Shame and guilt: their relationship with self-esteem and social connectedness in Irish adults.

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Bachelor of Arts degree (Psychology Specialisation) at DBS School of Arts, Dublin.

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March 2014
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Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to my friends and family for your constant encouragement and support throughout this challenging but worthwhile process. I don't know if I would have been able to achieve this without your relentless kindness, cups of tea and confidence in me over the last few months. I would also like to thank all the people who gave up their time to participate in this study, you are very much appreciated. Finally, I would like to thank my academic supervisor; Ms Patricia Orr. I am so grateful for your time, support and guidance given in through this process.
Abstract

The aim of the present study was to investigate the relationship between shame and guilt to aspects of psychological well-being such as self-esteem and social connectedness in Irish adults. Data was collected from 115 adults; 39 males and 76 females between the ages of 18 and 52. An online questionnaire was administered incorporating the State Shame and Guilt Scale (Marshall, Sanfier & Tangney, 1994), the Social Connectedness Scale (Lee & Robbins, 1995), Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) and demographic questions regarding gender and age. Results found that as feelings of shame and guilt increase, levels of self-esteem and social connectedness subsequently decrease. No gender difference was observed in shame, guilt, self-esteem or social connectedness. Findings support previous research suggesting the negative implications of such emotions on a persons sense of self-worth and social interactions.
1. Introduction

Psychological well-being is a concept defined by positive mental health and general happiness that encompasses relationships with others, personal growth and the acceptance of self (Acun-Kapikiran, 2011). Recognising low levels of psychological well-being are of paramount importance as such can have negative implications on mental health and contribute to life dissatisfaction (Acun-Kapikiran, 2011). In contemporary literature, shame and guilt are classified as self-conscious emotions or ‘affects’ defined by adverse feelings and thoughts and are, as a result, some of the most difficult experiences known to society on a universal level (Tangney, 2002). Due to the magnitude of these negative emotions, shame and guilt play an important role in mental health conditions such as social anxiety disorder (Hedman, Ström, Stünkel & Mörtberg, 2013), depression (Kim, Thibodeau, & Jorgensen, 2011), and suicidal ideation (Bryan, Morrow, Etienne & Ray-Sannerud, 2013). In recent years, these affects have provoked much interest and recognition in realms of social, clinical, developmental and counselling Psychology (Tangney & Dearing, 2002). The aim of the present study is to build on current research to further investigate the relationship between shame and guilt to aspects of psychological well-being operationalised as self-esteem and social connectedness in an adult population in Ireland.

1.1 Differentiating Shame from Guilt

The concept of shame has been characterised by numerous researchers and theorists in recent years as an emotion that yields negative self-judging effects. Shame is described by Brown (2012, pg.69) as "the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing that [oneself is] flawed and therefore unworthy of love and belonging." Shame is an individual experience however, is often mediated by the presence of another (Tangney, 2002). Shame is distinguished by an individual’s level of anxiety or anticipation of evoking a sense of repulsion in another person (Troop &
Redshaw, 2012). In order to grasp this concept, it is important to note that the word 'shame' originates from the Indo-European word 'skam' which means 'to hide' (Gilbert, 2001). Similarly, guilt is understood as a powerful emotion based on an individual’s own negative judgement of their behaviour and actions (Gilbert, 2001). However, whilst shame is understood as a multi-dimensional concept, guilt is more one dimensional and is defined as self-blame or conviction that results in the experience of regret relating to a specific action or event that has occurred (Dryden, 2009). Furthermore, guilt is characterised by Ausubel (1955) as a 'wounded moral sense'.

Shame and guilt are inextricably interlinked and are hence often paired together as both are negative emotions that each evoke a similar degree of self-evaluation, interfere with mental health, help cultivate moral values and behaviours and play an important role in interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships (Tangney, 2002). These emotions can produce similar consequences; each can motivate individuals towards self-refinement and promote change at both a personal and behavioural level (Gausel & Leech, 2011). However, these ‘affects’ are commonly confused; therefore a differentiation between the two is necessary for the understanding of how these emotions uniquely operate and function (Gausel & Leech, 2011). Although shame and guilt are considered as negative emotions and can emerge from the same situational occurrence (Benetti-McQuoid & Bursik, 2005), it has been argued that each can have different implications for human behaviour and psychological well-being (Bryan et al., 2012). Theoretical and empirical evidence suggests substantial differences between shame and guilt (Dryden, 2009) as well as aforementioned similarities. Gilbert (2001) postulates that shame is based on the belief that the self as a whole ‘is’ bad, while guilt is based on the belief that one 'did' something bad. This distinction is of pre-eminent importance when conducting research as each emotion can have different influences on aspects of psychological well-being. Baumeister (1994) proposed that one of the main distinctions is that guilt has more positive than negative effects on interpersonal relationships. For example, the
guilt experience elicits a desire for reconciliation, confession and acknowledgement of wrong-doing (Baumeister, 1994) whilst shame triggers a hiding response (Gilbert, 2001) and can result in emotional avoidance (Gilliland, South, Carpenter, & Hardy, 2011). Therefore, shame is maladaptive as it does not benefit the individual experiencing it, while conversely, guilt can assist in the amendment of fractured relationships or circumstances (Shepard & Rabinowitz, 2013).

Furthermore, Gausel and Leech (2011) discovered that shame initiates a coping style that motivates self-defense, while guilt triggers problem-focused coping styles; providing favourable conditions for personal development. Guilt has been correlated with pro-social behaviour such as conflict resolution, while shame has been linked with negative effects on personal well-being such as depression, eating disorders, and addiction (Brown, 2012, pg.12). Guilt, unlike shame, is mostly based on self-judgement rather than on overt concern of the opinion of others (Gilbert, 2001). It is important to highlight the differences as well as the similarities of such phenomena in order to provide context for the objectives of the present study based on previous available literature. For the purpose of the present study, the psychological constructs of shame and guilt will be discussed both independently and in relation to each other.

1.2 Self-Conscious Emotions

Shame

According to researchers Hedman et al. (2013), there are two classifications of shame; internal and external. Internal shame is inwardly focussed and refers to how the individual judges and perceives him/herself, while external shame is characterised by an individual’s apprehension and also expectation of the negative judgement of others (Hedman et al., 2013). Internal and external shame are often experienced simultaneously. For example, if an individual perceives him/herself as defective or insufficient, they are inclined to believe that they are viewed this way by others (Shepard & Rabinowitz, 2013). External shame is highly correlated with depressive
symptoms (Kim et al., 2011) while internal shame is correlated with eating disorders such as bulimia nervosa (Gee & Troop, 2003, as cited by Troop & Redshaw, 2012). Shame is central to social identity (Kaufman, 1996) and is strongly related to the sense of self, as the crux of shame is an individual’s assessment of self and fixations about the perception of others (Gilbert, 2001). Shame is a complex psychological phenomenon and Ayers (2003) highlights this by indicating that it is common among individuals to experience shame as a result of being ashamed.

The construct of shame is becoming a popular topic of research in areas of social, clinical and developmental psychology in recent years due to the exciting and intriguing findings. A strong emerging motif in current research in this area proposes a close link between this self-conscious emotion and social interactions and exchanges between persons (Tangney, 2002). Gilliland et al. (2011) suggests that in order to defend against the painful experience of shame, often an individual will withdraw from social interactions and engage in negative self-critical thinking. This theory suggests a strong link between social interactions and shame and provides a deeper understanding of the often detrimental impact of such shameful experiences in realms of life that are crucial for self-development such as socialising. Researchers (Baldwin, Baldwin & Ewald, 2006) highlight the impact of shame in the development of self-identity, as being seen by others is essential in the process of formulating a sense of self. Furthermore, it has been posited that shame can have an effect on the dynamics within interpersonal relationships and social interactions (Kim, Thibodeau & Jorgensen, 2011). Concurrent with this theme, research examining the role of shame and guilt in social anxiety disorder (SAD) found that shame and social anxiety are strongly linked as they share similar attributes (Hedman et al., 2013). For example, they both involve anxiety concerning the opinion of others (Hedman et al., 2013). The Hedman et al. (2013) study was conducted exploring the relationship between shame and guilt, social anxiety and symptoms of depression in a Swedish population of both males and females between the ages of 18 and 64 (Hedman et al., 2013). Results
found that high levels of external shame was significantly correlated with social anxiety in individuals with social anxiety disorder (SAD) and that depressive symptoms were significantly linked with shame but not with guilt (Hedman et al., 2013). The strong link between shame and social anxiety disorder in this study further reinforces shame as a socially dependent emotion. Moreover, the results of this study highlight the importance of the distinction between shame and guilt and the different effects of each emotion. The correlation between external shame and social anxiety in the Hedman et al. (2013) study exhibits the negative implications of shame, providing more evidence for the impact of shame on socialisation and also its role in depression.

In a meta-analysis examining the relationship between depressive symptoms, shame and guilt, researchers found that shame but not mild guilt was significantly linked with depression (Kim et al., 2011). According to Kim et al. (2011) depressive symptoms and shame are comparable in experience. For example, both share feelings of inadequacy, hopelessness and an aversion to seeking help due to the desire in both cases to avoid social support (Kim et al., 2011). It has been theorised that one of the reasons for this strong association is due to the lengthy, intensely focused attention on the supposed imperfections of the self involved in shame which can lead to depression (Orth et al., 2006). Also reported by Kim et al. (2011), depressive symptoms not only share similar psychological attributes to shame but also share analogous biological processes. Both shame and depressive symptoms cause an extreme activation of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis, involved in the responses to stress and immune functioning (Kim et al., 2011). The results of this study illustrate the damaging effect shame can have on a person’s mental health and psychological well-being.

**Guilt**

Feelings of guilt often ensue from incidents in which an individual perceives their behaviour as breaching a certain moral conduct or social norm regarded as personally important to the
individual (Gausel & Leech, 2011). Contemporary literature consists of debates around the idea that guilt often produces more beneficial outcomes than shame (Tangney & Dearing, 2002). Theorists arguing the social benefits of guilt postulated that guilt has been linked with the strengthening of interpersonal relationships rather than the destruction of them (Nelissen, 2014). According to Nelissen (2014) guilt is a mediator for empathy and compassion in the individual experiencing it. Similarly, Tangney and Dearing (2002) proposed that guilt-proneness predicts willingness to accept responsibility for wrong-doings. Conversely, Gausel and Leech (2011) argue that while this emotion can produce positive outcomes, it has also been correlated with anger, self-hatred and self-punishment. This ruminant self-critical thinking can have negative implications on mental health resulting sometimes in depression (Kim et al., 2011). Moreover, according the DSM (American Psychiatric Association, 2000, as cited by Johnson & O'Brien, 2013), excessive guilt is one of the symptoms of depression. This is due to the harmful self-evaluation involved in the guilt experience, according to (Johnson & O'Brien, 2013). However, it is important to note that different levels of guilt can have varying effects on psychological well-being. In a meta-analysis, researchers Kim et al. (2011) found that unhealthy unrelenting guilt was significantly correlated with depression but adaptive un-excessive guilt was not. Whilst theoretical literature contending the positive outcome of guilt is abundant, there are not enough experimental studies to support this conceptualisation. Therefore, further research in this area is of good merit.

In a study conducted by Bryan et al. (2012) both shame and guilt and their relationship with mental health was explored. Researchers of this study investigated the role of shame and guilt in suicidal thoughts in a sample of military personnel and veterans (Bryan et al., 2012). Results showed that both emotions are high among military personnel with a record of suicidal thoughts. Furthermore, the higher the levels of shame and guilt found in military patients the correspondingly higher the intensity of suicidal ideation (Bryan et al., 2012). Bryan et al. (2012) argued that shame
and guilt are more powerfully liked with suicide than the effects of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or depression in military personnel. The results of the Bryan et al. (2012) study provide powerful implications for counselling and therapy while dealing with traumatised and suicidal military personnel. The current findings are imperative regarding the impact of both shame and guilt on not only an individual’s psychological well-being but on their will to live. The mounting body of research on shame and guilt confirming such impact on an individual’s psyche is both conspicuous and intriguing and makes further research in this area extremely plausible.

The difference between males and females in the experience of shame and guilt is relevant and topical due to the on-going stereotypes surrounding such phenomena. Existing research by (Else-Quest, Higgins, Allison, & Morton, 2012) examined gender differences among individuals experiencing shame and guilt. It is widely acknowledged that females are stereotypically more emotional than males. However, recent studies show that this difference is dependent upon the specific emotion experienced (Else-Quest et al., 2012). For example, it has been found that shame, guilt and embarrassment are more common among females than males while males display higher levels of self-assuredness and pride than females (Else-Quest et al., 2012). According to Kim et al. (2011), females are more socially orientated than males; therefore studies have shown that females are significantly more shameful than males. The same research examined the validity of such stereotypes and found evidence to support the theory that females do score higher than males in self-conscious emotions such as shame, guilt and embarrassment. Conversely, research in gender differences concerning the experience of shame has uncovered interesting findings. The study found that chronic shame is more common among males than females (Harder, 1995, as cited by Benetti-McQuoid & Bursik, 2005). Researchers Benetti-McQuoid and Bursik (2005) argue that one of the reasons for the fluctuation of results between genders is that the scales used to measure shame and guilt are often different and can result in varied findings. It is also proposed that a possible
explanation for females scoring higher in shame and guilt than males is due to gender roles. According to Benetti-McQuoid and Bursik (2005), society places higher expectations upon males to maintain a perception of physical and emotional strength, therefore males report lower levels of these emotions based on these social and gender norms. Due to social norms, it is commonly known that males are also less likely to admit their shame than women (Shepard & Rabinowitz, 2013). Most of the findings are parallel with social norms and stereotypes that portray women as more emotionally orientated than males. However, further research in this area is required in order to understand these emotions at a deeper level. The present study will explore gender differences in both shame and guilt experiences.

**Pride**

Pride is characterised by Brandon (1994) as an individual’s experience of satisfaction based on actions and obtained achievements. Pride has been defined as the opposite emotion of shame (Shepard & Rabinowitz, 2013). As with shame and guilt, pride is a robust self-conscious emotion that contributes to social conduct and psychological well-being (Orth, Robins & Soto, 2010). However, although shame and guilt are seen as negative, pride is described as a positive emotion (Orth et al., 2010). According to Orth et al. (2010) there are two types of pride, authentic and hubristic. Authentic pride is characterised by one's sense of achievement based on behaviour, while hubristic pride refers to an overall sense of self-assuredness one feels about him/herself (Orth et al., 2010). Authentic pride is the emotional underpinnings of self-esteem, while hubristic pride is related to extreme egotism (Shariff & Tracy, 2009). Research on authentic and hubristic pride has yielded simultaneous results as shame and guilt. For example, similar to guilt, as authentic pride increases psychological well-being and pro-social behaviour increases. Parallel with shame, as hubristic pride increases, psychological well-being and pro-social behaviour decreases (Orth et al., 2010). It is important to introduce pride as it is categorised as a self-conscious emotion that is linked with shame and guilt. However, for the purpose of the present study, pride will not be a focal point.
1.3 Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is a well-known, highly studied psychological trait that is described by Brandon (1994) as the beliefs a person has about their worthiness to be happy and ability to cope and deal with the daily occurrences of life. Self-esteem can be determined by positive or negative self-evaluation from comparing oneself to another (Reilly, Rochlen & Awad, 2014). According to Brandon (1994) self-esteem is a basic human need that is essential for productive positive functioning in areas of life such as interpersonal relationships, the workplace and place of education. High levels of self-esteem have been correlated with positive effects such as altruism, compassion, ability to embrace change and resilience (Brandon, 1994). However, low self-esteem is linked with depression (Steiger, Allemand, Robins, & Fend, 2014), addiction and low levels of resilience and competence to overcome life’s adversities (Brandon, 1994). Poston (2009) argued that most of the mental health and psychological well-being issues are as a result of low self-esteem. According to Gilbert and Procter (2006), low self-esteem increases individual’s vulnerability to negative mood states such as shame. The same researchers theorised that individuals with low self-esteem are less inclined to change their low mood due to a general lack of motivation and energy caused by the emotionally taxing fault-finding mind-set involved in low self-esteem (Gilbert & Procter, 2006). Similarly, theorists Wells, Glickauf-Hughes and Jones (1999) postulated that high levels of shame are correlated with low self-esteem due to the feelings of defect and flaw elicited in the shame experience mirroring that of low self-esteem. This correlation is pivotal as low self-esteem has been linked with mental health conditions such as depression (Johnson & O'Brien, 2013).

In a study exploring the relationship between shame, self-esteem and depression in a young adult Canadian sample, results found that shame, low self-esteem and introspective thinking were contributors to the development of depression (Johnson & O'Brien, 2013). Similarly, a recent study
conducted by Chinese researchers found that shame-proneness and low self-esteem were significant predictors of depression in a young adult Chinese sample (Jun, Mo, Mingyi & Xin, 2013). The researchers of this study also found that shame and guilt-proneness was significantly higher in females than in males (Jun et al., 2013). Empirical evidence regarding gender differences in self-esteem found that males have higher self-esteem than females (Else-Quest et al., 2012). Gender differences in self-esteem will be assessed in the present study. Due to the simultaneous link between the effects of shame and guilt on a person’s sense of value and self-worth, it is suggested that self-esteem is also a significant contributor in furthering the overall understanding of shame and guilt.

1.4 Social Connectedness

Social Connectedness can be understood as an individual’s relatedness with others and is defined by Lee and Robbins (1995) as a person’s subjective perception of the degree to which they are linked and connected with others in the social world. It is widely recognised that social connectedness is a fundamental psychological need (Seppala, Rossomando & Doty, 2013). According to Brown, (2012, pg.11) "the absence of love, belonging, and connection always leads to suffering." Therefore, individuals with low levels of positive social connectedness to others are more vulnerable to mental health difficulties such as social anxiety disorder, low self-esteem and a decrease in social skills leading to avoidance of social circumstances (Seppala et al., 2013).

According to Acun-Kapikiran (2011), social interaction is an important element in the make-up of psychological well-being. Jose, Ryan, and Pryor (2012) conducted a longitudinal study to investigate the predictability of psychological well-being based on social connectedness in an adolescent population over a three year period. Results found that individuals with higher levels of social connectedness in adolescence simultaneously reported higher levels of psychological well-
being in adult life (Jose et al., 2012). Similarly, the importance of social connectedness and feelings of belonging is outlined in the Social Psychology of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) which highlights the importance of connectedness in relation to psychological well-being (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Being connected to social surroundings is an important human need and aspect of life, therefore when disconnection occurs there are negative ramifications (Deci & Ryan, 2008). There have been links made between shame and social connectedness. Researcher Brown (2012, pg.68) postulates that shame is characterised by the excessive fear of feeling disconnected from others. The same researcher also proposed that healthy social connectedness can disarm shame from its often debilitating effects (Brown, 2013, pg.9). Building upon this, literature infers that the experience of shame elicits feelings of rejection from the social world which in turn, poses a threat to the primary human need of love, belonging and connectedness (Kim et al., 2011). This link is understandable and credible due to the wide body of literature that accentuates the social aspect of shame largely based on the importance of the perception of others.

Furthermore, there is a concurrent link between self-esteem and social connectedness. According to Baumeister (1993), self-esteem has a direct effect on interpersonal relationships. Researchers Lee and Robbins (1998) found a significant relationship between social connectedness and self-esteem, reporting that low levels of social connectedness correlated with low levels of self-esteem, high levels of social anxiety and low levels of social identity. Furthermore, theory supporting this link between social connectedness and self-esteem is highlighted in Maslow's hierarchy of needs pyramid which encompasses both self-esteem and social connectedness or a sense of belonging. Maslow asserts that these are central to the psychological needs of humans (Poston, 2009). Poston (2009) proposes that belongingness and self-esteem go hand in hand due to the influence that a sense of belonging has on an individual’s self-esteem. Maslow posited that the need to belong is the first fundamental psychological human need before self-esteem. It is clear
from this research that both self-esteem and social connectedness each have a part to play in psychological well-being and are likely related to shame and guilt due to the simultaneous themes throughout all constructs. Social connectedness is a potentially key element in the understanding of shame and guilt as evidence shows that often individuals will withdraw from social interactions in order to conceal the debilitating shame and guilt they are experiencing (Gilbert, 2001). According to Benetti-McQuoid and Bursik (2005) gender differences exist in socialisation and connectedness. For example, males are reportedly less dependent upon emotional relationships and more self-reliant while females are more dependent upon interpersonal relationships and less independent (Benetti-McQuoid & Bursik, 2005). Gender differences in social connectedness will be assessed in the present study.

1.5 Aims of the Present Study

The review of the current literature surrounding the constructs of shame and guilt confirms that these powerful emotions are topical and relevant as the experiences of these affects are unavoidable as social and emotional beings. Findings mainly conclude that shame can have negative implications on psychological well-being such as negative self-critical thinking, social anxiety, depression and sometimes suicidal thoughts. Guilt has also been correlated with negative effects such as self-hatred, intense feelings of regret and depression. However, most of the current emerging research on shame and guilt concludes that shame has more negative ramifications than guilt. While the literature above examines the link between shame and guilt and social anxiety, depression and suicidal ideation, there is a gap in literature exploring the relationship between shame and guilt and feelings of social connectedness and self-esteem. The aim of the present study is to investigate the as yet unstudied relationship between shame and guilt, social connectedness and self-esteem in adults in Ireland, building upon current available literature and operationalised concepts to do so. Overall the results from this study may contribute to the literature within the
fields of social psychology and counselling psychology and similarly may yield clinically useful information with implications for improvement in the understanding of psychological and mental health issues such as depression, social anxiety, and suicidal ideation.

1.6 Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There will be a significant relationship between both shame and guilt and self-esteem, suggesting that shame will have a more significant relationship with self-esteem than guilt.

Hypothesis 2: There will be a significant relationship between shame and social connectedness and guilt and social connectedness.

Hypothesis 3: There will be a significant relationship between social connectedness and self-esteem.

Hypothesis 4: There will be a significant difference in the report of shame, guilt, self-esteem and social connectedness across genders, suggesting that females will be significantly more ashamed and guilty than males.
2. Method

2.1 Participants

The total number of participants (n=115), consisted of 39 males and 76 females aged between 18 and 52 (Mean= 24.19 SD= 4.948). The two demographic overview questions on the first page of the survey asked participants their gender; categorised as male or female, and to enter their age in the box provided. Participants were informed that all responses were anonymous and participation was voluntary and were asked to tick a box to consent that they were over the age of 18 and were willing to take part in the study before beginning. Access to the sample was gained through convenience sampling and a snowball effect from an online questionnaire shared on social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

2.2 Research Design

A quantitative correlation design was obtained in this study by means of an online self-administered questionnaire. The predictor variables for this study are shame and guilt. The criteria variables are social connectedness and self-esteem. A project proposal was submitted to the Ethics Committee of DBS and approved prior to commencement of the study.

2.3 Materials

The first page of the online questionnaire included a cover sheet explaining the intentions of the study, the anonymity of responses and a statement claiming that participants are not obliged to take part and can withdraw from the study before submitting their response if so desired. The researchers contact details were provided and participants were informed that they could contact the researcher, should they have any further questions. The cover sheet also consisted of a question of consent and participants were asked to provide their gender and age. The remainder of the survey
consisted of standardised scales such as The State Shame and Guilt Scale (SSGS) (Marshall, Sanftner & Tangney, 1994) (see Appendix 1), The Social Connectedness Scale-Revised (Lee & Robbins, 1995) (see Appendix 3) and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) (see Appendix 2). The respective measures are considered to be valid and reliable as they have been used in previous research. The titles of the scales were removed and the order in which they were presented in the online questionnaire was mixed up to allow for some ignorance in order to ensure non biased answering. In addition, permission was granted for the use of the three respective scales from their respective authors. The scales used are as follows:

The State Shame and Guilt Scale (SSGS) (Marshall, Sanftner & Tangney, 1994)

The SSGS is a fifteen item self-rating scale that measured in-the-moment feelings of shame, guilt and pride experiences and are rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1= Not feeling this way at all, 5= Feeling this way very strongly). It is important to note, for this study, the scale was condensed into a 3 point scale (1= Not feeling this way at all, 2= Feeling this way somewhat, 3= Feeling this way very strongly). Participants were instructed to rate their response on the scale based on how they were feeling in the moment. Within the measure, shame, guilt and pride each have their own sub-scales. Shame items are 2, 5, 8, 11 and 14. Guilt items are 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15. Pride items are 1, 4, 7, 10 and 13. Examples of the shame items include: "I want to sink to the floor and disappear," and "I feel like I am a bad person." Guilt items include: "I feel remorse, regret," and "I feel like apologising, confessing." To measure pride, items include: "I feel worthwhile, valuable," and "I feel pleased about something I have done." Higher scores in shame, guilt and pride indicate high levels of shame, guilt and pride. Items for each sub-scale were obtained through empirical and theoretical literature surrounding shame and guilt. The Cronbach’s $\alpha$ for the three sub-scales were reliable: for shame items ($\alpha = .89$), guilt items ($\alpha = .82$), pride items ($\alpha = .87$) (Marshall, Sanftner & Tangney, 1994).
The Social Connectedness Scale-Revised (Lee & Robbins, 1995)

The Social Connectedness Scale-Revised was used to measure the degree of interpersonal closeness that is experienced between an individual and their social world as well as the degree of difficulty in maintaining a sense of closeness. The questionnaire consists of 20 items rated on a 6 point scale (1= Strongly Disagree, 6= Strongly Agree). Participants were instructed to rate the degree to which they agree or disagree with the statements using the scale provided. Items include statements such as: “I feel distant from people,” and “I am able to connect with other people.” Items 3, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 18 and 20 are reverse scored and all are totaled. Higher scores on the Social Connectedness Scale indicate higher levels of connectedness to others. Internal reliability for the Social Connectedness Scale is .91 and .82. Test-retest correlations revealed good test stability over a 2 week period (rs = .96 and .84, respectively). The SCS is a reliable measure as it has been field tested and used in numerous studies using known groups. (Lee & Robbins, 1995)

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE) (Rosenberg, 1965)

The RSE was used to measure the level of self-reported self-esteem in individuals. The scale consists of 10 items in total. Examples of such are: “On the whole, I am satisfied with myself,” and “I am able to do things as well as most other people.” Answers were rated on a 4 point Likert scale (1= Strongly agree, 2= Agree, 3= Disagree, 4= Strongly Disagree). Participants were asked to rate the degree to which they agree or disagree with the statements provided. Items 1,3,4,7 and 10 were recoded and all items were totaled to ensure that the higher individuals scored on the scale, the higher their self-reported self-esteem. The RSE was originally the measure used to assess the self-esteem of high school students. However, the scale has developed over time and is now a commonly used scale in a variety of different age groups. The RSE demonstrates a Guttman scale coefficient of reproducibility of .92, indicating exceptional internal consistency. Test-retest
reliability over a period of 2 weeks reveals correlations of .85 and .88, indicating excellent stability (Rosenberg, 1965). The RSE also exhibits concurrent, predictive and construct validity using known groups. The scale correlates significantly with other measures of self-esteem, including the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory and also correlates in the predicted direction with measures of depression and anxiety.

2.4 Apparatus

For the current research, the researcher’s computer was used along with IBM SPSS Statistics 21.

2.5 Procedure

The researcher recruited participants by sharing the link for the questionnaire through online social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. The study's basic underpinnings were presented next to the link. For example, it was briefly described that the study was looking at the relationship between shame and guilt and psychological well-being in adults over the age of 18 and would take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. Once the link was clicked, individuals were directed to the questionnaire cover sheet. Participants were informed of the nature of the study whilst not mentioning all variables (such as self-esteem and social connectedness) and were reminded that taking part was completely voluntary and that it was within the participant's right to withdraw from the study if so desired. Participants were also informed that once the response was submitted, withdrawal from participation was no longer permissible since responses are anonymous and all data is de-identified. No coercion was involved in obtaining respondents. The cover sheet contained demographic questions such as gender and age and participants were required to provide this information before continuing to the next page. The cover sheet also contained an informed consent. Participants could not proceed unless they consented to taking part. Upon completion of
the survey, respondents were provided with the researcher and supervisors email address, along with contact details for agencies such as Aware and Samaritans. In this study, 148 participants started the survey while 115 fully completed it, subsequently resulting in a 22.3% dropout rate overall.

2.6 Data Analysis

Data was gathered through Qualtrics and collected and analysed using IBM SPSS 21. Once data was collected, variable names were given to variables, a code was assigned to the missing values, and levels of measurement (scale, nominal, ordinal) were specified. Data was then recoded where necessary and all items in each scale were computed to get a total.

Analysis of variance was carried out to check for normally distributed data, to provide a summary of descriptive statistics and to identify any patterns in the participants' responses. This was to ensure the tests the researcher was considering using were appropriate. A spearman’s rho correlation was conducted to test H1 (there will be a significant relationship between shame, guilt and self-esteem). For H2 (there will be a significant relationship between shame, guilt and social connectedness) a spearman’s rho was carried out. A Pearson’s R correlation was conducted to assess H3 (there will be a significant relationship between social connectedness and self-esteem). An independent samples t-test was used to explore gender differences in social connectedness and self-esteem in H4, whilst a Mann Whitney-U was conducted to explore gender differences in shame and guilt in H4.
3. Results

The aim of the present study was to assess the relationship between various psychological variables such as shame, guilt, self-esteem and social connectedness. This section will discuss the results of the study, presented in three different sections. The first section will consist of reliability and validity tests on the scales used and corresponding sub-scales (see Table 1). Secondly, a description of statistics will be presented displaying the means and standard deviations of total scores and a summary of gender statistics (see Table 2). Lastly, a summary of inferential statistics will be displayed regarding the results of statistical tests run to assess each individual hypothesis.

3.1 Reliability and Validity Analyses

Reliability analyses were performed in order to determine the internal reliability of each respective scale and sub-scale where appropriate. Cronbach’s alpha (α) (Cronbach, 1951) is measured on a scale between zero and one; with a score greater than 0.7 indicating acceptable internal reliability, alpha values of between 0.5 and 0.7 are understood as moderate and scores below 0.5 are considered unacceptable and deems scales as internally unreliable (Cronbach, 1951). The cronbach's alpha values for the current study are mostly strong, therefore they are all acceptable in terms of reliability and validity (see Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale/Sub-scale</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Valid responses (% total)</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha (α)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SSGS Shame sub-scale</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>113 (98.3%)</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSGS Guilt sub-scale</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>112 (97.4%)</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSGS Pride sub-scale</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>113 (98.3%)</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSGS Total</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>112 (97.4%)</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCS Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>110 (95.7%)</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSE Total</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>113 (98.3%)</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were carried out to explore basic elements of the data in this study. These tests revealed that the sample included 115 participants, consisting of 39 (33.9%) males and 76 (66.1%) females aged between 18 and 52 (Mean= 24.13 SD= 5.050).

Scores for the Rosenberg Self Esteem scale ranged from 14 to 40, whilst for the social connectedness scale, scores ranged from 36 to 118. The shame sub-scale consisted of scores ranging from 5 to 13 and the guilt sub-scale ranged from 5 to 15. The means and standard deviations were calculated for each variable total of social connectedness, self-esteem, shame and guilt and also divided by gender (see Table 2). Table 1 illustrates the levels of shame, guilt, social connectedness and self-esteem across gender found in this study.

Table 2: Table displaying the means and standard deviations of variable scores across gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCS Total</td>
<td>90.55</td>
<td>15.28</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>89.57</td>
<td>15.39</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>91.04</td>
<td>15.31</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSE Total</td>
<td>28.72</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5.78</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>28.07</td>
<td>5.85</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shame Total</td>
<td>6.65</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>6.22</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>6.87</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guilt Total</td>
<td>7.66</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>7.19</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>7.89</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 illustrates that the mean scores for males levels of social connectedness was 89.57 (SD = 15.39), which is slightly lower than the mean scores for females 91.04 (SD = 91.04). The mean scores for males self-esteem was 30 (SD = 5.78), which is slightly higher than females scores 28.07 (SD = 5.85). The mean level of shame in females was 6.87 (SD = 2.31), which is slightly higher than males mean score of 6.22 (SD = 2.08). Females scores of 7.89 (2.86) for guilt was slightly higher than males scores of 7.19 (SD = 2.47). Overall, this description of statistics identifies a minor rather than a major difference between males and females across all variables.

3.3 Inferential Statistics

Hypothesis 1 states that there will be a significant relationship between shame, guilt and self-esteem, suggesting that shame will have a stronger significant relationship with self-esteem than guilt. Since shame and guilt data was not normally distributed, a spearman’s rho correlation coefficient was conducted. Results found that there was a moderately strong positive significant relationship between shame and guilt (rs(112) = 0.559, p = <.01, two-tailed). This means that as shame increases, guilt simultaneously increases. Therefore the null is rejected. To examine the relationship between shame and self-esteem a spearman’s rho correlation coefficient found that there was a strong negative significant relationship between shame and self-esteem (rs(112) = -.692, p = <.01, two-tailed) (see Table 3). Therefore as shame increases, self-esteem decreases and vice versa. This means that the null is rejected. Furthermore, to determine the relationship between guilt and self-esteem, a spearman’s rho correlation coefficient found that there was a moderate negative significant relationship between guilt and self-esteem (rs(111) = -.389, p = <.01, two-tailed) (see Table 3). This explains that as guilt increases, self-esteem decreases and vice versa. Therefore the null is rejected.
Table 3: Spearman’s rho correlation table displaying the relationships between shame and self-esteem and guilt and self-esteem.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>rs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shame</td>
<td>6.65</td>
<td>2.247</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Esteem</td>
<td>28.72</td>
<td>5.876</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guilt</td>
<td>7.66</td>
<td>2.746</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Esteem</td>
<td>28.72</td>
<td>5.876</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**significant at level 0.01**

Hypothesis 2 states that there will be a significant relationship between shame and social connectedness and guilt and social connectedness. To evaluate the relationship between shame and social connectedness a spearman’s rho correlation coefficient was carried out. Results found that there was a strong negative significant relationship between shame and social connectedness (rs(107) = -.547, p = <.01, two-tailed). This means that as shame increases, social connectedness decreases and vice versa. Therefore the null is rejected. To test the relationship between guilt and social connectedness a spearman’s rho correlation coefficient was also conducted. Results found that there was a weak negative significant relationship between guilt and social connectedness (rs(107) = -.287, p = .003, two-tailed). This reveals that as guilt rises, levels of social connectedness fall and vice versa. Therefore the null is rejected.

Hypothesis 3 states that there will be a significant relationship between social connectedness and self-esteem. To test this a pearson’s correlation coefficient was executed. Results found that there was a moderate positive significant relationship between social connectedness and self-esteem.
Hypothesis 4 states that there will be a significant difference in the levels of shame, guilt, self-esteem and social connectedness across genders, suggesting that female’s levels of shame and guilt will be higher than males. To test H4, an independent samples t-test was conducted. Results found that there was no significant difference in levels of social connectedness of males and females ($t(108) = .895, p = .635$). Therefore the null is accepted. An independent samples t-test also found that there was no significant difference in levels of self-esteem of males and females ($t(111) = .698, p = .099$). Therefore the null is accepted. A Mann-Whitney U was used to test the hypothesis that there will be a significant difference in levels of shame of males and females. This revealed that levels of shame in males and females did not differ significantly ($u(113) = -1.570, p = .117$). Therefore the null is accepted. A Mann-Whitney U test was also conducted to test the hypothesis that there will be a significant difference in levels of guilt in males and females. Results found that levels of guilt in males and females did not differ significantly ($u(112) = -1.241, p = .215$). Therefore the null is accepted.
4. Discussion

The aim of this study was to understand in greater depths the negative emotions; shame and guilt and to explore their relationship with self-esteem and social connectedness in an Irish adult population. The primary ambition of the current study was to explore correlations between all variables such as, shame, guilt, self-esteem and social connectedness. The secondary aspiration was to determine if a significant gender difference existed across all psychological variables. This study attempted to add to the literature on shame and guilt and their relationship with aspects of psychological well-being, expanding upon previous research to do so.

4.1 Summary of Key Findings

Results found that there was a significantly strong relationship between shame and guilt, indicating that as shame increases, guilt correspondingly increases and vice versa. Examination of the data also revealed a strong negative correlation between shame and self-esteem indicating that the higher the levels of shame, the lower the self-esteem. This correlation also revealed that the higher the self-esteem, the lower levels of shame in individuals. Guilt and self-esteem were moderately negatively correlated, this divulged that as levels of guilt increased, self-esteem decreased and vice versa. The correlation between guilt and self-esteem was not as strong as that detected between shame and self-esteem. These findings are in agreement with the predictions in hypothesis one.

It was observed that there was a strong negative correlation between shame and social connectedness. This demonstrates that as levels of shame increase, feelings of social connectedness decreases. Correspondingly, this explains that the higher the levels of social connectedness, the lower the levels of shame in individuals. Guilt was mildly negatively correlated with social connectedness, revealing that increased guilt is related to a decrease in social connectedness and
high levels of social connectedness is correlated with decreased levels of guilt. Furthermore, these results are in accordance with hypothesis two.

Results uncovered that self-esteem was moderately correlated with social connectedness. Therefore, as social connectedness increases, self-esteem simultaneously increases and vice versa. Moreover, these results are congruent with hypothesis three.

Although there were mild differences across the means of scores, no statistically significant difference was observed in males and females in levels of shame, guilt, self-esteem and social connectedness in this study (see Table 3 and Table 4). These findings were contrary to hypothesis four that predicted a significant difference between males and females across all variables.

4.2 Interpretation of Results

The results of this study confirm the acute link between shame and guilt. Findings revealed that these two emotions are undeniably associated and are often experienced in tandem, agreeing with previous, reviewed literature (Tangney, 2002; Gausel & Leech, 2011; Benetti-McQuoid & Bursik, 2005). This advocates that shame and guilt are not completely independent of one another and are experienced synchronously. This study also affirms that shame is linked with low self-esteem, supporting previous literature (Gilbert & Procter, 2006) contending that individuals experiencing low self-esteem are more susceptible to negative emotions such as shame. Similarly, this finding is in alliance with theorists (Wells et al, 1999) who postulated that the link between shame and self-esteem is justifiable due to the similarities in each construct towards feelings of inadequacy and worthlessness. Therefore, individuals experiencing high levels of shame are likely to acquire low self-esteem (Wells et al, 1999). Contrary to available and reviewed literature which advertises the adaptive nature of guilt, the present study found that guilt is linked with low self-
esteem, suggesting the adverse functioning of guilt. This denotes that the more guilt-laden individuals feel, the lower their self-esteem. Similarly, individuals with low self-esteem were significantly more guilty. However, these findings are interpreted with caution. Further research in this area is necessary for deeper understanding of the findings of this research.

Further analysis revealed an unsurprisingly close link between shame and social connectedness, verifying the findings of previous research which depicts shame as a maladaptive, socially stifling emotion (Tangney, 2002; Gilliland et al., 2011; Kim et al., 2011; Hedman et al., 2013; Brown, 2012). Moreover, this link proposes that as levels of social connectedness rise, shame declines among Irish adults, both male and female. This finding is in alignment with Brown’s (2013) theory that shame’s power depletes when positive connectedness with others occur. A link was also established between guilt and social connectedness, although not as robust as that found between shame and social connectedness. This finding is intriguing due to the large body of literature arguing the socially enhancing facets of guilt such as (Nelisson, 2014; Tangney & Dearing, 2002; Baumeister, 1994; Shepard & Rabinowitz, 2013; Brown, 2012). This finding however adds to literature contending the disadvantageous effects of guilt such as that by (Kim et al., 2011; Johnson & O'Brien, 2013) suggesting a link between guilt and depression and research by (Hedman et al., 2011) who found that guilt was a contributor for suicidal thoughts. The link between guilt and social connectedness in this study is thought-provoking, however caution is necessary with this interpretation.

Furthermore, this study confirmed the relationship between social connectedness and self-esteem. This finding reinforces the already established link between these two constructs by various researchers such as (Baumeister, 1993; Lee & Robbins, 1998; Poston, 2009) asserting that as levels
of social connectedness rise, as does self-esteem. In addition, as self-esteem increases, feelings of social connectedness increase.

Gender differences were not observed in shame, guilt, social connectedness or self-esteem in this study. This was contrary to previous literature arguing that females are more emotionally and socially charged than males, therefore score higher on shame, guilt and social connectedness (Shepard & Rabinowitz, 2013; Else-Quest et al., 2012; Benetti-McQuoid & Bursik, 2005; Kim et al., 2011) whilst self-esteem is higher in males according to (Else-Quest et al., 2012). Building upon previous research that challenges social norms and stereotypes, it is suggested that the findings from the present study reveal that shame, guilt and social connectedness are not exclusively female phenomenon and that self-esteem is not always higher in males. Moreover, both males and females share similar experiences in these areas in Irish adults.

4.3 Strengths and Limitations

There are many strengths of this study and some limitations that will be discussed in this section. One of the strengths is that the present study was conducted with a strong theoretical and empirical foundation. The research topic chosen is contemporary and interesting and builds upon the wide body of recent emerging literature in the area of negative emotions and psychological well-being (Tangney & Dearing, 2002). For example, shame, guilt, social connectedness and self-esteem are familiar terms to lay-people as each are understood and experienced universally. These emotions and psychological constructs are widely known to contribute or deduct from general happiness and satisfaction with life (Acun-Kapikiran, 2011; Brandon, 1994; Kim et al., 2011). Another advantage of the present study is that the sample was wide and varied and broadly representative of an Irish adult population; both male and female. Questionnaires obtained in this study are of exceptional internal reliability and validity and are robust and well used instruments
(Lee & Robbins, 1995; Rosenberg, 1965; Marshall, Sanfner & Tangney, 1994). Furthermore, online questionnaires are advantageous in nature as participants are more likely to be authentic and honest when the researcher is absent (Myers, Abell, Kolstad, Sani, 2010). In addition, titles of the individual scales were removed from the survey to minimize the social desirability bias (Myers et al., 2010). Social desirability bias refers to respondents answering questions in a manner that is biased in favour of the researchers aims (Myers et al., 2010). The online questionnaire proved to be a speedy and efficient method of gathering the necessary data.

Although there are strengths, there are also some weaknesses. One of the main limitations of this study is that emotions are difficult to measure due to individual difference and overt reliance on retrospection. The State Shame and Guilt Scale used is largely subjective and only measures ‘in the moment’ feelings of shame and guilt. It may have been interesting to use a situational scale that measured prone-ness to shame and guilt rather than ‘in the moment’ changeable feelings. This principle of the difficulties in measuring internal states applies to the Social Connectedness Scale and the Rosenberg Self Esteem scale also. This is understood as a major limitation as it may have impacted the results. As previously mentioned, although self-report questionnaires are useful in obtaining information regarding emotional states, there is an element of social desirability bias in the respondent that is unavoidable when using a questionnaire (Myers et al., 2010). Further limitations include a lack of male participants. There were 39.9% males while 66.1% females in this study. Although this is an acceptable ratio, recruiting more male participants may have enriched the data and been beneficial in the testing of gender differences across variables. In addition, a larger sample size in general may have profited this study even though 115 participants is a sufficient sample. The sample used for this study was convenience sampling. A more randomised sample would better represent the general population; therefore this can be interpreted as a limitation. Another limitation of the current study is that scores on the State Shame and Guilt questionnaire
were condensed from a 5 point Likert scale into 3 points. This is a possible limitation as this may have affected the results slightly however, this may not be significant. Subsequently, upon review of both the main strengths and evident limitations of this study, the present researcher can affirm a degree of confidence in the findings, whilst keeping in mind that results must be interpreted with discretion and care.

4.4 Future Research

Firstly, future research would be beneficial in examining age patterns in shame and guilt experiences. The current study did not look at age. However it would be interesting to explore whether these emotions are more prominent at a certain age or if they are experienced by all age groups. In addition, determining at what stage humans develop the capacity for these emotional experiences would also be beneficial. This study was predominantly correlational and empirical literature is limited in the area of shame and guilt. Further experimental research would be valuable in providing a more robust foundational ground for theoretical literature to stand upon. Moreover, whilst much literature argues that shame and guilt are distinguishable constructs, experimental evidence is limited in this area. Therefore literature would benefit from further experimental exploration of the differing effects of shame and guilt on aspects of psychological well-being.

4.5 Conclusion

The primary aim of this study was to address the gap in literature by assessing possible links between shame and guilt with elements of psychological well-being such as social connectedness and self-esteem in an adult Irish sample. Secondary objectives included an exploration of gender differences across all variables. Findings revealed that both shame and guilt are correlated with low self-esteem and low levels of social connectedness. Interestingly, the connection between shame and self-esteem was exceptionally strong; illustrating that high levels of shame are related to low
levels of self-esteem. Findings also disclosed a moderate relationship between social connectedness and self-esteem, outlining that the higher an individual's levels of social connectedness, the higher the self-esteem. Contrary to literature, no gender differences were observed in shame, guilt, self-esteem and social connectedness. Results of this study may contribute to literature in the field of social and counselling psychology and may also yield useful information for clinical psychologists dealing with individuals suffering from depression or social anxiety.
References


Brown, B. (2013). *The gifts of imperfection: Let go of who you think you're supposed to be and embrace who you are*. Hazelden Publishing.


Appendix 1

State Shame and Guilt Scale (SSGS)

The following are some statements which may or may not describe how you are feeling right now. Please rate each statement using the 5-point scale below. Remember to rate each statement based on how you are feeling right at this moment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Not feeling this way at all</th>
<th>Feeling this way somewhat</th>
<th>Feeling this way very strongly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I feel good about myself.</td>
<td>1 ------ 2 ------ 3 ------ 4 ------ 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I want to sink into the floor and disappear.</td>
<td>1 ------ 2 ------ 3 ------ 4 ------ 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I feel remorse, regret.</td>
<td>1 ------ 2 ------ 3 ------ 4 ------ 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I feel worthwhile, valuable.</td>
<td>1 ------ 2 ------ 3 ------ 4 ------ 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I feel small.</td>
<td>1 ------ 2 ------ 3 ------ 4 ------ 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I feel tension about something I have done.</td>
<td>1 ------ 2 ------ 3 ------ 4 ------ 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I feel capable, useful.</td>
<td>1 ------ 2 ------ 3 ------ 4 ------ 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I feel like I am a bad person.</td>
<td>1 ------ 2 ------ 3 ------ 4 ------ 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I cannot stop thinking about something bad I have done.</td>
<td>1 ------ 2 ------ 3 ------ 4 ------ 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I feel proud.</td>
<td>1 ------ 2 ------ 3 ------ 4 ------ 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I feel humiliated, disgraced.</td>
<td>1 ------ 2 ------ 3 ------ 4 ------ 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I feel like apologizing, confessing.</td>
<td>1 ------ 2 ------ 3 ------ 4 ------ 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I feel pleased about something I have done.</td>
<td>1 ------ 2 ------ 3 ------ 4 ------ 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I feel worthless, powerless.</td>
<td>1 ------ 2 ------ 3 ------ 4 ------ 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I feel bad about something I have done.</td>
<td>1 ------ 2 ------ 3 ------ 4 ------ 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The State Shame and Guilt Scale
Appendix 2

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

Please record the appropriate answer for each item, depending on whether you Strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with it.

1 = Strongly agree
2 = Agree
3 = Disagree
4 = Strongly disagree

1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
2. At times I think I am no good at all.
3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.
6. I certainly feel useless at times.
7. I feel that I'm a person of worth.
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.
9. All in all, I am inclined to think that I am a failure.
10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.
Appendix 3

SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS SCALE-REVISED

Directions: Following are a number of statements that reflect various ways in which we view ourselves. Rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement using the following scale (1 = Strongly Disagree and 6 = Strongly Agree). There is no right or wrong answer. Do not spend too much time with any one statement and do not leave any unanswered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Mildly Disagree</th>
<th>Mildly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. I feel comfortable in the presence of strangers ......................... 1 2 3 4 5 6
2. I am in tune with the world ....................................................... 1 2 3 4 5 6
*3. Even among my friends there is no sense of brother/sisterhood ............... 1 2 3 4 5 6
4. I fit in well in new situations ..................................................... 1 2 3 4 5 6
5. I feel close to people ............................................................... 1 2 3 4 5 6
*6. I feel disconnected from the world around me .................................. 1 2 3 4 5 6
*7. Even around people I know, I don't feel that I really belong .................. 1 2 3 4 5 6
8. I see people as friendly and approachable ....................................... 1 2 3 4 5 6
*9. I feel like an outsider .................................................................... 1 2 3 4 5 6
10. I feel understood by the people I know ......................................... 1 2 3 4 5 6
*11. I feel distant from people ............................................................ 1 2 3 4 5 6
12. I am able to relate to my peers ..................................................... 1 2 3 4 5 6
*13. I have little sense of togetherness with my peers ............................ 1 2 3 4 5 6
14. I find myself actively involved in people's lives ................................ 1 2 3 4 5 6
*15. I catch myself losing a sense of connectedness with society .................. 1 2 3 4 5 6
16. I am able to connect with other people ........................................... 1 2 3 4 5 6
*17. I see myself as a loner .................................................................... 1 2 3 4 5 6
*18. I don't feel related to most people ............................................... 1 2 3 4 5 6
19. My friends feel like family .............................................................. 1 2 3 4 5 6
*20. I don't feel I participate with anyone or any group ............................ 1 2 3 4 5 6

* reverse score Social connectedness scale-revised has two scoring options. The original scale consists of 8 items and the revised item consists of 20 items.
a) original = reverse score items 3,6,7,11,13,15,18,20 and sum 8 items. b) revised scale = reverse score items 3,6,7,9,11,13,15,17,18,20 and sum all 20 items.
Appendix 4

Questionnaire Cover Sheet

My name is Leah Ward and I am a 3rd year Psychology student in DBS. This research, examining the relationship between shame and guilt and psychological well-being, is being conducted as part of my final year project which will be submitted for examination.

You are invited to take part in this study and participation involves completing the attached anonymous survey. If any of the questions raise difficult feelings for you, contact information for support services are included on the final page.

Participation is completely voluntary and you are not obliged to take part. Participation is anonymous and confidential. Thus responses cannot be attributed to any one participant. For this reason, it will not be possible to withdraw from participation after the questionnaire has been collected. The questionnaires will be securely stored and data from the questionnaires will be transferred from the paper record to electronic format and stored on a password protected computer.

Please note that you must be over the age of 18 to complete this survey. Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Do you consent to taking part in this survey?
- Yes
- No

Are you male or female?
- Male
- Female

What age are you?