

The Effects of Personality Traits and Psychological Well-Being among Iranian Adolescent Migrants in Kuala-Lumpur, Malaysia

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to determine the relationships between personality traits and psychological well-being among Iranian adolescent migrants in Kuala-Lumpur, Malaysia. The participants were 300 high schools adolescents who comprise (143 males, and 157 females) in the age range of 13 to be 16 years old. The instrument used to measurement personality traits was Five Factor Inventory (FFI-NEO) Iranian version by Costa and McCrae, (1992) and psychological well-being Scale by Ryff, and keys, (1995). The results from the study showed that there was negative statistical significant relationship between neuroticism trait and adolescent's psychological well-being, while extroversion and agreeableness traits have positive correlation with psychological well-being. However, the results also indicated that openness to experience and conscientiousness traits do not have statistical significance relationships with psychological well-being.

Keywords: personality traits, psychological well-being, immigrant, Iranian adolescence

I. Introduction

Adolescence is a period of transition between childhood and adulthood and is highly associated with physical, biological, psychological, cognitive, emotional, and social changes (Kaplan, 2004:16). Many influential factors like neuroticism, agreeableness and extroversion always determine the mainstream of these changes that may be positive or negative about psychological well-being of adolescents (Hutchinson & Rapee, 2007:12). Psychological well-being as we all know today is defined as a positive self-perception and a positive view of an individual's way of life includes a sense of being happy about oneself, (Diener, 1984:7). According to Keyes, (2006:18) psychological well-being is a feeling of satisfaction and happiness with one's activities, also the ability to meet the demands involved in one's daily life, and having a sense of personal purpose and meaning. Past research has shown that psychological well-being reflects the dynamic relationship between social process and psychological processes. As such, psychological processes are the inner world that involves, beliefs, attitudes, emotions, feelings, thoughts, perception and understanding. Similarly McNulty, Livneh, and Wilson, (2004:21) psychological well-being is an important factor in positive psychology, as well as, contentment, satisfaction for the past, optimism for the future and happiness in the present.

Although, one of the larger disasters and difficulties over the past three decades before the world have been the phenomenon of the massive wave of immigration to foreign countries (Ghaffarian, 1987:10). This situation is particularly obvious in third-world countries like Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Middle East countries, Africa, or some of the other countries in Southeast Asia (Kazemipoor, 2007:17). Generally speaking, this phenomenon of the massive wave immigration is a challenging issue for many nations around the world, and Iranian immigrants are no exception. This is because for every year thousands from Iranian adolescents always moved to other countries, where they usually face with acculturation problems within their own family and their children (Mehdizadeh and Scott, 2005:22). Moreover, these problems influence all Iranian immigrants in European's countries, like American, Scandinavia, or Southeast Asia's countries such as Malaysia (Safdar, Lewis and Daneshpour, 2006:26).

In addition, low psychological well-being has been recognized as well because it is one of the main problems faced for numerous adolescent migrants and their family (Berry, 1980:2). In other words, like many other immigrants, Iranian adolescent migrants also suffer from many problems, which include; low psychological well-being, language proficiency, discrimination, low self-esteem, homesick, and poor social adaptation, (Ghaffarian, 1987:10). Importantly, adolescents also encountered numerous changes in economics, climate, behaviour, beliefs, values, religious and contexts (Smith, 1989:27). In addition, immigrants are faced

with much pressure on their identity because immigrants are faced with acculturation difficulty through psychological and cultural changes, which occur as a result of interaction between two, three or more cultural groups, as a result members from this group of culture have been negatively faced with unsatisfactory psychological well-being among the immigrants (Berry, 1990:1).

II. Objective

The aim of this study is to determine the relationship between five dimensions of personality traits, such as neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness and psychological well-being among Iranian adolescents migrant in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

III. Methodology

3.1. Population and Sample

The population of the current study was 950 high school adolescents from Iranian high school in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and sample from the study was 300 male and female Iranian students with age 13-16 years old, and the samples from this study were obtained by using cluster random sampling technique.

3.2. Instruments

Personality was measured by Five Factor Inventory NEO-FFI. This scale is a comprehensive model of personality traits (Costa and McCare, 1992:5). It measured five dimensions of personality includes; Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness (Costa and McCrae, 1992:5). Garousifarshi and Soufiyani (2008:8) reported internal consistency values of 0.74 to 0.89 in Iran with 2000 respondents. Moreover, criterion validity for all types of personality exceed the suggested value of 0.70, neuroticism (.70), extraversion (.74), openness (.72), agreeableness (.71), and conscientiousness (.71) respectively. In addition, Five-Factor Inventory is a short form of five factors personality (NEO-PI-R) scale, which developed by Costa and McCrae in 1983 (John, 1999:13). It has 60 items (5×12) with a 5-point Likert scale, ranked from 1 "strongly disagree" to 5 "strongly agree." According to Garousifarshi and Soufiyani, (2007:9) the reliability of NEO-FFI among Iranian population was acceptable (Cronbach's Alpha= 0.86 > 0.70).

Psychological Well-being scale developed by Ryff and Keyes, (1995:24) was used to assess adolescents psychological well-being. In this study, psychological well-being is a multidimensional construct encompass psychological well-being (Ryff and Singer, 2005:25). This scale has 54 items through six dimensions, self-acceptance (nine items), autonomy, social support (nine items), environmental mastery (nine items), personal growth (nine items), positive relations with others (nine items), and purpose of life (nine items). Respondents were asked to participate in this study by answering each item using 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree (e.g., In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live). The total score, ranged from 54 to 270, higher scores indicating that adolescents have high level of psychological well-being.

IV. Results

Descriptive statistics are used to describe the variables from the data from this study. Pearson correlation analysis has obtained to examine the relationships between personality traits and psychological well-being.

IV.1 Descriptive Findings

Respondents in present study were Iranian adolescent migrants in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The respondents' age range from 13 to 16 years-old with the mean age of 14.76 years (SD= 1.11). Then more than half of the respondents 157 (52.3%) were female and 143 (47.7%) were males.

As shown in Table 1 based on the mean of actual scores of respondents, Castells, (1996:4) the scores of psychological well-being, 48.4% of the respondents reported high score in psychological well-being, and it means 145 of respondents were strong in adjustment and psychological well-being, also 50% of the respondents (150) reported mild scores in psychological well-being whereas only (1.6%) of the respondents reported low scores in psychological well-being and almost greater number of respondents (98.4%) reported medium and strong adjustment and also good psychological well-being.

Descriptive findings of psychological well-being are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1 The level of psychological Well-Being of Respondents N=300						
Variable	Mean	S.D	Min	Max	N	%
psychological Well-Being	190.32	24.59	103	247		
Low (Scores 54 - 141)					5	1.6
Medium (Scores 142- 190)					150	50
High (Scores 191 - 270)					145	48.4

Descriptive findings for Personality traits variable are displayed in Table 2.

Variable	Mean	S.D	Min	Max	N	%
Personality traits						
Neuroticism	24.14	8.83	3	48		
Low (Scores 1 - 14)					28	9.4
Medium (Scores 15 -31)					211	70.3
High (Scores 32 - 48)					61	20.3
Openness	25.89	4.59	13	40		
Low (Scores 1 - 23)					89	29.7
Medium (Scores 24 - 32)					186	62
High (Scores 33 - 48)					25	8.3
Conscientiousness	4.03	30.06	15	40		
Low (Scores 01- 26)					49	16.3
Medium (Scores 27- 39)					248	82.7
High (Scores 40 - 48)					3	1
Agreeableness	28.68	5.42	14	44		
Low (Scores 1 - 26)					102	34
Medium (Scores 27-37)					175	58.4
High (Scores 38- 48)					23	7.6
Extraversion	30.97	7.33	8	46		
Low (scores 1 - 21)					28	9.4
Medium (scores 22 - 32)					148	49.3
High (scores 33 - 48)					124	41.3

IV.2 Inferential Findings

As indicated in Table 3, three dimensions of five personality traits statistically have significant relationships with adolescent psychological well-being. Personality trait's significant dimensions include neuroticism, agreeableness and extraversion. The finding from the study showed that there was a significant negative correlation between neuroticism and psychological well-being. In other words, respondents with a low score in neuroticism ($r = -.401, p \leq .05$) had high psychological well-being. While respondents with a high score in agreeableness ($r = .357, p \leq .01$) and extraversion ($r = .259, p \leq .01$) had high psychological well-being. Furthermore, openness to experience and conscientiousness dimensions did not have significant correlation with adolescent psychological well-being.

Table 3 Correlation Matrix for personality traits and psychological well - being

Variable	PSW	Neurot	Openn	Consc	Agree	Extra
psychological Well-Being	1					
Neuroticism	-.401**	1				
Openness	-.052	-.070	1			
Conscientiousness	-.057	-.054	0.032	1		
Agreeableness	.357**	-.240**	-.077	.134*	1	
Extraversion	.259**	-.440**	0.061	.202**	.489**	1

V. Conclusion

The present study found a significant negative correlation between neuroticism and psychological well-being. Also a significant positive correlation between agreeableness and extraversion traits with adolescent psychological well-being. Past studies by Kjell, Nima, Sikström, Archer and Garcia, (2013:19); and Motevaliyan, (2014:23) and Bradburn (1969:3); Librán (2006:20) showed significant relationship between neuroticism and adolescent psychological well-being. Similarly, Joshanloo and Afshari, (2011:14) found a negative significant relationship between neuroticism and psychological well-being. Moreover, respondents with low neuroticism personality traits may present more social adjustment, modesty, dutifulness and well-being. Therefore, adolescents with high neuroticism personality traits are usually anxious, depressed, moody, vulnerable and emotionally not stable (Garusifarshi, 2007:9). Clearly, adolescents with high neuroticism personality might not be able to do his/her duty well. The finding from this study also indicated positive significant relationships between extraversion and agreeableness traits and adolescent psychological well-being.

This finding is consistent with (Garusifarshi, 2007:9; Hagh-Shenas, 2010:11; Joshanloo and Rastegar, 2007:15) who argued that there were positive relationships between extraversion and adolescent's psychological well-being. Findings from Costa and McCrae (1980:6) argued that satisfaction with life is related to a high level of extraversion and a low level of neuroticism. To them, adolescents with extraversion personality have characteristics such as warmth, cheerful, sociable, activity, assertive, optimism and excitement seeking.

Based on findings of this study, domain and type of personality has significant relationships with adolescent psychological well-being among Iranian adolescent students in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. It is clear to note that adolescents who are less neurotic, more extraversion and more agreeable are more likely sociable and tendency to society host culture and higher psychological well-being. In conclusion, the results from this study showed that personality traits play a vital role to determine the level of adolescent adjustments and psychological well-being among Iranian adolescents in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Thus, it is necessary that adolescents in Iranian school should be equipped with appropriate abilities, skills and knowledge so that they can have better adjustment with their society at large.

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