

A relationship among personality factors (Neuroticism, Openness to experience and Agreeableness) and subjective well being of female post graduate students

Dr. Rajashree Kapure

Assistant Professor

Department of Psychology

H.P.T. Arts & R.Y.K. Science College, Nasik.

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ABSTRACT

*Since the start of the 21st century we psychologists and also many thinkers of this science are busy in asking question such as what is right about people rather than the age old question about what is wrong with people? Which were pointing only about the weaknesses and pathologies? The former question pinpoints over the approach of positive psychology which is the scientific and applied approach to uncovering people's strengths and promoting positive functioning. After modern era of industrialization and modernization many studies and researches as well as practical applications were made to cure the pathos of life but the later missions were forgotten that is making the lives of all people better and nurturing the talent. Through a variety of research and working on a medical model on personal weakness and on the damaged brain has led the mental professionals to do effective prevention. Certainly they have worked over the concept of human strength and virtue. Present study tries to focus on relationship among personality factors and subjective well being or a common term for the concept SWB as happiness. Sample in the present study were consisted of female college going students and studying their masters in psychology at first and second year. Sample consisted of 26 female students in the age group of 20 to 42 years from Nasik city. Tools used were NEOFFI standardized scale and subjective well being Inventory (Dr. H. Sell and Dr.R. Nagpal, online version). Both the tools used for the present study were Likert type rating scale. The results indicate that there is negative and moderate correlation between SWB and Neuroticism ($r'=-0.35, *0.01$ levels) while openness to experience and SWB were also negatively correlated with moderate 'r' value ($r'=-0.01$, at $*0.01$ levels). As compare to both the factors agreeableness does not relate significantly with SWB with ($r'=0.19$, at $*0.01$ levels). Thus taking view on the results one can say happiness and anxiousness or neurotic approach were proved in a significant manner. The same is true for the other trait of openness to experience. While being friendly and easygoing may not always affect positively towards one's wellbeing. Thus being happy and satisfied at one's life may be influenced by other factors apart from the current studied variables.*

Key words: Neuroticism, Openness to experience, Agreeableness, Subjective Well Being and female post graduate students.

Introduction:

Since the start of the 21st century we psychologists and also many thinkers of this science are busy in asking question such as what is right about people rather than the age old question about what is wrong with people? Which were pointing only about the weaknesses and pathologies? The former question pinpoints over the approach of positive psychology which is the scientific and applied approach to uncovering people's strengths and promoting positive functioning. Before world war II, psychology had three missions: curing mental illness, making the lives of all people more fulfilling and identifying and nurturing high talent. In the later period many studies and researches as well as practical applications were made to cure the pathos of life but the later missions were forgotten that is making the lives of all people better and nurturing the talent. The major psychological theories have

changed to nurture a new science of strength and resilience. There are many socialists and old time thinkers find their expression of happiness in variety of dimensions, such as total eradication of poverty, equality and peacefulness of mind. When Buddha left home in search of a more meaningful existence and untimely found Enlightenment, a sense of peace, and happiness. Watman, 1993 said "Doing what is worth doing" is the key to good life. For many years the topic of happiness was remain neglected as most of the researches were concentrated on topics like anxiety, depression and emotional disorders. Now there is a whole new field to study the topic of happiness or subjective well-being commonly known as positive psychology. Age old definitions of happiness have clear influences on the views of 20th and 21st century scholars and they have shared the philosophies of what Buddha referred

happiness as and also of Aristotle. Subjective well being is defined by Diener (1984,2000Diener,Lucas&Oishi,2002) as a combination of positive affect(in the absence of negative affect) and general life satisfaction. In psychology literature the term subjective well being is used as a synonym for happiness. It appears that happiness, the experience of unpleasant emotions and life satisfaction often depend more on temperament than on one's life circumstances. Subjective well being refers to people's evaluations of their lives, including cognitive judgments', such as life satisfaction and affective evaluations (moods and emotions),such as positive and negative emotional feelings. When a person reports that her life is satisfying that she is frequently experiencing pleasant affect and infrequently experiencing unpleasant affect, person is said to have high subjective well being. Both her cognitive and affective systems react favorably to what is happening in her life.

Some researchers have concluded that personality is a greater determinant of happiness than race, social class, money, social relationships, work, leisure, religion, or other external variables (Diener et al., 1999). Various research studies have made evidences about personality correlates and the happiness. Diener and Larsen (1984) found that positive and negative affect in various work and leisure situations was more due to persons (52%) than to situations (23%).

For the present research researcher studied 26 female post graduate students and how their score on subjective well being related with their personality traits such as Neuroticism, Openness to experience and Agreeableness. Is there positive or negative relationship among all these three variables is the broad aim of this study?

Review of related literature: As a part of present research various early researches about the variables under study were reviewed by the researcher. Mostly researches about personality and subjective well being were in plenty as compare to studies related specially with female genders. So following is an attempt to describe them.

Subjective well being refers to people's evaluations of their lives, including cognitive judgments, such as life satisfaction and affective evaluations (moods and emotions), such as positive and negative emotional feelings. When a person reports that her life is satisfying that she is frequently experiencing pleasant affect and

infrequently experiencing unpleasant affect, person is said to have high subjective well being. Both her cognitive and affective systems react favorably to what is happening in her life. The second variable of personality does affect one's happiness and through this study researcher has done some review of the earlier research work. Personality is the unique aspect of a person's character that influences behavior in different situations (Schultz & Schultz, 2007). Personality is nothing but the unique signature of one's life. People differ in temperaments, motives, attitudes, characteristics, cognitive styles and many other factors. There is also interaction between the effects of person and situations. The trait of neuroticism of BIG FIVE includes characteristics such as anxiety, pessimism, irritability, bodily complaints and interpersonal sensitivity. Thus it includes a wide range of unpleasant thoughts and emotions. Neurotics tend to experience more unpleasant life events. Heady and Wearing (1992) found that highly neurotic people recurrently experience more negative life events than do less neurotic individuals. Pavot, Fujita and Diener (1996) found that neurotics have a large discrepancy between their actual selves and ideal selves than do no neurotics. Numerous studies have shown that subjective well-being is related to the Five-Factor Model (FFM) of personality, especially the domains of Neuroticism, Extraversion, and Conscientiousness and that, although subjective well-being is not subsumed by personality, the two constructs are reliably correlated (DeNeve & Cooper, 1998). For example, some researchers (Cantor & Sanderson, 1999; Carver & Scheier, 1990) have emphasized the roles of Extraversion and Neuroticism in reward and punishment systems, respectively. Others have proposed that the relationship arises from indirect, instrumental effects of personality on the experiences an individual encounters (McCrae & Costa, 1991). Other three dimensions such as conscientiousness and agreeableness and openness, in which the earlier two appear to be related moderately with SWB and also this was not studied as intensely as extraversion and neuroticism while openness the fifth trait of BIG FIVE is not related on the hedonic level to whether people experience more or less positive affect or life satisfaction.

So present study is an attempt to study the relation between SWB and the three less studied variables of personality such as Neuroticism, Openness to experience and Agreeableness. As the selected sample consists of female post graduate

students it has certain limitation about the gender and related responses towards the variables.

Statement of the Problem: To study the relationship among personality factors (Neuroticism, Openness to experience and Agreeableness) and subjective well being of female post graduate students.

Objectives:

1. To study the relation between score on subjective well being and score of neuroticism for female post graduate students.
2. To study the relation between score on subjective well being and score of openness to experience for female post graduate students.
3. To study the relation between score on subjective well being and score of agreeableness for female post graduate students.

Method:

For the present research following variables were under study.

1. Subjective well being
2. Neuroticism
3. Openness to Experience
4. Agreeableness
5. Female students doing post graduate study.

Operational definitions:

1. Subjective well being: Measures of SWB assess a person's level of life satisfaction and the frequency of positive and negative emotional experiences, (as defined by Diener) but for the present study as measured by Dr. H. Sell and Dr. R. Nagpal, online version.

2. Neuroticism: Neuroticism covers individual differences in the inclination, to construct, perceive and feel reality as being problematic, threatening, and difficult and to feel negative emotions (such as fear, shame and anger) as measured by NEOFFI.

3. Openness to experience: Openness describes cognitive and non cognitive openness to experience. This acceptance of new experiences may be relevant to various domains and different spheres of behavior (ideas, beliefs, values, and actions) as measured by NEOFFI.

4. Agreeableness: Agreeableness deals with the quality of interpersonal relationships on a spectrum ranging from compassion to antagonisms measured by NEOFFI.

5. Female students doing post graduate study: Female students pursuing their masters in

psychology at H.P.T. Arts College, Nasik were regarded as a sample for this study.

Hypotheses:

1. There is negative correlation between subjective well being and neuroticism in female students doing post graduate study.
2. There is a positive correlation between subjective well being and openness to experience in female students doing post graduate study.
3. There is a positive correlation between subjective well being and agreeableness in female students doing post graduate study.

Research Design: For the present study correlational design was used. In the present study 26 female students from H.P.T. Arts College, Nasik were taken as a sample with purposive sampling method. They were all studying in P.G.I & II as a major subject psychology.

Tools: 1. Personality Factors: For the present study the NEO Five Factor Inventory of 60 items was used. The original version of the inventory has satisfactory reliability and validity across different data sources like Goldberg's (1992) adjective inventory. Internal consistency of the sub scale is also satisfactory ($r = 0.80$ to 0.95).

Sample:

	No of students
M.A.I	16
M.A.II	10
Total	26

Results:

Table 1.1 shows the mean, SD and r value for SWB and Neuroticism

VARIABLE	N	MEAN	SD	r
SWB	26	82.88	7.43	-0.35
Neuroticism	26	20.15	5.04	

*0.01 levels

Table 1.2 shows the mean, SD and r value for SWB and Openness to Experience

VARIABLE	N	MEAN	SD	r
SWB	26	82.88	7.43	-0.01
Openness to Experience	26	27.03	5.24	

*0.01 levels

Table 1.3 shows the mean, SD and r value for SWB and Agreeableness

VARIABLE	N	MEAN	SD	r
SWB	26	82.88	7.43	0.19
Agreeableness	26	33.50	4.58	

*0.01 levels

Discussion: After observing values of all the three result tables, the results indicate that there is negative and moderate correlation between SWB and Neuroticism ($r' = -0.35$, *0.01 levels) while openness to experience and SWB were also negatively correlated with moderate 'r' value ($r' = -0.01$, at *0.01 levels). As compare to both the factors agreeableness does not relate significantly with SWB with ($r' = 0.19$, at *0.01 levels).

The reasons based on the values, one can say that one's well being is mostly depend on how healthy and happy one is in physical and psychological manner. A person with anxiousness and too much irritation may not be able to keep healthiness of mind. This also reflects in handling negative emotions in unhealthier ways and the values correlate significantly with this aspect. (Table No.1-1 'r' value = -0.35). So for the present study the hypothesis, there is negative correlation between subjective well being and neuroticism in female students doing post graduate study is accepted.

Table 1.2 describes correlation between SWB and openness to experience ($r' = -0.01$) which signifies negative correlation between both the variables. The value for the present data confirms that there are other factors other than openness to experience which are dependent on one's happiness or the operational term for this research SWB. How flexible one is and how one can accept new ideas into one's actions and beliefs does not necessarily relate with one's happiness and well being. So the hypothesis framed for these variables, there is a positive correlation between subjective well being and openness to experience

in female students doing post graduate study is not accepted.

Table 1.3 shows 'r' value of SWB and agreeableness ($r' = 0.19$) shows less or very moderate correlation thus it depicts that apart from agreeableness there are other factors of personality which confirms one's SWB. Though being adaptive/ adjustive does affect one's relationships and life, but those are not the only factors which determine one's SWB. So the hypothesis framed for these variables, there is a positive correlation between subjective well being and agreeableness in female students doing post graduate study is not accepted.

Conclusion:

1. SWB and neuroticism were significantly related for female students doing post graduate study.
2. SWB and openness to experience were not significantly related for female students doing post graduate study
3. SWB and agreeableness were not significantly related for female students doing post graduate study.

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Whatever your mind can conceive and believe, it can achieve.

~ Napoleon Hill