

Abstract

The present study focused on determining if positive affect scores increase after viewing an example of misfortune which would demonstrate the psychological phenomenon of *schadenfreude*. *Schadenfreude* is defined as a feeling of pleasure or satisfaction when something misfortunate happens to someone else. Measures used in the study included the Positive and Negative Affect inventory (PANAS; Watson et al., 1988) and a modified version of the Velton mood induction procedure developed by Seibert and Ellis (1991) which was used to manipulate and measure students' mood. A total of 47 students from Columbus State University participated in the study. A paired samples t-test was used to compare the positive affect scores before and after being presented with an example of misfortune. The results suggested that positive affect decreased instead of increased, which did not support the hypothesis that positive affect would increase, and therefore did not show evidence of *schadenfreude*. Future directions for this project include delving into empathy, social groups, and demographic factors that may or may not relate to experiencing *schadenfreude*.

Keywords: misfortune, negative affect, positive affect, *schadenfreude*, Social Identity Theory, tall poppy syndrome