

A RELATIONSHIP STUDY BETWEEN PERSONALITY FACTORS AND RESILIENCE AMONG ADULTS

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ABSTRACT

The current review of this quantitative correlational study was to determine if there were correlations between the personality traits and resilience among adults. Resilience theory and the big five factor model of personality are the two theoretical foundations of this study. The main objectives of the present study were: 1) To study the relationship between extraversion and resilience. 2) To study the relationship between agreeableness and resilience. 3) To study the relationship between neuroticism and resilience. In present study the hypotheses framed by researcher were: 1) There is positive relationship between extraversion and resilience. 2) There is positive relationship between agreeableness and resilience. 3) There is negative relationship between neuroticism and resilience. For this purposive a sample of 40 adults aged between 18-30 years was collected using the snowball sampling technique. A correlational survey design was used in this research. The NEO-Five Factor and Resilience Scale were used to measure the variables of personality traits and resilience in the study. The obtained data was analyzed using the statistical technique of Pearson product-moment correlation. Findings indicated that all three hypotheses were accepted. The results showed that there is positive relationship between personality traits (extraversion and agreeableness) and resilience. A negative relationship was found between personality trait (neuroticism) and resilience.

Keywords: *Personality Traits (Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism) and Resilience.*

INTRODUCTION

Each unique individual has his/her own personality; a great deal of similarity exists between these personalities. Some people are very talkative while others are very quiet. Some are very active whereas others inert. Some worry a lot, others almost never seem anxious. Each time someone uses one of these words, words like “talkative”, “quiet”, “active” or “anxious” to describe those around them, they are talking about a person’s personality - the characteristic ways that people differ from one another. Although there are many ways to think about the personalities that people have, Gordon Allport and other “personologists” claimed that people can best understand the differences between individuals by understanding their personality traits reflect basic dimensions on which people differ (Matthews, Deary and Whitemen 2003). According to trait psychologist, there are a limited number of these dimensions, meaning that they could be low, medium or high on any specific trait.

After a highly stressful and potentially traumatic life, some people adjust well by showing a stable trajectory with healthy functioning, while some people may experience distress in the immediate aftermath of event. Resilience has been most frequently defined as positive adaptation despite adversity. Over the past 40 years, resilience research has gone through several stages. How do people deal with difficult event that change their lives? The death of loved ones, loss of job, serious illness, terrorist attacks and other traumatic events: these are all examples of very challenging life experiences. Resilience is what gives people the psychological strength to cope with stress and hardship. Everybody has resilience. It’s just a question of how much and how well you put it to good use in your life. Resilience has been used to describe people and systems that bounce back from negative experiences and disturbances.

The fields of psychiatry, psychology and psychotherapy have investigated relationship between resilience and personality traits to understand what drives healthy coping styles and adaptive behavior. There is considerable evidence that the personality traits can influence psychological resilience among the adolescents as found in earlier studies.

CONCEPTS UNDER STUDY

Personality Traits:

Definitions: Personality traits are typically defined as descriptions of people in terms of relatively stable patterns of behavior, thoughts, and emotions (e.g., McCrae & Costa, 2003).

Personality traits reflect people's characteristic patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Personality traits imply consistency and stability (Diener, E. & Lucas, R. E., 2021).

Personality traits are relatively stable, consistent, and enduring internal characteristics that are inferred from a pattern of behaviors, attitudes, feelings, and habits in an individual (APA Dictionary of Psychology).

Personality traits reflect peoples' characteristics patterns of thoughts, feelings and behaviors.

Personality Trait Theories:

In 1936 psychologist Gordon Allport found that one English-language dictionary alone contained more than 4,000 words describing different personality traits into three levels - Cardinal traits, Central traits and Secondary traits. British psychologist Hans Eysenck (1947) developed a model of personality based upon just three universal traits - Introversion/Extraversion, Neuroticism/Emotional stability and Psychoticism. Trait theorist Raymond Cattell (1957) reduced the number of main personality traits from Allport's initial list of over 4,000 down to 171. Then using a statistical techniques known as factor analysis he identified closely related terms and eventually reduced his list to just 16 key personality traits. According to Cattell, these 16 traits are the source of all human personality. He also developed one of the most widely used personality assessments known as the "16 Personality Factor Questionnaire." Both Cattell's and Eysenck's theories have been the subject of considerable research. This has led some theorists to believe that Cattell focused on too many traits, while Eysenck focused on too few. As a result, a new trait theory often referred to as the "Big Five" theory emerged (1980).

Big five personality theory (Lewis goldberg, 1980): The big five model, also known as the five-factor model, is the most widely accepted personality theory held by psychologists today. The theory states that personality can be boiled down to five core factors - openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism (known by the acronym CANOE or OCEAN). The big five model resulted from the contribution of many independent researchers. But in particular Lewis Goldberg heavily advocated for five primary factors of personality.

The theory identifies five factors:

Extraversion (outgoing/energetic vs. solitary/reserved)

Agreeableness (friendly/compassionate vs. critical/rational)

Openness to experience (inventive/curious vs. consistent/cautious)

Conscientiousness (efficient/organized vs. extravagant/careless)

Neuroticism (sensitive/nervous vs. resilient/confident)

Out of the above mentioned five factors, this research is only considering the following three personality traits

Extraversion: Reflects the tendency and intensity to which someone seeks interaction with their environment particularly socially. Extraversion describes energy, positive emotions, assertiveness, sociability, talkativeness, and the tendency to seek stimulation in the company of others.

Agreeableness: Refers to how people tend to treat relationships with others. Agreeableness is the tendency to be compassionate and cooperative towards others rather than suspicious and antagonistic.

Neuroticism: Describes vulnerability to unpleasant emotions like anger, anxiety, depression, or vulnerability. Neuroticism also refers to an individual's level of emotional stability and impulse control and is sometimes referred to as emotional stability.

Resilience: Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or even significant sources of stress – such as family and relationship problems or workplace and financial stressors. (American Psychological Association - APA)

Psychological resilience can be defined as individual's ability to withstand and adapt to adverse and traumatic events. (Walker, p. 10)

Resilience is the capacity and dynamic process of adaptively overcoming stress and adversity while maintaining normal psychological and physical functioning. (Gang, Adriana)

The capacity of a dynamic system to adapt successfully to disturbances that threaten system function, viability or development of that system. (Ann S. Masten)

Theories of Resilience:

Michael Rutter Theory: Rutter (2006), defined resilience as, “An interactive concept that is concerned with the combination of serious risk experiences and a relatively positive psychological outcome despite those experiences”. Rutter believes that resilience is not at all related to the individual's psychological traits; rather he believes it to be the ability to adapt when given the right resources.

Dr. Norman Garmezy's Resilience Theory: Dr. Norman Garmezy is a clinical psychologist and is known as the founder of research in resilience. According to the Norman Garmezy resilience is not necessarily someone who is extremely brave despite adversity, it is someone who is able to show functional adequacy despite the emotional turmoil.

Statement of the Problem:

To study the relationship between personality traits (Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism) and the level of resilience among adults.

Purpose and Significance of the Study:

Everything that a person does and how they behave can be influenced by personality in some way, including resilience and resilient behavior. Since 2020, people have experienced anxiety and stress for many reasons and the purpose of this research is to find out if personality traits have helped people to be resilient during this COVID-19 situation and which personality traits (Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism) correlate positively or negatively with resilience.

Resilience not only helps people surviving in this environment but it also helps them to grow and develop. Research shows that the big five factors of personality play a significant role in resilience. Based on previous studies it is evidence that the big five personality traits significantly influenced the level of resilience. Research has shown that resilience can impact one's health and well-being and if after illness, people are able to return to a 'normal' state of health and well-being then this can indicate quite a strong resilience. A resilient nature can help an individual to seek support for both physical and mental health issues and this could allow a quicker rate of recovery in some cases. Resilience is important because it gives people the strength needed to process and overcome hardship. Those lacking resilience get easily overwhelmed, and may turn to unhealthy coping mechanisms. Resilient people tap into their strengths and support system to overcome challenges and work

through problems. Much research has been carried out into the relationship between resilience and big five personality traits. The research also indicated that those with high ‘control’ and ‘energy’ and low ‘emotionality’ also show greater resilience. In previous studies it has shown that those who scored high on extraversion and agreeableness were less likely to burnout. High energy individuals often build better social networks, which can be important in providing support through stressful periods. Likewise people with high are more optimistic and cooperative and may therefore be better able to cope with stressful situations. The studies published since the COVID-19 outbreak agree that personality plays a huge role in how people do or don’t cope with difficult situations such as lockdowns.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the relationship between extraversion and resilience among adults
2. To study the relationship between agreeableness and resilience among adults.
3. To study the relationship between neuroticism and resilience among adults.

HYPOTHESES

1. There is positive relationship between extraversion and resilience among adults.
2. There is positive relationship between agreeableness and resilience among adults.
3. There is negative relationship between neuroticism and resilience among adults.

METHODOLOGY

In the present research correlational survey design was used.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

- 1. Personality Traits:** Subject’s scores (Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism) obtained on the NEO-FFI by Paul Costa Jr. and Robert R. McCrae would be considered as personality traits in this research.
- 2. Resilience:** Subject’s scores obtained on the 14 Item Resilience Scale by Gail M. Wagnild and Heather M. Young would be considered as resilience level in this research.

Sample

Sample Group	Sample No.	Age Group (In years)
Adults	40	18-30

SAMPLING

The snowball sampling method is used for this research.

TOOLS

Two tools were used in this research as follows:

- 1. NEO-FFI:** NEO- Five Factor Inventory developed by Costa Jr. and Robert R. McCrae. It has 60 items. The inventory measures five broad domains or factors of personality (Extraversion, Openness to experience, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and Neuroticism,). The inventory uses a Five-Point Likert response format, ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”. The scores provide a brief explanation of the assessment and give the participants domain levels and a strength based description of three levels (High, Average and Low) in each domain. For NEO-FFI, the reliable internal consistencies reported in the manual were: Neuroticism-.79, Extraversion -.79, Openness -.80, Agreeableness -.75 and Conscientiousness-.83. A number of studies evaluated criterion validity of NEO-FFI.

2. Resilience Scale:The 14 item Resilience Scale developed by Gail M. Wagnild and Heather M. Young. It has 14 items. The inventory uses a Seven-Point Rating Scale Ranging from “1-Strongly Disagree” to “7-Strongly Agree”. Higher scores indicates stronger resilience. Prior research has demonstrated evidence of internal consistency (Cronbach’s alpha ranges from .89 to .96), test re-test reliability and construct validity.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The data collected was analysed statistically by using Mean, SD and ‘r’ with Pearson product-moment.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

Correlations between personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism) and resilience.

Table 1.1 Correlation between Extraversion and Resilience

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r (Calculated Value)
Extraversion	40	21.12	11.29	0.54
Resilience		81.92	10.81	

Significant at 0.05 level

As per the table 1.1, computed value of correlation between personality trait (Extraversion) and Resilience is 0.54. Mean of Extraversion is 21.12, Resilience is 81.92 and SD of Extraversion is 11.29, Resilience is 10.81. It was found that Personality trait (Extraversion) showed significant moderate and positive correlation with resilience. As the hypothesis that there is positive relationship between extraversion and resilience is accepted.

Table 1.2 Correlation between Agreeableness and Resilience

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r (Calculated Value)
Agreeableness	40	30.4	6.45	0.33
Resilience		81.92	10.81	

Significant at 0.05 level

As per the table 1.2, computed value of correlation between personality trait (Agreeableness) and Resilience is 0.33. Mean of Agreeableness is 30.4, Resilience is 81.92 and SD of Agreeableness is 6.45, Resilience is 10.81. It was found that personality trait (Agreeableness) showed slightly significant and positive correlation with resilience. As the hypothesis that there is positive relationship between agreeableness and resilience is accepted.

Table 1.3 Correlation between Neuroticism and Resilience

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r (Calculated Value)
Neuroticism	40	29.25	11	-0.35
Resilience		81.92	10.81	

Significant at 0.05 level

As per the table 1.3, computed value of correlation between personality traits (Neuroticism) and Resilience is -0.35. Mean of Neuroticism is 29.25, Resilience 81.92 and SD of Neuroticism is 11, Resilience is 10.81. It was found that personality trait (Neuroticism) showed slightly significant and negative correlation with resilience. As the hypothesis that there is negative relationship between neuroticism and resilience is accepted.

DISCUSSION

The present study was aimed at exploring the relationship between personality traits and resilience among adults. Significant positive and negative relationships were found after the analysis and interpretation of the table recorded earlier. As per the computed value of correlation between personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism) and resilience, Extraversion and Resilience is 0.54, Agreeableness and Resilience is 0.33 and Neuroticism and Resilience is -0.35. It was found that Personality trait (Extraversion) showed significant moderate and positive correlation with resilience. As the hypothesis that there is positive relationship between extraversion and resilience is accepted. Personality trait (Agreeableness) showed slightly significant and positive correlation with resilience. As the hypothesis that there is positive relationship between Agreeableness and resilience is accepted. It was found that personality trait (Neuroticism) showed slightly significant and negative correlation with resilience. As the hypothesis that there is negative relationship between neuroticism and resilience is accepted. The objectives framed by researcher have been proven. This is quite expected because agreeableness and extraversion are healthy personalities with such traits as getting along with others, assertiveness, cooperative, trustworthy. All these promote psychological resilience in an individual while those of neuroticism like nervousness; tendency toward unstable emotions negates it. At the time of data collection, researcher observed that most of the subjects showed high level of resilience, which might because of COVID pandemic.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Personality trait (Extraversion) showed positive and moderately significant correlation with the level of resilience.
2. Personality trait (Agreeableness) showed positive and slightly significant correlation with the level of resilience.
3. Personality trait (Neuroticism) showed negative and slightly significant correlation with the level of resilience.

LIMITATIONS & SUGGESTIONS

1. The study considered only three personality traits from Big Five Model of personality traits.
2. This research study is only limited to the COVID situation.
3. The study can be conducted on other age groups.
4. Further researches can be conducted using all five personality traits from Big Five Model of personality traits.
5. Further studies can use other variables like well-being, adjustment, coping strategies and social support.

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