

# CHARACTER STRENGTHS AND BURNOUT DIMENSIONS AMONG EMERGENCY CARE PROFESSIONALS IN HUNGARY: A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY

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## OBJECTIVES

Emergency care professionals are exposed to substantial psychological strain; however, individual psychological resources, particularly character strengths, may serve as potential protective factors against burnout. This study aimed to examine the associations between character strengths and burnout dimensions among healthcare professionals working in an emergency department.

## METHODS

A cross-sectional study was conducted in April 2025 at the Emergency Department of the Petz Aladár University Teaching Hospital, Győr, Hungary, involving physicians and nurses. Participation was based on voluntary, purposive sampling. Burnout was assessed using the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), while character strengths were measured with the VIA (The Values in Action) Inventory of Strengths. Sociodemographic and work-related characteristics were also collected. Data analysis included descriptive statistics, Mann-Whitney U tests, and Spearman's rank correlation analyses ( $p < 0.05$ ), using SPSS version 29.0.

## RESULTS

Most participants exhibited moderate burnout (62%), while severe burnout was identified in 23.3% and 14.7% showed no signs of burnout. Regarding character strengths, Humanity was the most frequently identified domain (38.8%), followed by Wisdom and Knowledge (27.1%), Courage (11.6%), and Justice (10.9%), whereas Transcendence (6.2%) and Temperance (5.4%) were less common (Figure 1). Wisdom and Knowledge demonstrated a moderate positive correlation with Emotional Exhaustion ( $r = 0.340$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) and Depersonalization ( $r = 0.323$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) (Figure 2-3). In contrast, Transcendence showed a weak negative correlation with Emotional Exhaustion ( $r = -0.270$ ;  $p = 0.002$ ) and Depersonalization ( $r = -0.249$ ;  $p = 0.004$ ) (Figure 4-5). Overall, the character strengths of Courage, Humanity, and Transcendence were associated with more favorable burnout levels.

## CONCLUSIONS

Character strengths are meaningfully associated with burnout dimensions in emergency care professionals, suggesting that strength-based, resource-oriented approaches may support burnout prevention and mental health promotion in high-stress healthcare settings.

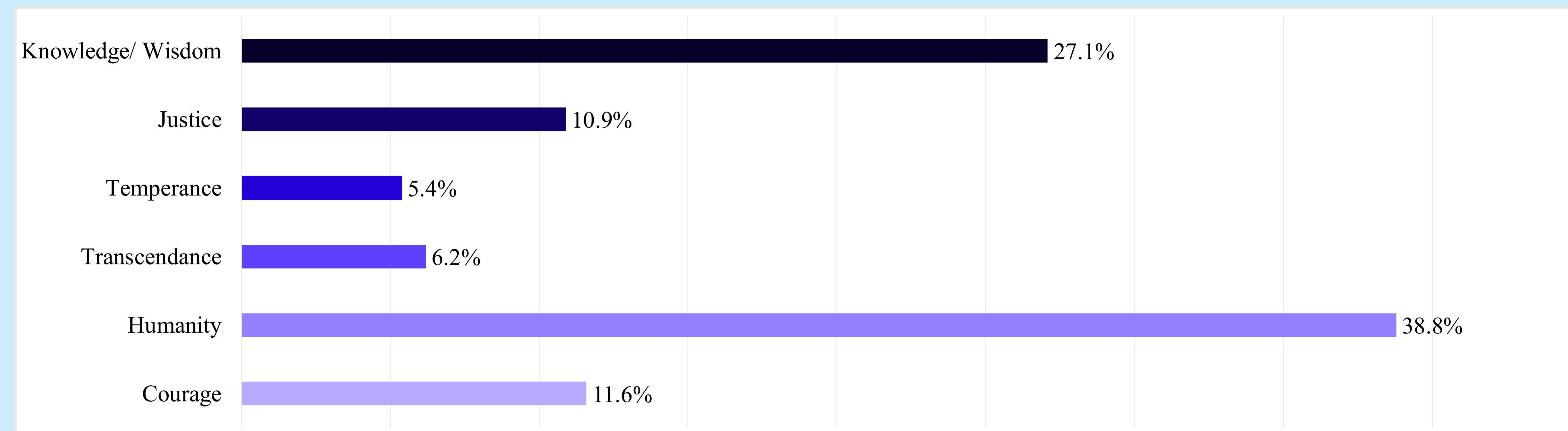


Figure 1. Distribution of VIA character strengths among emergency care workers ( $n = 129$ )

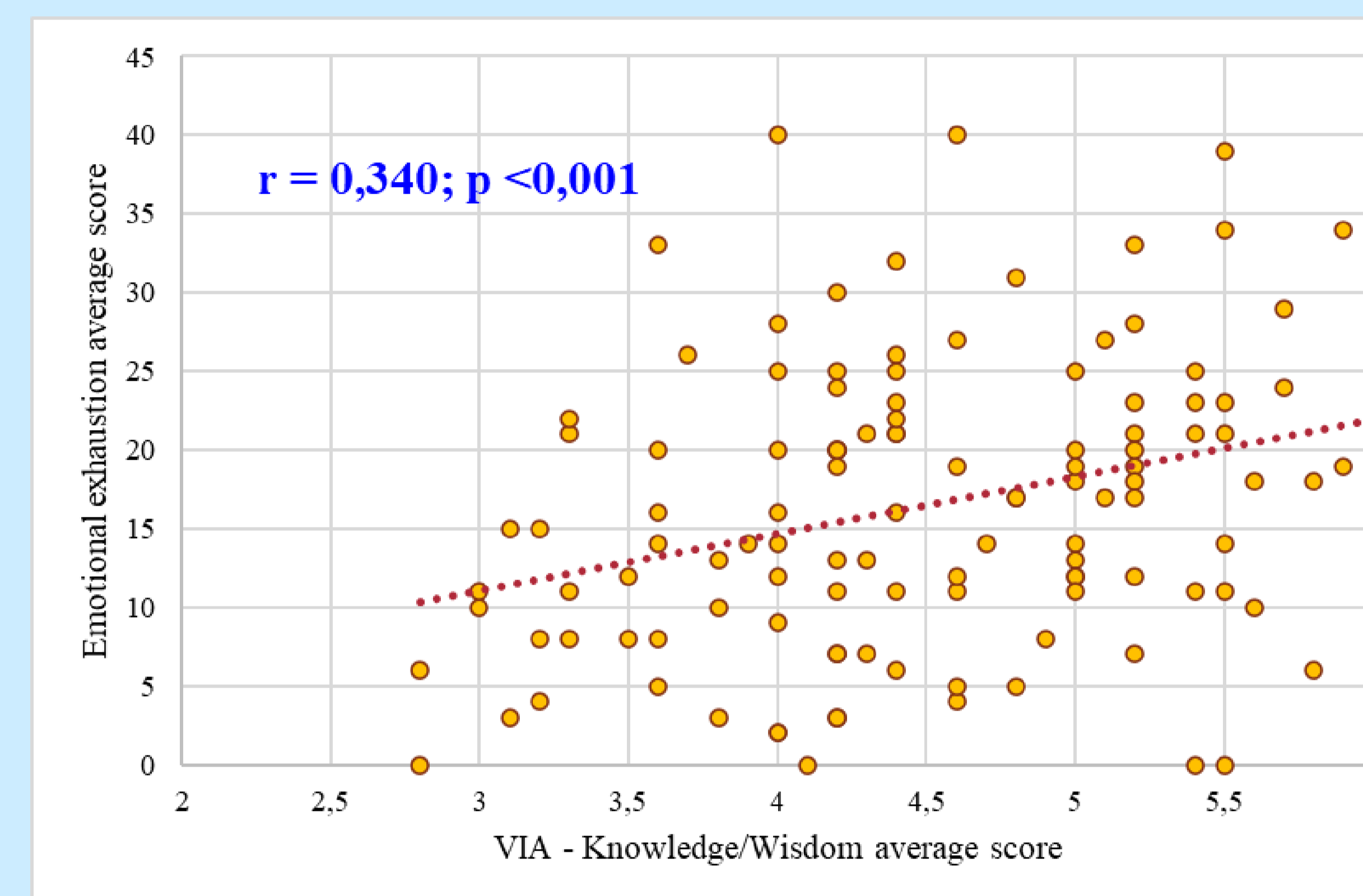


Figure 2. Correlational relationships between VIA knowledge/wisdom and emotional exhaustion dimension

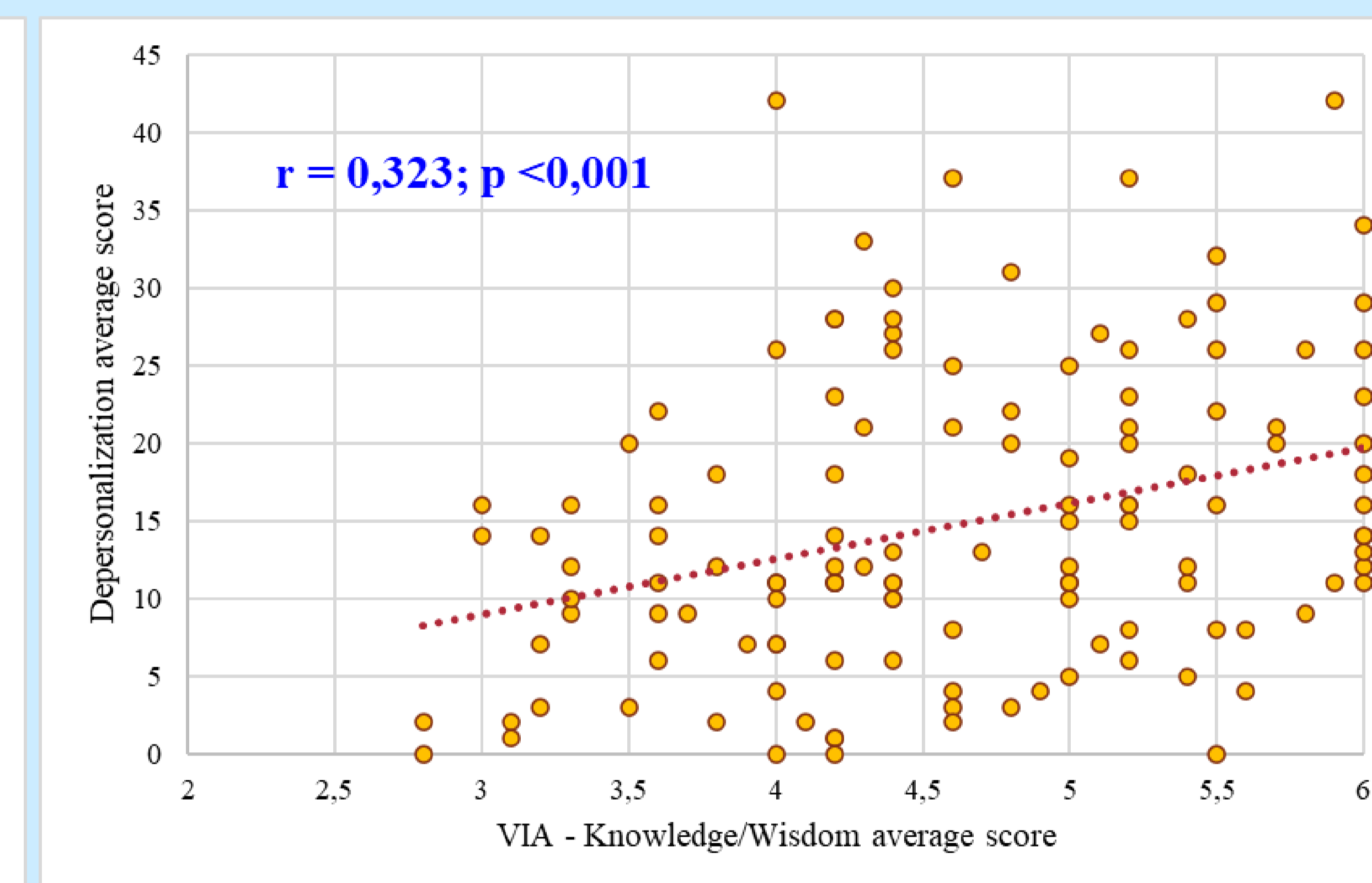


Figure 3. Correlational relationships between VIA knowledge/wisdom and depersonalization dimension

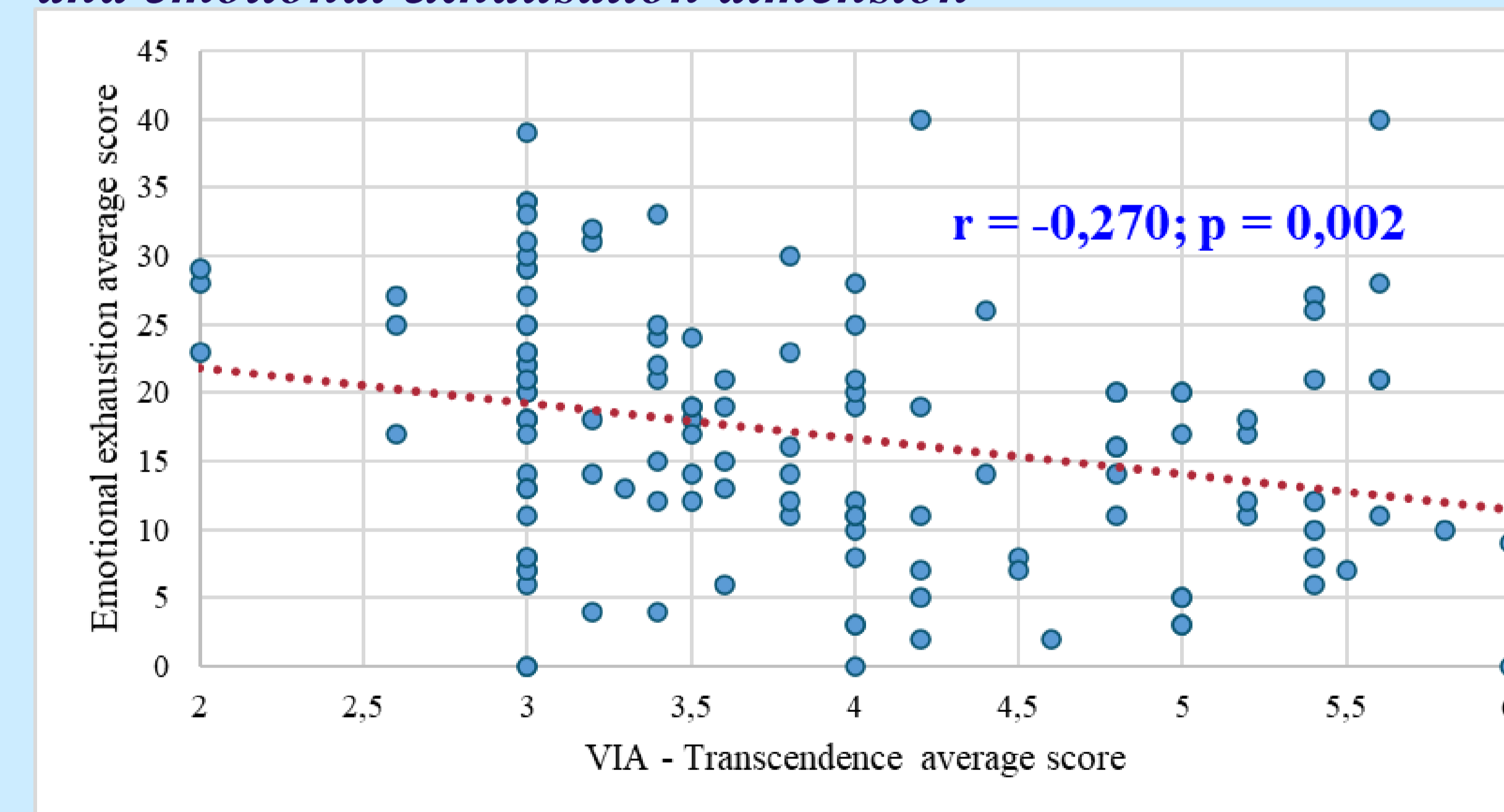


Figure 4. Correlational relationships between VIA transcendece and emotional exhaustion dimension

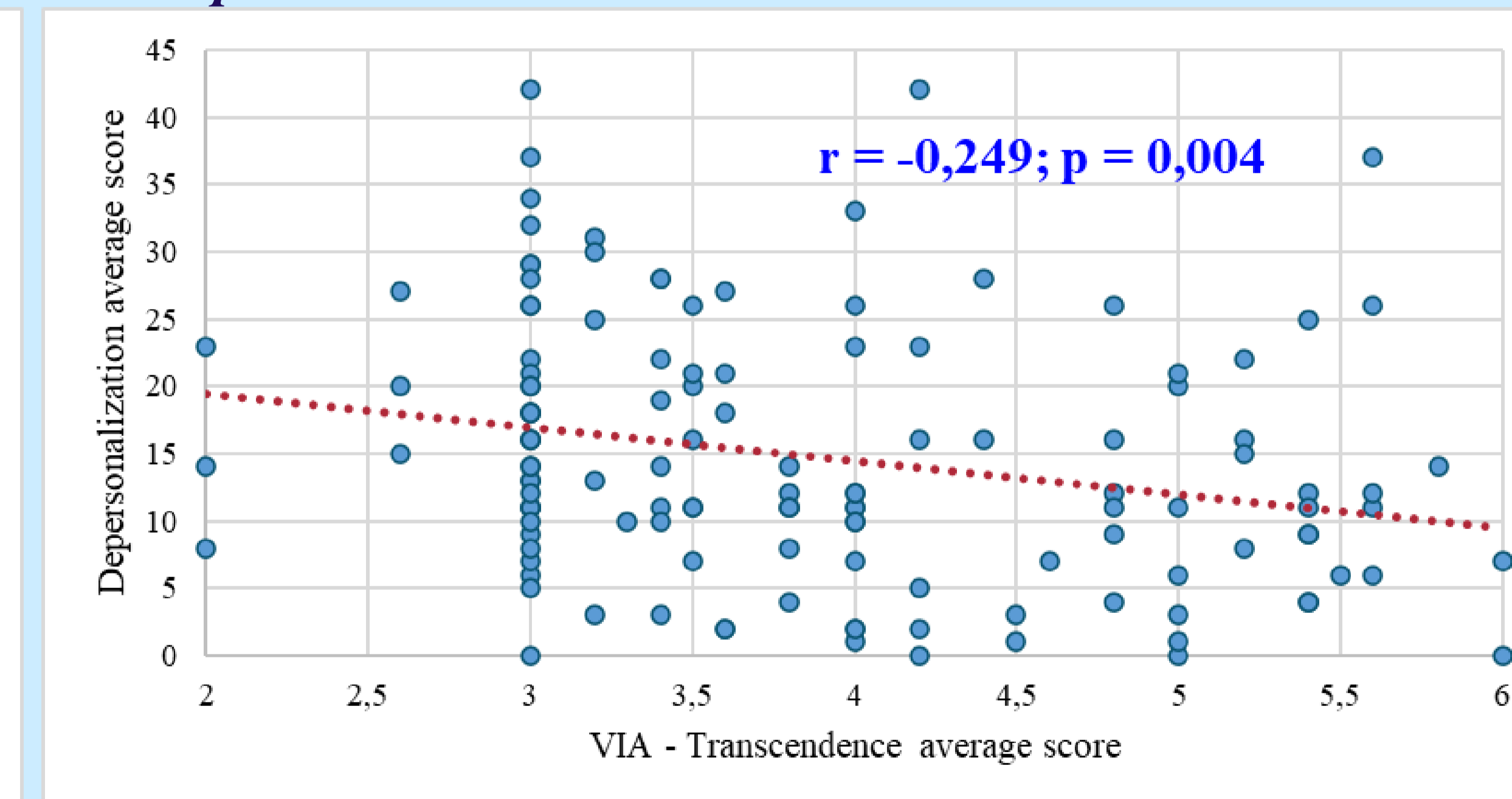


Figure 5. Correlational relationships between VIA transcendece and depersonalization dimension

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