants

For this study, participants must be older than 18. The non-English speakers were excluded from the study, for the validation process will be conducted for the original version of the tool (English). Participants were selected using convenient sampling due to time and budget restrictions. Participants all over Lebanon were reached using online platforms to minimize any risk to reachability in light of the current gas crisis.

Sample size was estimated using the rule of thumb; The ratio of cases to free parameters, or N:q is a CFA rule of thumb that is often used for minimum recommendations, anywhere between 10:1 and 20:1 are commonly advised ratios (Jackson, 2003; Myers et al., 2011), for this study, the ratio of 15:1 was used. Using this method, it is possible to estimate 2 parameters per variable/item (factor loading and error variances). Therefore, for 10 items in the IDRlabs Toxic Positivity Test (IDR-TPT) 20 parameters are estimated; with a ratio of 15:1, a sample of 300 individuals is expected to be reached. A 10% contingency rate will be assumed and added to the overall sample, 30 individuals are to be added making the total 330 individuals.

Method and Procedure

A survey design was employed to address the psychometric properties of the IDRlabs Toxic Positivity Test (IDR-TPT). 5 scales were included in the survey along with a small demographic section (age, educational level) at the end of the survey. The scales measured Toxic Positivity, Surface Acting, Emotional Intelligence, Authenticity, and Perceived Emotional Distress. Counterbalancing will be used with the 5 scales to avoid sequencing and

carry-over effect from one scale to the other. The survey was administered online using Qualtrics to maximize reach.

Measurement

Toxic Positivity

IDRlabs developed the IDRlabs Toxic Positivity Test (IDR-TPT). The IDR-TPT is built on Samara Quintero and Dr. Jamie Long's work, who detected and quantified signs of Toxic Positivity. It is a 10-items questionnaire, participants are asked to indicate whether or not the statements apply to them on a 3-point Likert scale (Not me, Somewhat describes me, and Definitely me). The IDR-TPT is not linked with any specific researchers in the field of psychology or any affiliated research institutions. Its psychometric properties are still unknown but will be further examined in this paper.

Surface Acting

Surface acting is usually assessed as a dimension of Emotional Labor; however, Genuine emotional display and Deep acting are not within the scope of this paper. Diefendorff et al. (2005) were also interested in SA as a separate variable in their study. They attempted to use nine items to measure it: five items adapted from Grandey's (2003) SA scale, two items adapted from Kruml and Geddes' (2000) emotive dissonance scale, and two developed by the authors. A preliminary examination of the psychometric properties of the 9-items scale probed the authors to remove the two items they developed. Participants will be requested to rate each item using a 5-point Likert scale (5 being "Strongly Agree"; 1 being "Strongly Disagree"). Diefendorff et al. (2005) reported internal consistency reliability for the seven items used in his study, the Cronbach alpha in the primary sample used was .91 and.92 in the cross-validation sample.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence (EI) appeared in the 1990s and was defined as a construct based on ability comparable to general Intelligence (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Since its development 30 years ago, two other conceptually distinct forms of EI have arisen (called "trait EI" and "mixed model EI") (O'Connor et al., 2019), proposing a large number of psychometric tools intended to measure said forms. There are currently more than 30 widely used measures of EI. The authors also recommended utilizing measures of ability EI when the interest is emotional abilities and competencies.

According to O'Connor et al. (2019), the Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) is one of the best measures to assess EI ability; however, it is expensive, lengthy, and could affect the response rate of the participants. Alternative measurements were suggested with decent psychometric properties like the following:

- Self-report Emotional Intelligence Test (SREIT) also known as the Schutte emotional intelligence scale (SEIS) (Schutte et al., 1998)
- the Multidimensional Emotional Intelligence Assessment (MEIA) (Tett, Fox, & Wang, 2005)
- Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue) (Petrides and Furnham, 2001)
- Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) (Bar-On, 1997a,b)
- The Situational Test of Emotional Management (STEM) (MacCann and Roberts, 2008)
- The Situational Test of Emotional Understanding (STEU) (MacCann and Roberts, 2008)
- Emotional and Social competence Inventory (ESCI) (Boyatzis and Goleman, 2007)

In their article examining different EI measurement tools, Gardner & Qualter (2010) mentioned Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale as one of the most widely used traits EI measures based on the earlier ability model of EI (Salovey & Mayer, 1990), it has been cited in over 3000 studies (O'Connor et al., 2019). The number of factors examined by this instrument appears to be controversial. To describe the original model, Gignac, Palmer, Manocha, and Stough (2005) tested a 6-factor structure. After deleting five questions, Confirmatory factor analysis was unable to uncover two of the six dimensions: emotional regulation and emotional expression. Some research supports the assessment of four facets: optimism/mood regulation, appraisal of emotions, social skills, and utilization of emotion (e.g., Saklofske et al., 2003).

The SEIS is a 33-item survey based on Salovey and Mayer's (1990) three-factor model of EI. It determines how accurately individuals appraise and express emotions, regulate emotions, and use emotions to address problems. Based on exploratory factor analysis, Schutte et al. (1998) found that all elements reflect a single global EI component. When assessing lower-level facets, however, EI may be better assessed by the MEIA for some criteria given stronger predictive power. This may raise some challenges because the MEIA includes more subscales than the SEIS, which carries only four degrees of freedom. Future research needs to determine the range of criteria in which the MEIA is a superior predictor and criteria for which the shorter and freely available SEIS is an equally valid and alternative indicator of trait EI (brief scales save time in testing and also avoid participant boredom and fatigue). For criteria for which the predictive power of both measures is comparable, under the law of parsimony it is preferable to use fewer factors (the SEIS) if they are equally good indicators of trait EI.

Authenticity

The Authenticity Scale is a self-reported multidimensional tool that assesses an individual's sense of Authenticity. It has three subscales assessing: Authentic Living, Accepting External Influence, and Self-Alienation (Wood et al., 2008). The scale contains 12 items; participants will be asked to report their agreement on a seven-point Likert scale varying from 1 (does not describe me at all) to 7 (describes me very well).

According to Kernis & Goldman (2006), Mengers (2014), Nartova-Bochaver, et al. (2021), and Xia et al. (2021), the tool shows decent psychometric properties within several contexts, one of which is China, a collectivist community similar to the Lebanese one.

Perceived Emotional Distress Inventory

Perceived Emotional Distress will be assessed using The Perceived Emotional Distress Inventory (PEDI). It is a brief 15-item self-report screening tool intended to measure both the presence and severity of emotional distress as a multi-factor, general mood disorder such as anxiety, depression, anger, hopelessness, and social Isolation in cancer patients. According to Manolete S. Moscoso et al. (2012), the scale shows decent psychometric properties. However, it needs minor adaptations to be used with the general population.

Statistical analysis

To better examine the psychometric properties of the IDRLabs - TPT, and using IBM-SPSS, the reliability of the test was examined through Cronbach's α. Using the same software, convergent validity was evaluated by examining Pearson's correlations between Toxic Positivity and the following variables: Surface acting, Emotional Intelligence, Authenticity, and Perceived Emotional Distress. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to examine the construct validity using AMOS.

Ethical Considerations

The participant in this study will be exposed to sensitive, emotional topics; however, participation should not entail risks that are not common in day-to-day life. However, a debriefing and psychoeducation sheet will be included at the end of the survey. Also, participants will be provided with free mental health and counseling service providers in the area to seek additional support if needed.

Chapter 3

Results

Preliminary Analysis

Preliminary analyses were conducted prior to the main analyses to examine missing data, normality, and reliability of the scales.

Reliability Analysis

To assess the reliability of the measurement scales used in this study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated. This coefficient ranges from 0 to 1, with values closer to 1 indicating higher levels of internal consistency (Cronbach, 1951). All scales had acceptable levels of internal consistency, with alpha values greater than .7, which is the commonly used criterion for acceptable reliability (Nunnally, 1978). The Perceived Emotional Distress Scale (PED) showed high reliability ($\alpha = .937$), while the Surface Acting Scale (SA) and the Schults Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS) had good reliability ($\alpha = .85$ and $\alpha = .862$, respectively). The Toxic Positivity Test and the Authenticity Scale also had acceptable reliability ($\alpha = .766$ and $\alpha = .789$, respectively). Overall, the findings suggest that the measurement scales used in this study are reliable.

Table 1

Reliability of Scales: Cronbach's alpha

Scale	Cronbach’s Alpha	N of items
IDRlabs Toxic Positivity Test	.766	10
Surface Acting Scale	.85	7
Schults Emotional Intelligence Scale	.862	33
Authenticity Scale	.789	12
Perceived emotional Distress Scale	.937	15

Missing Data

Missing data is a common problem in survey research and can lead to biased estimates and reduced statistical power. In the current study, and for the purposes of the correlational analyses to assess validity, out of 370 surveys collected, 127 were disregarded for being completely empty, and 20 were deleted due to having more than 50% of their data missing, resulting in a final sample size of 223.

To conduct the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) analysis, the surveys of 218 participants who completed the Toxic Positivity Test out of 370 submissions were used. Participants who did not complete at least 90% of the test were excluded, resulting in the removal of 152 surveys. The final sample size for the CFA analysis was 218. Participants with incomplete data were excluded to ensure the validity and reliability of the analysis. Previous research has shown that incomplete data can bias the results of a CFA analysis and lead to inaccurate conclusions (Widaman, Ferrer, & Conger, 2010). By using a more complete dataset, the accuracy and robustness of the current findings were ensured to the extent possible.

To replace missing values that were below the 10% cutoff in the current dataset Maximum likelihood estimation (MLE) was applied (Dempster, Laird, & Rubin, 1977). This is a statistical method that estimates the parameters of a model using only the observed data while accounting for the missing data using likelihood-based methods. Specifically, Expectation-Maximization (EM) algorithm was applied to estimate the parameters of a regression model that included all variables with missing data (Little & Rubin, 2014).

MLE assumes that the data are missing at random, and the missingness is not related to the unobserved values themselves after conditioning on the observed data. To assess the

validity of this assumption, sensitivity analyses using multiple imputations and complete case analyses were conducted (von Hippel, 2018). The results were consistent across the different methods, indicating the robustness of findings.

The use of MLE enables unbiased parameter estimates to be obtained by incorporating the uncertainty caused by the missing data into the likelihood function. MLE maximizes the likelihood function of the observed data, considering the uncertainty in the missing values, which allows for valid statistical inference and can lead to unbiased parameter estimates under certain assumptions (Schafer & Graham, 2002). However, it is important to acknowledge that MLE relies on assumptions about the distribution of the data, and the results may be sensitive to these assumptions. In the current study, the validity of these assumptions using sensitivity analyses was assessed.

MLE is a widely used and established method for handling missing data and is recommended in many statistical textbooks and guidelines (Schafer & Graham, 2002). Moreover, MLE does not require imputing the missing values, which can introduce additional uncertainty and bias in the analysis (Rubin, 1987). By retaining as much data as possible while accounting for the missing data, the statistical power of the current analysis was maximized.

Normality of Variables

The normality of the variables of interest was tested using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) test with a significance level of $p < .05$. The results of the normality test indicated that none of the variables met the assumption of normality. Specifically, the KS test revealed that the normality of Toxic Positivity (D (223) = 0.066, p = .02), Surface Acting (D(223) = .061, p = .043), Emotional Intelligence (D (223) = 0.064, p = .026), Authenticity (D (223) = 0.088,

p= .000), and Perceived emotional distress (*D* (223) = 0.082, *p* = .001) were not met. For more robust estimates, bootstrapping was applied across subsequent analyses.

Sample Descriptive

A total of 370 individuals responded to the survey, but 127 surveys were excluded due to incompleteness. This left a total of 223 surveys for analysis. For the correlation analysis, an additional 20 surveys were removed due to having more than 50% missing values. For the CFA, only surveys from participants who completed at least 9 out of 10 questions on the IDRlab-TPT section were included, resulting in the exclusion of 152 surveys, which left a total of 218 surveys for the CFA analysis.

Since the aim of the study was to examine the psychometric property of the Toxic Positivity Test, the demographic section was not expansive, and only included the age and educational level of participants. The mean age of participants was 29.69 years (*SD* = 11.4), with a range of 18 to 95 years, there were six participants above 60. Regarding educational level, .8% did not complete High School, 3.1% of the participants had their Highschool diploma, 16.6% had some University Education, 29.6% completed a Bachelor's Degree, while 39,9% had a Post Graduate degree (35% Master's degree and 4.9% Doctorate Degree). These demographic characteristics provide a basic description of the sample used in this study.

Please find the full demographic information of participants (*N* = 223) is presented in the table below.

Table 2

Number and Percentages of Participants as per Demographic Information (N = 223)

Demographics	Categories	N	%
Age	18 - 25	70	31.4
	26 -30	73	32.7
	31 - 40	36	16.1
	41 - 58	14	6.3
	Above 60	6	2.7
	Missing Values	24	10.8
Education	No schooling completed	1	0.4
	12th grade, no diploma	1	0.4
	High school graduate, with a diploma	7	3.1
	Some university, but less than 1 year	6	2.7
	One or more years of university, no degree	31	13.9
	Bachelor's degree	66	29.6
	Master's degree	78	35.0
	Doctorate (Ph.D. or MD)	11	4.9
	Missing Values	22	9.9

Scale Descriptive

The results of the study showed that participants reported a moderate level of toxic positivity with a mean score of 1.81 (*SD* = 0.418) on a 3-point Likert scale. Participants also reported a high level of emotional intelligence with a mean score of 3.73 (*SD* = 0.390) on a 5-point Likert scale. In terms of authenticity, the lower the score the higher the authenticity, therefore participants reported a slightly elevated level with a mean score of 3.37 (*SD* = 1.018) on a 7-point Likert scale. Participants reported a low level of perceived emotional

distress with a mean score of 2.31 (*SD* = 0.70) on a 4-point Likert scale. Finally, participants reported a relatively high level of surface acting with a mean score of 3.15 (*SD* = 0.760) on a 5-point Likert scale.

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations of the Scales

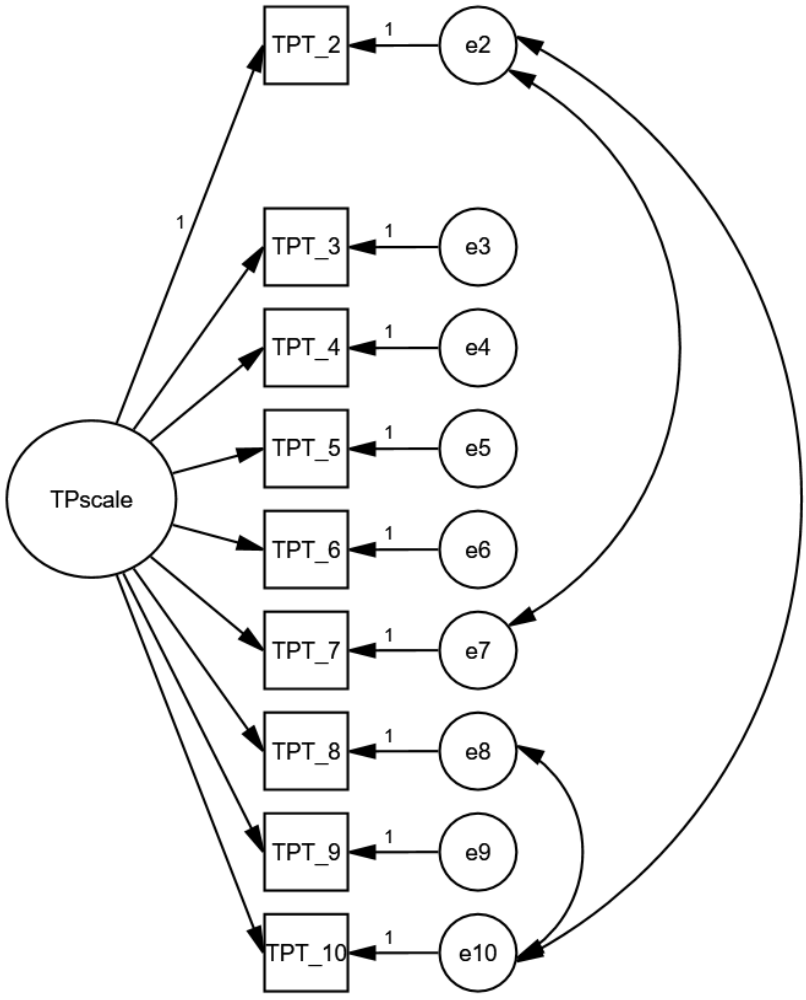
Measurement Tool	*M*	*SD*
Toxic Positivity	1.81	0.418
Emotional Intelligence	3.73	0.390
Authenticity	3.37	1.018
Perceived Emotional Distress	2.31	0.700
Surface Acting	3.15	0.760

Main Analyses

CFA

Figure 1

The CFA model of the IDRLab-TPT without the first Question TPT_1.



Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to investigate the factor structure of the IDRlab-TPT questionnaire. The analysis was carried out using AMOS software,

version 26, and involved a sample of 218 participants who completed the IDRlab-TPT. The model included nine observed endogenous variables and ten unobserved exogenous variables, and the sample size was deemed adequate for the analysis. A one factor solution was presumed as per the scale authors and tested such that all 10 items were considered as part of one underlying latent construct of Toxic Positivity. The initial results showed a poor fit and upon inspecting the modification indices, it was found that the item 1 was loaded poorly on the latent construct of Toxic Positivity (<.3) and was thus removed. Additionally, two significant paths between the error terms were noted and suggested. First, e2 was negatively associated with e10 ($\beta = -.091$, $p < .05$). Second, e8 was positively associated with e10 ($\beta = .286$, $p < .01$). Additionally, e2 was positively associated with e7 ($\beta = .399$, $p < .001$). Once these changes were made, the model was tested again (See Figure 1).

The results of the CFA revealed that the model was a good fit for the data, as indicated by a non-significant chi-square value ($\chi^2 = 70.693$, df = 24, $p < .001$). The goodness of fit index (GFI) and adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) for the tested model were found to be adequate, with values of 0.93 and 0.869, respectively. According to Hu and Bentler (1999), values greater than 0.9 are generally considered acceptable for these indices. The comparative fit index (CFI) value obtained for the IDRlab-TPT questionnaire in our study was 0.894, which is below the widely accepted cutoff value of 0.95 for an adequate fit. However, some researchers suggest that values close to 0.95 can still be interpreted as providing an acceptable representation of the underlying structure. The root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) value of 0.095 indicated a mediocre fit, as this value doesn't fall between the range of 0.05 to 0.08, which is generally considered a reasonable fit. A value below 0.05 is considered a good fit, while a value of 0.095 would be considered indicative of a mediocre fit (Browne & Cudeck, 1993). The standardized root mean square

residual (SRMR) is a fit index that measures the average discrepancy between the observed and predicted covariance matrices. An SRMR value of 0.08 or lower is considered as an acceptable fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999), hence the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) of .041 is considered acceptable. These fit indices suggested that the model provided an acceptable representation of the underlying structure of the IDRlab-TPT questionnaire.

The standardized regression weights indicated that all items were significant predictors of the latent construct they were intended to measure ($p < .001$) in this case Toxic Positivity. This finding provides evidence indicating that the items on the scale are measuring the same underlying construct. The modification indices indicated that there were no significant residual correlations among the items, indicating that the IDRlab-TPT questionnaire items were independent of one another.

In conclusion, the results of this study suggest that the IDRlab-TPT questionnaire has adequate factorial validity and reliability, and can be used to assess attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control toward the target behavior. These findings contribute to the growing body of research on the measurement of positive and negative attitudes and their impact on behavior and provide researchers with a reliable tool for measuring toxic positivity.

The results showed that the IDRlab-TPT questionnaire positively predicted TPT_2 ($\beta = .527$, $p < .001$), TPT_3 ($\beta = .320$, $p < .001$), TPT_4 ($\beta = .380$, $p < .001$), TPT_5 ($\beta = .377$, $p < .001$), TPT_6 ($\beta = .422$, $p < .001$), TPT_7 ($\beta = .567$, $p < .001$), TPT_8 ($\beta = .566$, $p < .001$), TPT_9 ($\beta = .768$, $p < .001$), and TPT_10 ($\beta = .643$, $p < .001$).

Overall, the results indicated that the IDRlab-TPT questionnaire had adequate factorial validity and good reliability, and therefore can be used to assess toxic positivity-

related attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors in a diverse range of populations. However, further research is needed to explore the relationship between toxic positivity and mental health outcomes, as well as to investigate the effectiveness of interventions targeting toxic positivity in reducing negative psychological outcomes.

Correlation analysis

The Pearson's correlation test was conducted to examine the relationships between Toxic Positivity (TPT) and four outcome variables: Surface Acting (SA), Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS), Authenticity Scale (AS), and Perceived Emotional Distress (PED). The correlations indicate that TPT is significantly correlated with SA (r = -.38, p < .01), AS (r = .289, p < .01), and PED (r = .27, p < .01), but not with SEIS (r = -.034, p = .618) (See Table 4 for exact error rates).

Contrary to Hypothesis 1, which proposed a positive correlation between TPT and SA, the negative correlation between TPT and SA suggests a moderate negative relationship between these constructs. Specifically, individuals who exhibit higher levels of toxic positivity are less likely to engage in Surface Acting behaviors.

Hypothesis 2 proposed that there would be a significant negative correlation between Toxic Positivity (TPT) and Emotional Intelligence (SEIS). The findings suggest that while there was a negative correlation between TPT and SEIS, Hypothesis 2 was not supported as the correlation was likely due to error given the significance value of greater than 5% (r = -.034, p = .618).

Hypothesis 3, which proposed a negative correlation between TPT and Authenticity, is supported by the data, since in this case the lower a person scores on the Authenticity Scale the higher their Authenticity level, the results suggest that the higher an individual score on

IDRlab-TPT, the higher they score on the Authenticity Scale which means the less authentic they are, as the score of TPT and that of AS are positively correlated. This suggests that individuals who exhibit higher levels of toxic positivity are less likely to experience authenticity in their emotions.

The data also supports Hypothesis 4, which predicts a positive correlation between TPT and PED. This finding suggests that individuals who exhibit higher levels of toxic positivity experience elevated levels of Perceived Emotional Distress.

In summary, the results of this study suggest that the Toxic Positivity Test (TPT) is positively associated with surface acting, and negatively associated with authenticity and perceived emotional distress, providing support for the convergent validity of the TPT in relation to these constructs. Convergent validity refers to the extent to which a measure correlates with other measures that are theoretically related to the construct being measured (Campbell & Fiske, 1959). However, the non-significant findings for Hypotheses 1 and 2 suggest that further research is needed to fully understand the relationships between Toxic Positivity, Emotional Intelligence, and Authenticity. In other words, while the TPT is related to some of the constructs we examined, there may be more complex relationships at play that require additional investigation.

Overall, the results suggest that the TPT has a degree of convergent validity in relation to the constructs of surface acting, authenticity, and perceived emotional distress. Nevertheless, the evidence for Hypotheses 1, and 2 is not significant, indicating that further research is needed to fully understand the relationships between toxic positivity, emotional intelligence, and authenticity.

Table 4

Correlation Matrix

Variables	Estimates	Probability
TPT - SA	-.38**	0.000
TPT - SEIS	-0.034	0.618
TPT - AS	.289**	0.000
TPT - PED	.27**	0.000

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Chapter 5

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to assess the validity (construct and convergent) and reliability of a questionnaire measuring Toxic Positivity. Convergent validity was assessed by examining the correlation of the tool with theoretically related constructs of Surface Acting behavior, Emotional Intelligence, Authenticity, and Perceived Emotional Distress. From this aim, four hypotheses were generated as follows:

Toxic Positivity and Surface acting behavior will be positively correlated.

Toxic Positivity and Emotional Intelligence will be negatively correlated.

Toxic Positivity and Authenticity will be negatively correlated.

Toxic Positivity and Perceived Emotional Distress will be positively correlated.

Interpretation of Findings

The findings of this study suggest that the IDRlab-TPT questionnaire has adequate factorial validity and reliability, and can be used to assess attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control toward toxic positivity. The results of the CFA indicated that the model was a good fit for the data, providing evidence for the adequacy of nine of the 10 items on the IDRlab-TPT questionnaire in predicting the construct of Toxic Positivity thus corroborating convergent validity.

Contrary to Hypothesis 1, the results showed a negative correlation between Toxic Positivity and Surface Acting behavior, suggesting that individuals who exhibit higher levels of toxic positivity are less likely to engage in Surface Acting behaviors. While there was no significant correlation observed between Toxic Positivity (TPT) and the Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS), the data supports Hypothesis 3, which proposed a negative correlation between TPT and Authenticity, indicating that individuals who exhibit higher

levels of toxic positivity are less likely to experience authenticity in their emotions. Finally, the data supports Hypothesis 4, which predicts a positive correlation between TPT and Perceived Emotional Distress, suggesting that individuals who exhibit higher levels of toxic positivity experience elevated levels of Perceived Emotional Distress.

Toxic Positivity and Surface Acting

The present study investigated the relationship between toxic positivity and surface acting. Contrary to the initial hypothesis, the results revealed a significant negative correlation between the two constructs. This finding suggests that individuals who engage in toxic positivity may be less likely to engage in surface acting to regulate their emotions.

Toxic positivity is characterized by a rigid and excessive focus on positive emotions and positive thinking, leading to the invalidation or dismissal of negative emotions or experiences (Pickett et al., 2021). This phenomenon may induce individuals to feel obligated to maintain a positive attitude, regardless of what would be considered as an appropriate response for a given situation. Therefore, individuals may not even recognize the negatively viewed emotions in themselves leading to improper processing of negative emotions. In this study, a negative correlation between Surface Acting and Toxic Positivity was observed, indicating that as individuals engage in more surface acting, they tend to score lower on measures of Toxic Positivity. Such pressure to constantly only experience the positive and act happy may hinder individuals from engaging in Surface Acting, which involves intentionally displaying emotions that do not correspond to one's true feelings (Hülsheger et al., 2010), since the individual could be unaware of any other emotion but the positive ones, so in this case an individual could lack of sufficient insight to intentionally recognize “negative” emotions to hide them in the first place. The main apparent distinction between Toxic Positivity and Surface Acting could be intentionality and awareness. When engaging in

Surface Acting, a person is aware of their negative emotions but chooses to display different emotions in certain situations. In contrast, Toxic Positivity involves disregarding negative emotions altogether and adopting a positive attitude, often without awareness or intentionality to recognize and address negative emotions.

Previous research indicates that individuals who perceive social norms around emotional expression and feel compelled to conform to them are more likely to engage in Surface Acting (Hülsheger et al., 2010), conversely, individuals who do not feel such pressure may be less likely to engage in Surface Acting. These cultural and individual factors may account for the negative correlation observed in this study between toxic positivity and surface acting. Recent studies further support the link between surface acting and negative outcomes, such as emotional exhaustion and burnout among employees (Lim & Moon, 2023; Al Kadi et al., 2023).

Moreover, the pressure to always appear positive and happy may inhibit individuals from engaging in surface acting, as surface acting involves intentionally presenting an emotional display that does not align with one's true feelings. Previous research has suggested that the pressure to conform to social norms around emotional expression may lead individuals to engage in surface acting. Grandey et al. (2005) found that employees who perceived high levels of emotional display rules were more likely to engage in surface acting, also Abraham (1998) found that individuals who felt pressure to hide their emotions were more likely to engage in surface acting.

Previous studies, such as Hülsheger et al. (2010), highlight the influence of cultural and individual factors on emotional regulation strategies. The negative correlation between toxic positivity and surface acting could also be influenced by cultural factors. For example, in collectivistic cultures, such as those found in East Asia, there is a greater emphasis on

maintaining positive social relationships and avoiding conflict, which may lead individuals to engage in surface acting to maintain social harmony. Conversely, in individualistic cultures, there is a greater emphasis on expressing one's authentic emotions (Matsumoto & Yoo, 2006), which may lead individuals in these cultures to be less likely to engage in surface acting.

Lebanese culture is a complex and multifaceted system that is shaped by a variety of historical, social, and religious factors. One of the defining features of Lebanese culture is its emphasis on family and extended kinship ties, which is known as "familism." Research has shown that the family is considered the cornerstone of Lebanese society, and maintaining strong family ties is a cultural priority (Assaf & Khoury, 2018). Familism is reflected in many aspects of Lebanese culture, including the influence of family on decision-making, the value placed on intergenerational relationships, and the importance of hospitality and generosity (Chamieh & Saade, 2018). Another key aspect of Lebanese culture is its emphasis on honor, which is a cultural value system that places a high value on respect, reputation, and social standing. This is reflected in Lebanese customs such as deference to elders and authority figures, and the expectation of upholding one's own and one's family's honor through actions that demonstrate courage, loyalty, and respect for authority (Abdallah, 2014). This aspect of Lebanese culture is known as "honor culture," and it has been linked to violence against women and other forms of interpersonal violence (Hokayem, 2019).

Honor culture is a cultural value system that prioritizes respect, reputation, and social standing (Cohen et al., 2011). Within this cultural framework, displaying negative emotions may be viewed as a form of vulnerability because it involves revealing one's inner thoughts and feelings, which can be interpreted as a sign of weakness or fragility (Kim & Sherman, 2007). As a result, individuals from honor cultures may be less likely to express vulnerability

and negative emotions (Le et al., 2018). This is in contrast to cultures that place a greater emphasis on emotional expression and disclosure, where expressing negative emotions is often viewed as a healthy way of coping with stressors and promoting social connections (Gross & John, 2003). Research has shown that individuals from honor cultures may be less likely to express vulnerability and negative emotions due to concerns about losing face or damaging their reputation (Kim & Sherman, 2007).

These findings underscore the importance of considering cultural and individual factors when examining emotional regulation strategies. In our cultural context, the likelihood of engaging in either Toxic Positivity or Surface Acting - both maladaptive behaviors that can negatively impact emotional well-being - is contingent upon various factors. Given the emphasis on Honor and familism, individuals are likely to display positive emotions that are highly regarded within the cultural context. However, the extent to which individuals engage in surface acting or toxic positivity may depend on their level of self-awareness and insight regarding the appropriateness of their emotional expression in a given situation. Therefore, the manifestation of these behaviors may be influenced by individual-level factors, such as emotional intelligence and cultural norms regarding emotional expression. It is crucial therefore to recognize the complex interplay of cultural and individual factors that may influence emotional regulation (Matsumoto & Yoo, 2006; Shiota et al., 2018).

In summary, the present study found a significant negative correlation between toxic positivity and surface acting, indicating that individuals who engage in toxic positivity may be less likely to engage in surface acting to regulate their emotions. While future research is needed to elucidate the underlying mechanisms of this relationship, the literature suggests

that cultural and individual factors, including pressure to conform to social norms around emotional expression, may play a role in this negative correlation.

Toxic Positivity and Emotional Intelligence

The current study aimed to investigate the relationship between Toxic Positivity and Emotional Intelligence. However, there is still limited research regarding the relationship between these two constructs. For instance, Ciarrochi et al. (2000) have critically evaluated the emotional intelligence construct, but there is not enough evidence to conclude whether or not there is a relationship between toxic positivity and emotional intelligence. The lack of significant correlation in the current study may not necessarily indicate the absence of a relationship but rather emphasizes the need for further research to fully understand the complexity of this relationship. It is worth noting that recent research has suggested that the relationship between Toxic Positivity and Emotional Intelligence may be more complex than previously thought. For instance, according to Reshetnikov et al. (2020), the results of their study suggest a positive correlation between Toxic Positivity and Emotional Recognition, but a negative correlation between Toxic Positivity and Emotional Intelligence. This indicates that individuals who exhibit higher levels of toxic positivity may possess a greater sensitivity to the emotions of others, while at the same time experiencing difficulty in effectively managing their own emotions.

The lack of significant correlation between toxic positivity and emotional intelligence (EI) in our study could be attributed to the method of assessing EI. Specifically, we utilized the Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS) to assess EI as a trait, rather than as a set of skills that can be developed through practice. Previous research has suggested that assessing EI as a trait may limit the understanding of the relationship between EI and other constructs, as it does not fully capture the dynamic nature of emotional intelligence development

(Petrides & Furnham, 2001; Van Rooy & Viswesvaran, 2004). Indeed, studies have shown that assessing EI as a set of skills that can be developed through practice may reveal stronger relationships between EI and other constructs, such as self-compassion and emotional (Austin, 2004; Yip et al., 2016). Therefore, future studies should consider assessing EI as both a trait and a set of skills to better understand its relationship with toxic positivity and other related constructs.

Furthermore, similarly to this study, Austin (2004) used SEIS to assess Emotional Intelligence and found no significant correlation between Emotional Intelligence and other variables of interest. The authors suggest that the fact that emotional intelligence was assessed as a trait rather than a set of skills that can be developed through practice (using SEIS) could be an explanation for this lack of significance. In other words, individuals who score high on measures of emotional intelligence may be more likely to regulate their emotions effectively, regardless of their level of endorsement of toxic positivity.

Toxic positivity is a maladaptive emotion regulation strategy that involves avoiding and suppressing negatively viewed emotions in favor of focusing only on positive emotions, it can be described as rejecting, denying, or displacing "any acknowledgement of stress, negativity, and possible disabling features of trauma" (Sokal, Trudel, & Babb, 2020). While emotional intelligence has been linked to adaptive emotion regulation strategies such as cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression (Ciarrochi, Chan, & Caputi, 2000), previous research has found no significant correlation between emotional intelligence and maladaptive emotion regulation strategies such as avoidance and suppression (Berking, Wirtz, Svaldi, & Hofmann, 2014). One possible explanation for this lack of correlation is that maladaptive emotion regulation strategies such as avoidance and suppression may be more automatic and less conscious compared to other strategies, which could make it more difficult for emotional

intelligence to have a significant relationship with these strategies (Berking et al., 2014). Similarly, toxic positivity may also be more automatic and less conscious compared to other strategies, which could contribute to the lack of significant correlation between toxic positivity and emotional intelligence. Further research could help in better understanding the relationship between emotional intelligence and toxic positivity.

The lack of a significant correlation between Toxic Positivity and Emotional Intelligence may also be explained by cultural or contextual factors. For instance, Chen et al. (2020) found that the negative relationship between toxic positivity and well-being was stronger for individuals in Western cultures, compared to those in East Asian cultures. This suggests that cultural values and beliefs about positivity and negativity may influence the relationship between toxic positivity and other outcomes.

In light of these findings, it is important to recognize the potential complexities of the relationship between toxic positivity and emotional intelligence. While the current study did not find a significant correlation between these constructs, further research is needed to explore the potential role of cultural and contextual factors in shaping this relationship. Overall, this study contributes to the broader research landscape on toxic positivity and emotional intelligence and highlights the need for further investigation.

Toxic Positivity and Authenticity

To validate the IDRLab Toxic Positivity Test (TPT), this study examines its construct validity using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), as well as its convergent validity by examining its correlation with other related variables, including Authenticity. Specifically, this study hypothesizes that there will be a negative correlation between authenticity and TPT. The results of the study support this hypothesis, and this section aims to provide a discussion of the findings in the context of other related studies.

According to Ford et al. (2014), placing a high value on happiness, which is often associated with an emphasis on positivity and avoidance of negative emotions, was found to be associated with greater symptoms and diagnosis of depression. This suggests that an excessive focus on happiness may lead to a lack of authenticity and an inability to fully acknowledge and process negative emotions. In line with this, Kashdan and Biswas-Diener (2014) argue that embracing negative emotions and experiences can lead to greater authenticity and well-being. These findings are consistent with previous research, such as Held (2004), which also suggests a negative relationship between toxic positivity and authenticity. Furthermore, the current study supports this notion by showing a significant negative correlation between toxic positivity and authenticity. It is worth noting that while the current study found a significant negative correlation between Surface Acting and Toxic Positivity, there was also a significant positive correlation between Surface Acting and Authenticity in the dataset. This suggests that individuals who engage in Surface Acting may still be authentic, since they are better at recognizing their negative emotions and displaying other emotions to better suit their situation. In contrast, those who exhibit toxic positivity are disregarding negative emotions altogether and not dealing with them, leading to a lack of authenticity.

It is possible that the negative correlation between TPT and authenticity is due to the fact that TPT involves suppressing or ignoring negative emotions (Quintero & Long, 2019), whereas authenticity involves being true to oneself and accepting one's emotions, both positive and negative (Rayan & Deci, 2000). In contrast, individuals who engage in toxic positivity may be more likely to present a façade of positivity to others, rather than expressing their true emotions, which can lead to feelings of inauthenticity.

While the present study found a significant negative correlation between toxic positivity and authenticity, the relationship between these constructs is still not fully understood. Some studies have reported contradictory findings regarding the association between toxic positivity and authenticity. For instance, one study reported a positive correlation between toxic positivity and authenticity in a sample of college students, suggesting that toxic positivity may be adaptive in certain situations, such as when dealing with minor setbacks or challenges. However, these results warrant further investigation and replication in different populations and contexts to better understand the complex relationship between toxic positivity and authenticity. Future research should also explore the potential mediating and moderating factors that may influence this relationship, such as cultural differences, coping styles, and personality traits.

In summary, the results of the present study offer support for the inverse association between TPT and authenticity. These findings highlight the importance of raising awareness of the potential adverse impact of toxic positivity on psychological well-being and authenticity. Additionally, this study contributes to the validation of the IDRLab-TPT scale, which demonstrates adequate convergent validity and can efficiently measure toxic positivity as a unique construct that is distinct from authenticity and other related constructs. However, further research is necessary to investigate the association between TPT and emotional intelligence, as well as to address any conflicting results that may arise in future studies.

Toxic Positivity and Perceived Emotional Distress

The results showed a significant positive correlation between toxic positivity and perceived emotional distress, which supports the fourth hypothesis.

This finding is consistent with previous research indicating that pressure to maintain a positive outlook can lead to emotional suppression and psychological distress (Ehring et al.,

2010; Synder et al., 2006; Kashdan & Rottenberg, 2010). Additionally, avoiding or denying negative emotions, a characteristic of toxic positivity, can result in negative outcomes such as anxiety, depression, and stress (Gross & Levenson, 1997; Mauss et al., 2007; Mor & Winquist, 2002). This study contributes to the literature by providing additional evidence of the relationship between toxic positivity and increased emotional distress. Furthermore, several studies' findings suggested a significant positive correlation between toxic positivity and negative affect (Quinto et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2021), while Li et al. (2022) found a negative correlation between toxic positivity and adaptive emotional regulation strategies, which resulted in greater emotional distress. Our findings are consistent with previous research that has found similar relationships between toxic positivity and negative affect (Quinto et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2021) and maladaptive emotional regulation strategies (Li et al., 2022). These results suggest that toxic positivity has negative consequences and underscore the importance of promoting authentic emotional expression and effective emotional regulation. While correlational data cannot establish causality, it is essential to explore the potential negative effects of toxic positivity on well-being. Future research could investigate the causal relationships between toxic positivity and perceived emotional distress and explore the effects of toxic positivity on various aspects of well-being.

Some studies report different findings regarding the relationship between toxic positivity and perceived emotional distress (Caprara et al., 2016). For example, the systematic Review of Dianovinina et al. (2023) found studies reporting no significant correlation between toxic positivity or similar constructs and emotional distress and studies that showed positive correlation between toxic positivity and depressive symptoms was fully mediated by rumination, suggesting that toxic positivity may indirectly contribute to emotional distress through maladaptive cognitive processes. These studies differ in their methodology, sample

characteristics, and measures used to assess toxic positivity and emotional distress. Further research is necessary to clarify the nature and direction of the relationship between toxic positivity and emotional distress and to explore potential moderating and mediating factors that may explain the inconsistencies in the existing literature.

In conclusion, the current study supports the hypothesis that toxic positivity and perceived emotional distress are positively correlated and provides evidence that the IDRlab toxic positivity test has construct and convergent validity. Our findings contribute to the growing body of literature on the negative effects of toxic positivity and highlight the need for interventions to promote emotional acceptance and regulation. Future research should investigate the causal relationship between toxic positivity and emotional distress and explore other types of validity for the toxic positivity test.

IDRLabs - Toxic Positivity Test CFA

The present study utilized confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to assess the underlying structure of the IDRlab-TPT questionnaire, a newly developed measure of toxic positivity (Kline, 2016). The model consisted of nine observed endogenous variables and ten unobserved exogenous variables, based on a sample size of 218 participants. The obtained fit indices from the CFA suggested an acceptable model fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999). It is also pertinent to mention that one item from the scale displayed inadequate psychometric properties during the CFA. meaning that it did not contribute to measuring the construct of toxic positivity effectively. The removed item was "In my experience, giving space to negativity only brings one further down." The reason for the low loading could be due to several factors, such as the item being too complex or vague, not being applicable to the target population, or having low variability in responses. Therefore, it was not contributing to the overall measurement of toxic positivity and had to be removed to improve the scale's

psychometric properties. This investigation is the first of its kind to examine the factor structure of the IDRlab-TPT questionnaire, thereby providing a crucial entry point for further academic inquiry. Nonetheless, the findings should be considered preliminary and require replication.

The standardized regression weights obtained from the CFA indicated good convergent validity, with all items showing significant positive loading on the toxic positivity factor, ranging from 0.32 to 0.768 (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2018). The correlation analysis showed a significant positive correlation between toxic positivity and perceived emotional distress, supporting previous findings that suggest toxic positivity can have negative consequences on individuals' emotional well-being (Jeung et al., 2018). Additionally, the significant negative correlation between authenticity and toxic positivity ($r = 0.295$, $p < 0.001$) provided further evidence for the convergent and discriminant validity of the TPT questionnaire.

The results of the CFA analysis support the factorial validity and reliability of the TPT questionnaire (Kline, 2016), consistent with previous research that used the TPT to measure toxic positivity-related attitudes (Akamatsu & Gherghel, 2021). The significant positive correlation between the TPT constructs and the Theory of Planned Behavior constructs suggests that the TPT can predict behavior related to toxic positivity (Ajzen, 1991).

However, future studies should further examine the criterion validity of the TPT questionnaire by testing its predictive validity and its correlation with actual behavior related to toxic positivity, such as ignoring or dismissing negative emotions in others. Additionally, the generalizability of the TPT questionnaire across different cultures and populations should be investigated further (Brislin, 1980).

In conclusion, the findings of this study suggest that the IDRlab-TPT questionnaire has strong factorial validity and reliability and can serve as a useful tool for assessing toxic positivity. The TPT questionnaire can contribute to the growing body of research on the measurement of positive and negative attitudes and their impact on behavior.

Limitations

Language proficiency is an important factor that affects the quality and quantity of data collected in self-report measures. In a longitudinal face-to-face survey conducted in the United Kingdom, non-native speakers were found to provide lower quality data and were less likely to respond to the self-completion section of the survey compared to native speakers (Wenz et al., 2021). This is because non-native speakers may not fully understand the nuances of the questions or may not be able to accurately convey their thoughts and feelings in a language that is not their native language (Bialystok & Poarch, 2014). Similarly, the language of survey administration can affect both the quality and quantity of recall in bilingual respondents (Wenz et al., 2021). Although the language of origin of the questionnaire may not be directly applicable to a study, potential language barriers in self-report measures should still be considered, as they may impact participants' ability to provide accurate responses (Peytcheva, 2020). Therefore, modifying the limitation statement to include a discussion on the potential impact of language barriers on self-report measures would be relevant in ensuring the validity and reliability of the data collected.

This study has several limitations that need to be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the language of origin of the IDRLab - TPT questionnaire is English, which is not the native language of the participants. Previous research has shown that the language in which a test is administered can affect the results obtained, particularly if the language is not the native language of the participants (Al Shamsi et al., 2020). A meta-analysis of studies on

language effects in testing found that non-native speakers generally perform worse than native speakers on tests, and this could have influenced the results obtained (Bialystok & Poarch, 2014). Thus, future research should consider administering the questionnaire in the participants' native language to control for this potential confound.

Second, the sample used in this study was mainly composed of English-speaking individuals in the Lebanese community, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other cultural group. Furthermore, around 70% of the participants were under 30 years old, which could limit the generalizability of the results to other age groups (Arnett, 2000). To improve the generalizability of the findings, future studies should aim to recruit a more diverse sample that includes individuals from different cultural backgrounds and age ranges.

Third, the study relied on self-report measures, which are subject to response biases such as social desirability bias or memory bias (Tourangeau & Yan, 2007). Participants may have provided answers they thought were more socially acceptable or may have inaccurately recalled their emotions and behaviors. To address this limitation, future studies should consider using multiple informants or incorporating behavioral measures to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of individuals' experiences.

The data were collected online, which could have led to low response rates and missing data due to technical issues or disinterest in the study (Gosling et al., 2004). This could have potentially biased the results, as individuals who choose to participate in an online study may differ from those who do not. To mitigate this limitation, future studies should consider using multiple recruitment methods and offering incentives to increase participation rates and minimize missing data.

Finally, the study only examined two aspects of validity, namely construct and convergent/discriminant validity, and did not examine other types of validity such as

criterion-related validity (Cook & Beckman, 2006). Future studies should consider establishing the criterion-related validity of the TPT scale by examining its ability to predict related outcomes, such as emotional regulation strategies or mental health outcomes.

In summary, this study has several limitations that could have influenced the results obtained. To improve future research, researchers should consider administering the questionnaire in the participants' native language, recruiting a more diverse sample, using multiple informants or measures, using multiple recruitment methods, and examining other types of validity such as criterion-related validity.

Future Direction

Future research should aim to address the limitations of this study and build on its findings. First, it would be important to replicate this study with a more diverse sample that includes individuals from different cultural backgrounds and age ranges to establish the generalizability of the findings. Second, future studies should consider using multiple informants and incorporating behavioral measures to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of individuals' experiences. Third, to overcome the potential biases associated with online data collection, future studies should consider using multiple recruitment methods and offering incentives to increase participation rates and minimize missing data. Given that the language of origin of the IDRLab-TPT is English and the study was conducted with an English-speaking sample, future research should consider translating and validating the questionnaire in other languages, including Arabic, to improve its cross-cultural applicability. Future research should aim to establish the criterion-related validity of the TPT scale by examining its ability to predict related outcomes such as emotional regulation strategies or mental health outcomes. Additionally, it would be valuable to explore the potential cultural differences in the conceptualization and experience of toxic positivity and its relationships

with other constructs. To elaborate on the potential cultural differences in the conceptualization and experience of toxic positivity, it is important to consider how different cultural values and norms may shape individuals' attitudes and beliefs towards positive emotions and expressions which may influence how individuals perceive and respond to Toxic Positivity, and how it relates to other constructs such as well-being, emotional regulation, and social support. Therefore, further research could examine these cultural nuances to better understand how Toxic Positivity operates in different contexts and how it may impact individuals' psychological and social functioning. In Lebanon, it would be important to acknowledge and respect the cultural values of honor and familism when exploring the potential cultural differences in the conceptualization and experience of toxic positivity conducting focus groups or interviews with participants could help shed some light on the conceptualization of Toxic Positivity in a given culture other than the one used to develop the original version of the test. Finally, future research could explore potential interventions or strategies to mitigate the negative effects of toxic positivity on mental health and well-being. Overall, while this study provides valuable insights into the relationship between toxic positivity and perceived emotional distress, its limitations highlight the need for further research to establish the generalizability, reliability, and validity of the TPT scale.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study aimed to validate the IDRlabs Toxic Positivity Test (IDR-TPT) in the Lebanese community using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) while examining convergent validity. The findings of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis revealed that the model was a good fit for the data and provided an acceptable representation of the underlying structure of the IDR-TPT questionnaire, indicating evidence for construct validity. Pearson's correlation test showed that TPT is significantly correlated with Surface Acting

(SA), Authenticity Scale (AS), and Perceived Emotional Distress (PED), but not with Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS). The negative correlation between TPT and SA suggests a moderate negative relationship between these constructs that needs further investigation, while the negative correlation between TPT and AS suggests that individuals who exhibit higher levels of toxic positivity are less likely to experience authenticity in their emotions. The positive correlation between TPT and PED suggests that individuals who exhibit higher levels of toxic positivity are more likely to experience emotional distress. The psychometric properties of the IDR-TPT were found to be satisfactory, and the instrument can be used to assess attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control toward toxic positivity.

The findings of this study have several implications for theory, practice, and policy. The implications of the findings of this study can be summarized as follows. The study provides a reliable tool for measuring toxic positivity, which can be useful for clinicians in assessing attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control toward patients' needs. The negative correlation between Toxic Positivity and Surface Acting behavior challenges the assumption that individuals who exhibit higher levels of Toxic Positivity are more likely to engage in Surface acting Behavior. The negative correlation between Toxic Positivity and Authenticity highlights the importance of promoting Authentic emotional expression and discouraging Toxic Positivity in individuals by employing a healthier and more compassionate attitude towards our emotions. Finally, the positive correlation between Toxic Positivity and Perceived Emotional distress emphasizes the need to encourage healthy emotional expression and discourage Toxic Positivity in individuals. These findings contribute to the growing body of research on the measurement of positive and negative attitudes and their impact on behavior and provide a reliable tool for measuring Toxic Positivity. Further research is needed to fully understand the relationships between Toxic

Positivity, Emotional Intelligence, and other variables. This study's findings on the negative impact of Toxic Positivity on emotional well-being could have important implications for individuals' mental health in a post-pandemic world. The pandemic has led to an increase in Toxic Positivity messages, such as "make the most of it" or "just be positive," which could potentially exacerbate feelings of guilt, shame, and inadequacy in individuals experiencing emotional distress. The study's results suggest that these messages may not be helpful and could actually be harmful to individuals' mental health. As we emerge from the pandemic, it is crucial to re-evaluate these messages and consider their potential impact on individuals' well-being. Given the potential cultural differences in the conceptualization and experience of Toxic Positivity, it would be valuable for future research to explore the construct's cross-cultural applicability and examine whether Toxic Positivity is more prevalent in one culture or the other. Overall, this study provides a valuable contribution to bridging the gap between the clinical and research communities by providing a valid tool to assess toxic positivity, a concept already discussed among clinicians, it highlights the need for further research and critical evaluation of the messages that individuals receive and internalize regarding positivity and emotional well-being in a post-pandemic world.

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Appendix A

Participant information letter

Dear Ms./Mr.

I am Zakia Kahhoul, a student at Haigazian University from the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences. I am currently carrying out a research study titled The IDRlabs Toxic Positivity Test (IDR-TPT), Validation Study in Lebanon advised by Dr. Lucy Tavitian.

You are being asked to take part in this study since we believe you might provide a valuable input regarding the topic at hand, also you fit this study's selection criteria.

Kindly read the below information to decide whether you would like to participate in this research study.

Purpose of the Research Project

This research study aims at validating the IDR-TPT test in the Lebanese community. This step will be an entry point for Toxic Positivity to the literature and enable interested scholars to examine this novel construct and its relation to other psychological variables and its effect on our behaviors and reactions. This study also aims at providing clinicians with the proper tool to assess Toxic Positivity, allowing them to better tailor their intervention to the patients' needs and best interest. On a Societal and Individual levels, this study could contribute towards spreading awareness regarding Toxic Positivity and encouraging people to adopt a healthier attitude when dealing with negative emotions. This study will also contribute towards the partial fulfillment of my academic study requirements at Haigazian University.

What will I be asked to do?

- If you choose to participate in this research study, you will be asked to fill in a questionnaire. Your participation will involve completing a survey that entails statements that you will have to rate based on agreement, and a demographic form for approximately (15 to 20) minutes. Participation in this project is voluntary. You are free to withdraw anytime without having to give any reason for your withdrawal.

What are my rights?

- Participation in this study is completely voluntary, anonymous, and confidential. Your name or any other identifying information will not be asked.
- Data you provide along with data from all participants in the present research will be stored in aggregate in a password protected folder. The data will be analysed and reported in aggregate. Only the principle investigators of this study will have access to the compiled data which will be stored for a period of 10 years post data. During this time, you have the right to inspect the data.
- You have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time for any reason. Your decision to refuse participation or withdraw will not involve any penalty or loss

of benefits to which you are entitled. Discontinuing participation in no way affects your relationship with Haigazian University.

- This research study has been reviewed and has received clearance from the Haigazian University ethics committee (Lucy Tavitian). If you have any further concerns about your rights as a research participant, please, do not hesitate to contact Dr. Lucy Tavitian via Email: lucy.tavitian@haigazian.edu.lb.

What are the risks and benefits of participation?

- Participation in this study does not involve any physical risk or emotional risk to you beyond the risks of daily life.
- You will receive no direct benefits from participating in this research; however your participation does help researchers better understand the psychometric properties of the IDR-TPT measuring Toxic Positivity.

Contact information
If you have any questions or concerns about the research, you may contact:

Name, title: Zakia Kahhoul, MA Clinical Psychology Candidate
Affiliation(s): Haigazian University
Telephone: 71 338 369
Email: ZKAHHOUL@students.haigazian.edu.lb

Name, title: Lucy Tavitian,
Affiliation(s): Haigazian University
Telephone: 01 349 230 Ext.
Email: lucy.tavitian@haigazian.edu.lb

Appendix B

IDRlabs - Toxic Positivity Test

Below is a list of questions that relate to life experiences common among people who experience toxic positivity. Please read each question carefully and indicate whether it applies to you or not.

	Questions	Not me	Describes me somewhat	Definitely me
Q1	In my experience, giving space to negativity only bring one further down.			
Q2	I pretend to be happy even when I am not.			
Q3	I brush difficult issues aside with statements such as “it is what it is.”			
Q4	I believe that people who focus too much on their problems instead of just staying positive are likely to become depressed.			
Q5	I often feel guilty for feeling sad.			
Q6	When someone is feeling down, I encourage them by saying things like “it could be worse.”			
Q7	I hide or mask my negative feelings.			
Q8	I minimize my negative experiences with “feel good” statements or quotes.			
Q9	I try to “just get on with it” by dismissing my negative emotions.			
Q10	I force myself to be happy by focusing on the positive.			

Appendix C

Surface Acting

		Always Strongly agree	Very often Agree	Sometimes Undecided	Rarely Disagree	Never Strongly disagree
1	I put on an act in order to deal with people customers in an appropriate way					
2	I fake a good mood when interacting with people customers.					
3	I put on a “show” or “performance” when interacting with people customers					
4	I just pretend to have the emotions I need to display for the given situations my job.					
5	I put on a “mask” in order to display the emotions I need in given situations the job.					
6	I show people feelings that are different from what I feel inside.					
7	I fake the emotions I show when dealing with people customers.					

Appendix D

Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	I know when to speak about my personal problems to others					
2	When I am faced with obstacles, I remember times I faced similar obstacles and overcame them					
3	I expect that I will do well on most things I try					
4	Other people find it easy to confide in me					
5	I find it hard to understand the non-verbal messages of other people					
6	Some of the major events of my life have led me to re-evaluate what is important and not important					
7	When my mood changes, I see new possibilities					
8	Emotions are one of the things that make my life worth living					
9	I am aware of my emotions as I experience them					

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
10	I expect good things to happen					
11	I like to share my emotions with others					
12	When I experience a positive emotion, I know how to make it last					
13	I arrange events others enjoy					
14	I seek out activities that make me happy					
15	I am aware of the non-verbal messages I send to others					
16	I present myself in a way that makes a good impression on others					
17	When I am in a positive mood, solving problems is easy for me					
18	By looking at their facial expressions, I recognize the emotions people are experiencing					
19	I know why my emotions change					

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
20	When I am in a positive mood, I am able to come up with new ideas					
21	I have control over my emotions					
22	I easily recognize my emotions as I experience them					
23	I motivate myself by imagining a good outcome to tasks I take on					
24	I compliment others when they have done something well					
25	I am aware of the non-verbal messages other people send					
26	When another person tells me about an important event in his or her life, I almost feel as though I have experienced this event myself					
27	When I feel a change in emotions, I tend to come up with new ideas					
28	When I am faced with a challenge, I give up because I believe I will fail					

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
29	I know what other people are feeling just by looking at them					
30	I help other people feel better when they are down					
31	I use good moods to help myself keep trying in the face of obstacles					
32	I can tell how people are feeling by listening to the tone of their voice					
33	It is difficult for me to understand why people feel the way they do					

Appendix E

The Authenticity Scale

		Doesn't describe me at all	Somewhat doesn't describe me	Slightly doesn't Describe me	Irrelevant to my case	Slightly describes me	Somewhat describes me	describes me very well
1	I think it is better to be yourself than to be popular (AL)							
2	I don't know how I really feel inside (SA)							
3	I am strongly influenced by the opinions of others (AEl)							
4	I usually do what other people tell me to do (AEI)							
5	I always feel I need to do what others expect me to do (AEl)							
6	Other people influence me greatly (AEl)							
7	I feel as if I don't know myself very well (SA)							
8	I always stand by what I believe in (AL)							

		Doesn't describe me at all	**Somewhat doesn't describe me**	**Slightly doesn't Describe me**	**Irrelevant to my case**	**Slightly describes me**	**Somewhat describes me**	**describes me very well**
9	I am true to myself in most situations (AL)							
10	I feel out of touch with the "real me" (SA)							
11	I live in accordance with my values and beliefs (AL)							
12	I feel alienated from myself (SA)							

Appendix F

Perceived emotional distress.

		Not at All	Sometimes	Often	Very Much So
1	I get easily irritated				
2	I feel strained				
3	I feel distant from my friends				
4	I am angrier than I am willing to admit				
5	I feel nervous				
6	I feel confused and restless				
7	I feel overwhelmed by "simple difficulties"				
8	I worry that my situation condition will get worse				
9	I am not enjoying the things I usually do for fun				
10	I am losing hope in the fight against my difficulties illness				
11	I "boil inside", but I try not to show it				
12	I am losing faith in my progress medical treatment				
13	I feel angry				
14	I feel sad				
15	I feel like a failure				

Appendix G

Debriefing Form for Participation in the IDR-TPT Validation Study

Haigazian University

Thank you for your participation in our study! Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Purpose of the Study:

We previously informed you that the purpose of the study was ***to better understand Toxic Positivity***. The goal of our research is to ***examine both the psychometric properties of the IDRLabs Toxic Positivity Test and the convergent and discriminant validities that will be assessed in relation to emotional intelligence dimensions and surface acting behavior.***

We realize that some of the questions asked may have provoked strong emotional reactions. As researchers, we do not provide mental health services and we will not be following up with you after the study. However, we want to provide every participant in this study with a comprehensive and accurate list of available clinical resources, should you decide you need assistance at any time. Please see information about local resources at the end of this form.

Useful Contact Information:

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, its purpose, or procedures, or if you have a research-related problem, please feel free to contact the researcher(s), Zakia Kahhoul, MA Clinical Psychology Candidate, Haigazian University via email: ZKAHHOUL@students.haigazian.edu.lb.

If you feel upset after completing the study or find that some questions or aspects of the study triggered distress, talking with a qualified clinician may help. If you feel you would like assistance, please contact:

Service Provider	**Hotline**	**Location**	**Active till**	**Online or F2F**
International Medical Corps	81311748 8:00am-4:00 pm (ask for internal referrals depending on the area)	Beirut, Mt Lebanon, Maten, Baabda	31/08/2023 – 29/9/2023 – 30/4/2024 (depending on the area)	F2F
Caritas Lebanon	70119283 – 81194255 (Monday-Friday, 8:00-14:00)	Mt Lebanon: Metn Kesrouane	31/12/2023	F2F

Service Provider	Hotline	Location	Active till	Online or F2F
Médecins du Monde	Open from Monday till Friday from 8:00 AM till 5:00 PM Hotline number: +961 81 314 932	Chiyah	30/04/2024	F2F
MEDAIR	81427269	Bachoura	31/12/2022	Both
RESTART Lebanon	76-708083 (All Weekdays)	Restart Center - Furn el Chebak	31/12/2022	Both
SIDC	76 028 221	SIDC Center sin el Fil	31/12/2022	F2F
Amel	Ersal: 81-831448 Kamed El Loz: 81-991329 Machghara: 71-531380 El Ain: 71-427765 Bourj El Barajneh: 81-847280 Khiam: 81-006813 Tyre: 71-542704 Bazourieh:76-831107	South and Mt Lebanon	N/A	Both
Embrace	1564	National Level	1/1/2025	Both

Or check the List of PHCCs Within the MoPH Network that Have Mental Health Services under The National Mental Health Programme

Final Report:

If you would like to receive a copy of the final report of this study (or a summary of the findings) when it is completed, please feel free to contact us.

Zakia Kahhoul, MA Clinical Psychology Candidate
Haigazian University
ZKAHHOUL@students.haigazian.edu.lb

Lucy Tavitian,
Instructor of Psychology, Haigazian University
lucy.tavitian@gmail.com
lucy.tavitian@haigazian.edu.lb