

Personality traits Impact on Resilience



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ABSTRACT

This research aims to study the association of Personality and Resilience in Mental health. The Big Five Personality traits (OCEAN) along with resilience have been studied. The data has been collected from a sample size of 147, where there were 70 males and 77 females in the age group of 18-30 years. Results for the study using Pearson Correlation at 0.05 to 0.01 levels (2-tailed) showed that Neuroticism and Agreeableness are negatively correlated to Resilience, Openness to Experience and Agreeableness show weak correlation with Resilience and Extraversion and Conscientiousness have a significant positive correlation to Resilience. The research paper examines multiple personality traits and how they impact resilience of young adults.

Keywords - Personality, Resilience, Neuroticism, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Openness to experience, Conscientiousness

INTRODUCTION

Personality has been always considered as the most fascinating topics to study in the field of psychology, The concept is currently used to describe the socially acceptable behavior patterns and unique personality processes resulting from the actions of the individuals. The present study also addresses the personality trait variable, which is believed to be related to resilience, in line with the big five perspective. Personality includes differences between people in how they typically think. **Example** – How people think and make their thoughts patterns after hearing to false news and does it mislead them in any way? Personality includes differences between people in how they typically feel. **Example** – Do people tend to enjoy their life or not? Do they get angry easily? Personality includes differences between people in how they typically behave. **Example** – Do they like to try specific patterns they have set for themselves or they like to try new things? How do they react in stressful situations? Personality refers to the unique and relatively stable aspects of human behavior. According to Kinicki (2008), personality represents a stable set of characteristics that are responsible for a person's identity. The dimensions of personality are mostly outside our control, but they strongly influence our attitude, our behavior, our expectations and assumptions about others. Personality is that complex part of humankind that differentiates them from one another.

Personality is a fascinating concept that has been widely defined by experts over the years. Gordon Allport, a pioneer in the field, described it as the dynamic organization of an individual's psychophysical systems that determine their unique adjustments to the environment. However, McAdams and Pals have given it a modern twist by defining it as an individual's unique variation on the general evolutionary design for human nature, expressed through a developing pattern of dispositional traits, characteristic adaptations, and integrative life stories that are complexly and differentially situated in culture. These definitions emphasize the dynamic and growth-oriented

nature of personality, which suggests that it is subject to change over time, rather than being static. Personality research goes from genetic code analysis and biological system studies to the study of sexual, social, ethnic, and cultural basis of thought, feelings, and behavior. Cognitive abilities, interpersonal styles, and emotional response are all studied in personality study. Methods include data reduction techniques like as factor analysis and principal components analysis, as well as structural modelling and multi-level modelling approaches, and span from laboratory experiments to longitudinal field research. The most important measurement difficulties are those of reliability and stability of individual differences.

Resilience –

The psychological construct known as resilience is a vital aspect of an individual's ability to adapt, recover, and maintain their psychological well-being in the face of adversity, trauma, or significant life stressors. To put it simply, it is the capability of a person to analytically evaluate negative and uncomfortable situations while taking logical steps to recover from them. Over the years, extensive research and scientific evidence have delved into the concept of resilience, unravelling its defining features, factors that influence it, and the outcomes that it yields. Recent researches have uncovered two significant results about resilience: the existence of one or more negative life events (NLE) does not predict poor future functioning, and there are multiple developmental paths of adaptability (Masten, 2001). Despite increased interest in resilience, little is known about which individual variations boost the likelihood that people would respond to adversity in a resilient manner. Resilience variables influence health outcomes during and/or after the commencement of an unfavourable or NLE. To accurately estimate resilience antecedents, resilience components must be measured before an NLE occurs.

People, on average, tend to see the past through rose-coloured glasses, so they recall themselves as more resilient than they were. Furthermore, a person's fleeting moods, emotions, and cognitions on the day they complete a self-report evaluation can alter their memory of earlier resilience. A pleasant attitude, for example, will cause a person to see her reactions to adversity as more successful than they actually were (Schwarz & Clore, 2003). Similarly, self-enhancement and social desirability biases may cause a person to overestimate their resilience during a previous difficulty or while anticipating a hardship. In terms of item content, self-report measures typically contain ambiguous item stems (e.g., "when something unexpected happens" or "during difficult periods"; Friborg et al., 2003) that make it impossible to determine whether a person is responding to a traumatic event (e.g., sexual assault), an everyday stressor (e.g., traffic jam), or any combination of the two. One of the most significant flaws is the notion that resilience is constant throughout time and context, which is frequently incorrect. When a close friend dies, a person may be resilient, but devastated when a family member dies. Thus, while viewing resilience as a stable attribute, caution is advised (Bonanno & Diminich, 2013).

Resilience is no longer considered a fixed characteristic, but rather a dynamic interaction between an individual's unique resources and the events they encounter. It is influenced by the context of life events and the individual's responses to them. Essentially, resilience consists of a set of mechanisms that enable a person to withstand adversity and maintain minimal functional impairment. A person demonstrates resilience when they are able to maintain their well-being

despite the presence of significant life events. Therefore, it is important to identify resilience factors before these events occur, as they can predict subsequent changes in subjective well-being.

In one groundbreaking research conducted by Masten and her team (1990), they delved into the resilience of children who faced various significant life challenges including poverty, parental mental illness, and other adversities. Interestingly, they discovered that despite the presence of risk factors, a significant number of children exhibited exceptional positive adaptation and functioning. This study sheds light on the crucial role of protective factors such as supportive relationships, self-regulation skills, and problem-solving abilities in nurturing resilience. In other words, having a strong support system, being able to manage emotions effectively, and having excellent problem-solving skills are vital in building resilience, especially in children facing challenging circumstances.

Bonanno and his colleagues conducted a noteworthy study in 2004, which delved into the concept of resilience in adults who had faced the traumatic events of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States. The study brought to light that a considerable portion of the sample displayed highly commendable psychological resilience and adaptive coping strategies. This research primarily emphasized the significance of individual characteristics, including optimism, flexible thinking, and emotional regulation, in promoting resilience in the face of extreme adversity.

Personality and Resilience –

Every person faces difficulties and problems throughout their lives. Resilience is essential for overcoming difficulties and problems. To achieve more difficult and long-term goals, a person must be resilient. Furthermore, in order to be content in life, a person does not necessarily need to meet specified standards. Each of us has our own definition of what constitutes life satisfaction. With the correct intervention, both resilience and life pleasure can be increased. Each of us has an own personality. To a large part, our personality determines our qualities and attitudes, including Resilience and Life Satisfaction.

According to research conducted by Smith et al. (2011), individuals with high levels of neuroticism typically struggle with emotional instability, anxiety, and a tendency to experience negative emotions. Unfortunately, this personality trait has been linked to a lower level of resilience. When faced with adversity, those high in neuroticism may have difficulty regulating their emotions, may experience heightened stress reactions, and may struggle with rumination. This can make it challenging for them to effectively navigate tough situations. Empirical studies, such as those performed by Connor-Smith and Flachsbart (2007), have supported these findings, demonstrating that individuals with higher neuroticism scores tend to exhibit lower levels of resilience.

In a noteworthy research conducted by Hu et al. (2015), the link between agreeableness and resilience was analyzed in a group of Chinese college students. The results showed a substantial and positive correlation between agreeableness and resilience, suggesting that individuals with a higher level of agreeableness are more likely to display greater levels of resilience. Agreeable people, identified by their compassion, empathy, and cooperative nature, may have better interpersonal skills and social networks, which can aid them in developing adaptive coping

strategies and bouncing back from difficult situations. In a study conducted by Werner and Smith (1992) that spanned over a long period, it was discovered that agreeable personality traits had a significant impact on resilience among individuals who faced significant adversity during their childhood. The study found that individuals who portrayed agreeable characteristics such as kindness, empathy, and cooperative behavior were more likely to overcome their adverse experiences and attain positive life outcomes despite their challenges.

According to research conducted by Bonanno et al. in 2004, those who exhibit extraversion by being sociable, assertive, and having a positive outlook on life tend to have a higher level of resilience. This is because extroverted individuals usually have a strong social support system, use effective problem-solving strategies, and maintain a positive attitude, which helps them overcome difficult situations. Empirical studies have also found that extraversion is linked with better psychological adjustment and higher levels of resilience in the face of adversity (McCrae & Costa, 1997).

In the realm of personality traits, conscientiousness stands out as a valuable quality that encompasses self-discipline, responsibility, and goal-driven behavior. It has been consistently shown to have a positive correlation with resilience, as per research conducted by Luthar et al. (2000). Conscientious individuals exhibit strong willpower, self-motivation, and a proactive approach to tackling challenges. These qualities enable them to effectively cope with and bounce back from setbacks. Studies have also revealed that individuals with higher levels of conscientiousness tend to display greater resilience, as they possess the necessary qualities to navigate and adapt to the complexities of life (Connor & Davidson, 2003).

Openness to experience, characterized by curiosity, imagination, and a willingness to embrace new ideas, has shown a positive correlation with resilience as well (Connor & Davidson, 2003). Individuals high in openness tend to exhibit cognitive flexibility, adaptability, and a propensity for seeking novel solutions to problems. The investigation conducted by Wagnild and Young (1993) centered on the concept of resilience in grown-ups. The study revealed that being open to new experiences was a substantial indicator of resilience. The outcomes of the research pointed out that people with greater openness to experience were inclined to display higher levels of resilience. This observation indicated their proficiency in imaginative problem-solving, seeking fresh viewpoints, and welcoming novel prospects. Being receptive to new experiences was linked to cognitive flexibility and a readiness to explore unconventional approaches, empowering individuals to adjust and prosper in challenging circumstances.

Present Study -

The current study intends to explore the correlation between several personality traits and resilience among young adults. By analysing the Big Five Personality Traits (OCEAN) in association with resilience, this research aims to offer a complete perception of how one's personality impacts their potential to recover from difficult situations. This study's findings can provide valuable insights into the importance of personality development and its role in shaping an individual's resilience.

A set of five hypotheses was formulated for different types of personalities and their relationship with resilience. When the correlation strength of personality traits with resilience was measure, it was found out that the ability of human beings to bounce back from NLE (Negative life experiences) is influenced by different personality traits.

Based on the past studies, it can be concluded that there is a consistent body of research highlighting the relationship between personality traits and resilience. The Big Five personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience) are commonly investigated in these studies. The available literature consistently suggests that certain personality traits, such as extraversion, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and lower levels of neuroticism, are associated with higher levels of resilience. Understanding these relationships can provide valuable insights into fostering resilience in individuals across different age groups and contexts. High extraversion, low neuroticism, conscientiousness, openness to experience, and emotional stability are consistently associated with greater levels of resilience. Additionally, social support is found to play a mediating role in the relationship between extraversion and resilience.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The two variables “**Personality**” and “**Resilience**” have been studied in various articles before which explains the relationship between the two variables.

One of the recent articles “*Effect of Personality on Resilience in young adults: a comparative study*” by **Suruchi Singh** which was published in The International Journal of Indian Psychology (June 2020) made use of The Big Five Personality (OCEAN) and Nicholson McBride Resilience Questionnaire. The sample of 100 (50 males and 50 females) of age range 20-25 was used. This paper shows the effect of Resilience on young adults. With the use of multiple hypothesis and a comparative study, it was found that women are more conscientious and neurotic as compared to men with no significant difference in their extraversion, agreeableness, openness to experience and resilience. It was also hypothesized that agreeableness and openness to experience do not affect resilience and the neuroticism will decrease as resilience increases but the results did not support the hypothesis. Thus, this study concluded that all five sub-dimensions of personality affect the resilience of an individual. Resilience increases as all the facets increases.

The article “*Five Factor Personality Traits and Psychological Resilience Among Secondary School Students in Egypt*” by **Adel Abdulla Mohammed & Amaal Ahmed Mostafa**, published in **International Journal of Psycho-Educational Sciences (September 2015)** includes the usage of Personality Test Based on Adjectives (PTBA) and Wagnild and Young Resilience Scale. The sample consisted of 200 male secondary school students aged from 15-17 years. This is a limitation of this study as the sample only includes boys and it is hard to draw conclusion about girls. The aim of the study was to find relationship between Big Five Personality Traits and Resilience. The study founded that there was a notable positive association existed between the four traits (conscientiousness, agreeableness, extraversion, openness to experience) and psychological resilience, whereas one personality trait; neuroticism, was found to be negatively associated with resilience. This was not surprising, as individual with the above mentioned four traits were healthy people while individuals with high neuroticism had negative personality, which lacks resilience.

The study in article “*Gender Differences in Relationship between Resilience and Big Five Personality Traits in Japanese Adolescents*” by *Shuhei Iimura, Kanako Taku (2018)* was to explore gender differences in the relationships between Resilience and Big Five Personality Traits in Japanese Adolescents middle school students, from the developmental perspective. The sample taken was 310 students (50-50 percent of both genders) age of 14-15 years via an online survey. The results demonstrated females high in conscientiousness than males. Step wise regression analysis indicated that neuroticism was the most influential predictor of resilience in females whereas extraversion was the most important predictor in males. Multi group path analysis demonstrated that the effect of neuroticism on resilience was greater for females. The study concluded that considering gender differences while understanding the personality traits and resilience is very important.

METHODOLOGY

Hypothesis:

- 1) Resilience will increase as extraversion increases.
- 2) There exist no relationship between agreeableness and resilience.
- 3) Resilience will increase as conscientiousness increases.
- 4) Resilience will increase as neuroticism increases.
- 5) No relationship between openness to experience and resilience.

Tool used:

1. **NEO five factor inventory by Paul Costa and Robert McCrae**, which consists of 60 items representing 5 dimensions of personality namely Neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness. It is a 5-point likert scale which ranges from strongly disagree to strongly agree, each dimension have 12 items. Higher scores indicate that the person has high on that particular personality dimension.
2. **The Resilience Scale by Wagnild and Young**. It is a seven-point likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Scores range from 25-175. Scores greater 145 indicated moderately high to high resilience, 125-145 indicated moderately low and score of 120 and below indicated low resilience.

(SPSS software was used to interpret the result using person's correlation method.)

Sample:

The test was conducted randomly on 147 participants age 18 to 30 years consisting of both males (70) and females (77) and most of the participants were either students or had recently started working. The data was taken through physical test inventory of both the scales as well as through Google forms which were circulated on WhatsApp and other social media sites, the scores of the subjects were kept confidential.

RESULTS

The results of the data collected from the overall sample using descriptive statistics are as follows:

Correlations Table

	Neuroticism	Extraversion	Openness	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Resilience
Neuroticism	1.0	-0.347	0.077	-0.204	-0.302	-0.194
Extraversion	-0.347	1.0	0.051	0.145	0.397	0.329
Openness to experience	0.077	0.051	1.0	0.172	0.057	0.096
Agreeableness	-0.204	0.145	0.172	1.0	0.105	-0.062
Conscientiousness	-0.302	0.397	0.057	0.105	1.0	0.486
Resilience	-0.194	0.329	0.096	-0.062	0.486	1.0

Table 1: Resilience of Sub-Dimensions of Personality

Sub-dimensions	Resilience
Neuroticism	-0.194
Extraversion	0.329
Openness to experience	0.096
Agreeableness	-0.062
Conscientiousness	0.486

Table No. 1 shows resilience of the sub-dimensions of personality.

DISCUSSION

Inferring anyone's personality is a difficult task. It is much more difficult with questionnaires with less items. NEO-FFI only infer personality on five sub-dimensions. Inferring personality of young

adults is also not easy as this is the time when most of them start shaping their career pathways and they try to understand who they really are. This paper aims to focus on the effect of personality and resilience in young adults.

Using Pearson correlation, from the results it can be inferred that Neuroticism shows a significant weak negative correlation to Resilience with significance of .002 and correlation of -0.194. The null hypothesis is rejected that resilience will increase as neuroticism increases.

Sub-dimension Extraversion shows significant weak positive correlation to resilience with significance of <.001 and correlation of 0.329. We accept the null hypothesis that resilience will increase as extraversion increases.

Openness to experience shows highly significant very weak positive correlation to resilience with significance of .759 and correlation of 0.096. We reject the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between openness to experience and resilience.

The results for Agreeableness show highly significant very weak negative correlation to resilience with the significance of .733 and correlation of -0.062. We accept the null hypothesis that there exist no relationship between agreeableness and resilience.

Conscientiousness shows significant moderate positive correlation to resilience with the significance of <.001 and correlation of 0.486. We accept the null hypothesis that resilience will increase as conscientiousness increases.

According to Evans (1996), absolute value for r:

$r = 0.00-0.19$ is considered to be “very weak”

$r = 0.20-0.39$ is considered to be “weak”

$r = 0.40-0.59$ is considered to be “moderate”

$r = 0.60-0.79$ is considered to be “strong”

$r = 0.80-1.0$ is considered to be “very strong”

The findings differ from the past research findings where all the sub-dimensions of the personality affect the resilience of an individual.

CONCLUSION

Personality and resilience have been an interesting topic to review and comprehend its findings. This paper provides a concept of how personality of young adults of 18 to 30 year of age affects their resilience. Through this paper, it may be concluded that Agreeableness and Openness to experience shows very weak correlation to resilience.

Multiple hypothesis were synthesized for this research from which some of them were accepted and some were rejected. It was hypothesized that resilience will increase as neuroticism increases but the results were found to be opposite.

The hypothesis for agreeableness, extraversion and conscientiousness were accepted as the results were similar to what was hypothesized. The hypothesis for openness to experience was rejected as there exist some relationship between openness to experience and resilience.

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