

# Self-Identity in Times of Collective Trauma: A Comparative Study of Autistic and Non-Autistic College Students During the "Iron Swords" War

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## Background

- ❑ On October 7, 2023, the onset of the "Iron Swords" war exposed civilians to terrorist attacks, resulting in widespread collective trauma.
- ❑ Continuous collective trauma represents a shared societal experience stemming from ongoing harmful events that destabilize collective identity, security, and social structures.
- ❑ Autistic Individuals face elevated risk for adverse psychological trauma outcomes, with higher PTSD prevalence compared to non-autistic populations
- ❑ Autistic self-identity and diagnostic acceptance significantly influence psychological well-being and identity formation. Positive identity profiles correlate with enhanced functioning

# Objectives



To compare personal resilience levels between autistic and non-autistic students during the first months of the Iron-Sword war.



To examine relationships and impact of Autism Identity Profiles on psychological well-being-and resilience.

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# Method



83



Total Higher Education Students

45

Autistic Students

38

Non-Autistic Students

## Data Collection Tools



Resilience & Self-Efficacy



Community Support



Affect



Post-Traumatic Growth



Autism Identity

# Results

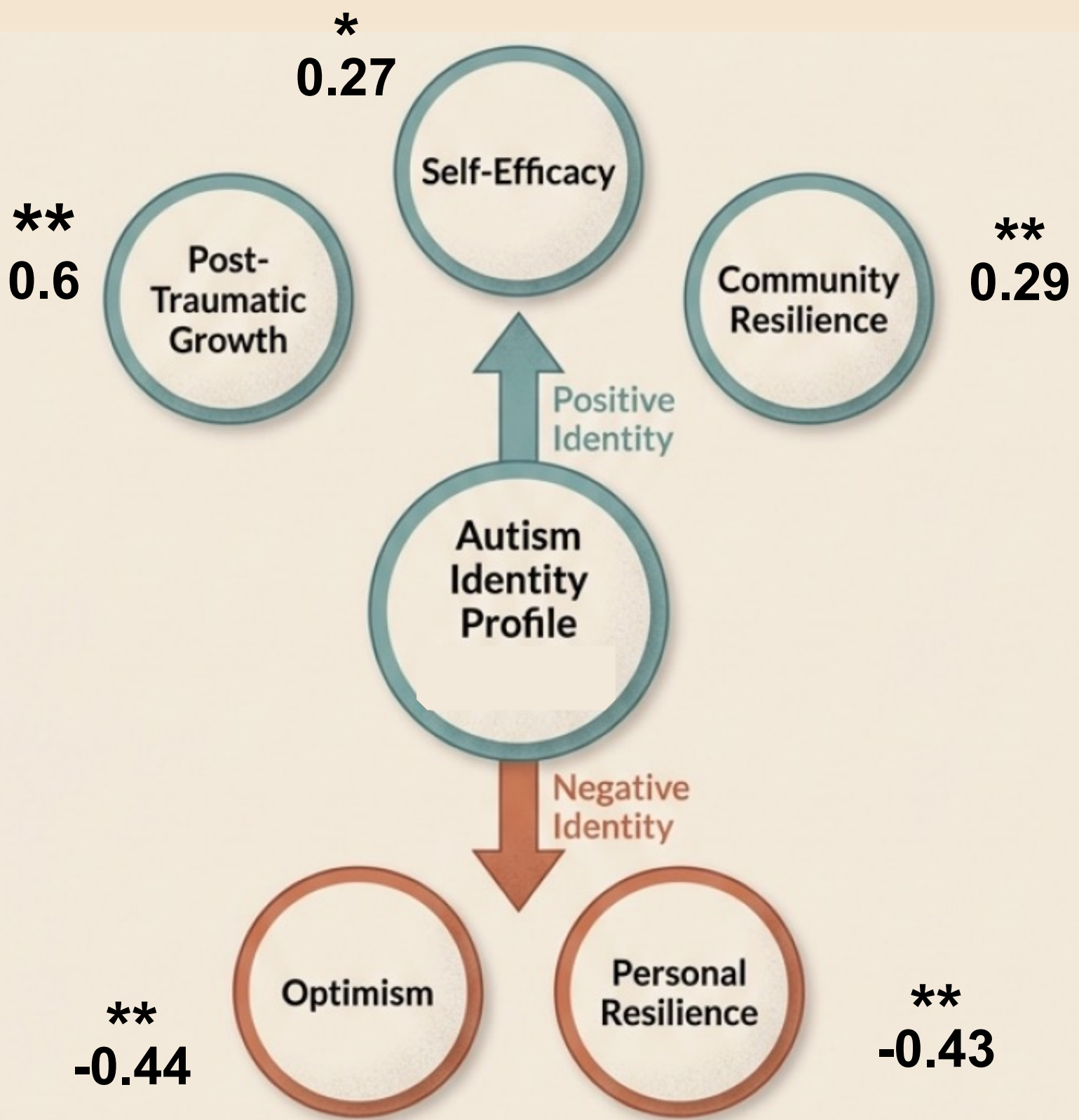
## Similarities:

- = Self-Efficacy
- = Personal Resilience
- = Affect.

## Differences:

- Autistic students reported:
- ↘ Loneliness \*
  - ↶ academic support \*\*
  - ↘ Post-Traumatic Growth \*\*
  - ↘ Optimism.\*\*

## Correlations To Autistic Identity.



# Conclusions

**The Insight:** While autistic students demonstrate comparable resilience to peers in several domains, their identity profiles significantly influence adaptation to trauma.

**Clinical Implication:** Interventions must move beyond symptom management to Identity Formation. Promoting a positive autism identity is a critical pathway to building resilience in trauma.