

## Psykens immunsystem

## *- et eksperimentelt studie med fokus på dissonansmekanismens rolle i psykens immunsystem*



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| Rapportens samlede antal tegn (med mellemrum & fodnoter): 268.507  Svarende til antal normalsider: 111,9  Siri Folsø Sørensen, Studie nr. 20104203  Christine D. Emanuelsen, Studie nr. 20104211 | 10. Semester, Psykologi  Stressklinikken (CKH)/CETES  Aalborg Universitet  29. maj 2015  Vejleder: Einar B. Baldursson |

**Abstract**

**Is it plausible to assume that human beings possess a psychological immune system? The present thesis revolves around this theme. One fundamental assumption in present thesis is that more complex social interactions and cooperation demands more complex psychological mechanisms. It is argued that social pain as a psychological mechanism play an important part regarding regulation of social interaction – therefore, social pain is conceptualised as a vital factor of the psychological immune system.**

**More specifically, we elaborate on the evolutionary development of psychological capacities to achieve and maintain well-being – these capacities are presumed to be essential in the psychological immune system.**

**The primary purpose of the dissonance-mechanism concerns obtaining and maintaining consistency. Furthermore, we have reason to believe that the dissonance-mechanism plays a part in this psychological immune system. To elaborate on these assumptions we formed and conducted four experiments.**

**These experiments are based on following hypotheses: 1) dissonance induction causes changes regarding self-esteem, 2) dissonance induction causes changes regarding self-compassion, 3) dissonance induction causes changes regarding interpersonal orientation, 4) dissonance induction causes changes regarding rumination and 5) dissonance-emotions occur as a stable result of dissonance induction.**

**We found no support concerning hypotheses 1, 2 and 4. Results regarding hypothesis 3 indicated that dissonance induction causes subjects to become less attention seeking. Furthermore, dissonance-emotions follow as a result of dissonance induction in one out of four experiments (hypothesis 5). Due to prior research concerning dissonance induction we have reason to recommend further research considering various methodological challenges.**

**Apart from the discussion concerning these hypotheses, our thesis also elaborate on interesting and unexpected results. These results suggest that interpersonal differences should be accounted for when doing scientific research regarding the dissonance-mechanism.**

**Finally, we discus whether the dissonance-mechanism can be conceptualised as a process rather than a mechanism that can be induced immediately. Additionally, we find it reasonable to believe that the dissonance-mechanism supports both stability and flexibility in the psychological immune system.**