



Exploring The Correlation Between Personality Traits And Attachment Dimension Among Young Adults.

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Abstract

Personality plays an integral part in identifying attachment styles and dimensions in individuals. While a lot of personality traits are influenced by the environment in which the individual lives, different situations and circumstances can also influence a lot of negative personality traits in an individual as they grow up. As a result, it can impact the ability of an individual to form secure and trustworthy relationships or attachment dimensions in his/her life. While there has been much research on the same in early childhood and adolescents, only a handful of them focuses on the impact of it on young adulthood. For this purpose, we conducted this study, to understand how the personality traits of an individual correlate with the different attachment dimensions in young adults. The objective of this study is whether personality facets were significantly correlated with different attachment dimensions. To investigate our objective, we used two different tools a) the NEO-FFI and b) the Revised Adult Attachment Scale. The results of this study indicated that only some of the personality traits were significantly correlated with attachment dimensions.

Keywords – personality traits, attachment dimensions.

1. Introduction

There have many models for attachment theories in the field of psychology, but a lot of them revolve around the same fundamentals that the attachment a child forms with their primary caregivers in childhood is a primary source for identifying the different attachment styles they form and are most likely to form throughout life.

However, exposure to certain circumstances in a child's life also plays an important role in identifying or forming these attachment styles or dimensions.

PERSONALITY

Personality traits that an individual has inherited through nature or nurture have also been shown to have a significant relationship with different attachment dimensions. When we look at the OCEAN model of personality, it shows us that certain personality traits are present in each individual some have them to a higher degree and some lower than others. The degrees to which these traits are present in an individual or a child influence different attachment dimension among young adults. **(Beeney, Stepp et al. 2019)**

For example – children who have a high degree of extraversion (being social, outgoing etc) can make and maintain good relationships with other people throughout their life. Similarly, children who have high neuroticism traits (anxiety, anger, depression) are more likely to form attachments or relationships with other people that are less secure and more likely that they worry about rejection or abandonment constantly. **(Ledoux, Winterwood et al. 2010)**

Personality as a whole can give us many insights about an individual's behavioural attributes and other things it gives us a deep understanding as to why an individual is who he is and helps them also to reach their full potential and work on their weaknesses as well.

ATTACHMENT

Attachment is explained as having an affection bond or tie with something or someone. It could be between two individuals or an individual with a non-living thing. An example of such can be seen in a parent-child relationship, these attachments are essential for any infant or child as they shape the child's relationship in adulthood or the bond that a child creates with an imaginary friend or a toy and to a degree this attachment at a young age can also bring about certain personality traits to surface.

An infant's first coping system is attachment is, it gives the infant a sense of security, a comforting mental presence that the caregiver or the parent is going to be there when they need them.

Infants and children create attachments with caregivers or parent figures that are available or present at the time of need, when an infant has a secure connection with an adult it decreases fear in children when they are present with situations that they are not familiar with.

The focal point here is to see whether different how different personality traits are correlated to specific attachment dimensions in an individual. **(Konrath, Chopik et al. 2014)**

By studying these particular objectives, we will have a better understanding of how different personality traits can be correlated to different attachment dimensions in individuals. This paper will contribute to a more complex and detailed understanding of and interplay between these factors.

2. Methodology

Aim -

To study the correlation between different personality traits and different attachment dimensions in young adults.

Objectives –

1. To study the correlation between personality and attachment dimensions in young adults.

Hypothesis -

1. There will be a significant correlation between personality and attachment dimensions.

Sample and its selection –

The selected size for the research is 100 respondents. The selected age criteria are 20-30 years. The sample includes 50 males and 50 females who are currently studying at universities.

Study tools -

Neo Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI) - The NEO-FFI was given to us by Costa and McCrae in 1992. This scale is used to assess the personality traits of an individual with an overall of 60 questions these questions assess an individual's personality traits under 5 different facets such as – openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and lastly neuroticism. This scale assesses personality on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from Strongly Disagree (0), Disagree (1), Neither agree nor disagree (2), Agree (3), and strongly agree (4). This 60-item domain scale had correspondingly larger coefficient alphas, which ranged from 0.86 to 0.45.

Revised Adult Attachment Scale – Close Relationships Version - Revised Adult Attachment Scale – Close Relationship Version (RAAS) was given to us by Collins in 1996, this scale is used to measure the attachment dimensions of an individual on three different dimensions – close, depend, and anxiety. There are overall of 18 questions which individual answers on a 5-point Likert scale. Where 1 stand for (not at all characteristics of me) and 5 (very characteristic of me). Collins reported Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .69 for close, .75 for depend on, and .72 for anxiety.

3. Results

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics

This table depicts the Mean and Standard Deviation among Personality, and Attachment dimensions.

Table 1 depicts the descriptive statistics data for the personality traits and attachment dimensions. The sample was collected from overall 100 participants.

Table 2 Correlation –

Table 2.1– This table depicts the correlation between personality facets and the dimension of the attachment scale using Pearson correlation at a 0.05 level

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Neuroticism	26.79	8.705	100
Extraversion	25.43	6.307	100
Openness	27.47	6.198	100
Agreeableness	25.27	5.867	100
Conscientiousness	29.5	7.124	100
Close	18.1	4.428	100
Depend	16.74	4.756	100
Anxiety	19.33	5.742	100

	Close	Depend	Anxiety
Neuroticism	-.144	-.477*	.576*
Extraversion	.374*	.114	-.143
Openness	.132	-.075	.029
Agreeableness	.321*	.354*	-.244*
Conscientiousness	.201*	-.095	-.078

**Correlation significance at 0.05 level*

4. DISCUSSION

The main aim of this study was to explore the correlation between personality traits and attachment dimensions among young adults.

The variables were personality and attachment dimensions. An overall sample was collected from 100 individuals consisting of 50 males and 50 females. Where the main focus was on the individuals who were currently enrolled in universities. The tools that were utilized were the NEO-FFI scale, and the Revised Adult Attachment Scale (RAAS).

The main objective of this study was, to inspect the correlation between personality traits, and attachment dimensions. As the tools that we utilized were discreet, we inspected the relationship between the variables.

Pearson correlation was used to assess the correlation between NEO-FFI and RAAS.

According to the hypothesis, we explore the correlation between personality traits and attachment dimensions.

Results of those were as follows – Neuroticism showed a significant correlation with depend dimension of the attachment scale, where $r = -.477$ and a $p\text{-value}=.000$ which shows that there is a negative moderate correlation between the two variables. The negative relationship here indicates that as neuroticism increases, the dependent dimension will decrease. This highlights that if neuroticism traits in an individual increase (anxiety, depression, impulsivity, etc.), there will be a decrease in the dependent dimension of the attachment scale which means the individual is less likely to be comfortable while depending on others in a relationship. This correlation was significant at a 0.05 level. (*Referring to Table 2.1*)

Neuroticism also showed a significant correlation anxiety dimension of the attachment scale, where $r = .576$ and a $p\text{-value}=.000$, which indicates that there exists a positive moderate correlation between both. The positive correlation here indicates that as neuroticism increases, the anxiety dimension will also increase. This correlation highlights, that if neuroticism traits in an individual increase (hostility, anxiety, and anger.), there would also be an increase in the anxiety dimension which could lead individuals to have a constant fear of rejection and worry about being unloved. This correlation is significant at a 0.05 level. (*Referring to Table 2.1*) (*Sherif, 2022*)

Neuroticism showed a non-significant result with the close dimension of the attachment scale.

The second facet in the NEO-FFI assessment is extraversion, which showed significant results with the close dimensions of the attachment scale. Where $r = .374$ and a $p\text{-value}=.000$ which shows us that there exists a positive weak relationship between the two variables. Here, the positive correlation indicates that as extraversion increases, the close dimension of the attachment scale also increases. This shows that if extraversion traits in an individual increase (warmth, excitement, positive emotions, etc.), there would also be an increase in the close dimension of the attachment scale, in simpler terms, this would lead individuals to form many close and intimate relations with others. This correlation is significant at a 0.05 level. (*Referring to Table 2.1*)

Extraversion showed non-significant results with both the dependant and the anxiety dimensions of the attachment scale.

The third facet of the NEO-FFI assessment was openness, which showed non-significant results with all three of the dimensions of the attachment scale that is – close, depend, and anxiety dimensions.

The fourth facet of the NEO-FFI assessment was agreeableness, which showed significant results with the close dimension of the attachment scale, where $r = .321$ and a $p\text{-value}=.001$ which shows us that there

exists a positive weak relationship between the two variables. Here, the positive correlation indicates that as agreeableness increases, the close dimension of the attachment scale also increases. This indicates that as agreeableness traits in an individual increase (morality, compliance, corporation, etc.), there would be an increase in the individual's ability to form close and intimate relations with others. This correlation was significant at a 0.05 level. (*Referring to Table 2.1*)

Agreeableness showed significant results with the dependent dimension of the attachment scale, where $r = .354$ and the $p\text{-value} = .000$ which shows us that there exists a positive weak relationship between both. The positive relationship here tells us that as agreeableness increases, the dependent dimension of the attachment scale also increases. This could lead to mean that as agreeableness traits in an individual increase (compliance, corporation, etc.) it also increases the ability of an individual to form relationships with other individuals that he/she can easily depend on. This correlation is significant at a 0.05 level. (*Referring to Table 2.1*)

Agreeableness also shows us significant results with the anxiety dimension of the attachment scale, where $r = -.244$ and a $p\text{-value} = .014$, this indicates that there is a negative weak correlation between the two variables. The negative correlation here indicates that as agreeableness increases, the anxiety dimension of the attachment dimension will decrease. This correlation highlights that if agreeableness traits increase (sympathy, tendermindedness, etc.), there will be a decrease in the anxiety dimension, which would be interpreted as the individual is less likely to worry about being unloved and having a constant fear of being rejected. This correlation is significant at a 0.05 level. (*Referring to Table 2.1*)

The last facet of the NEO-FFI assessment is conscientiousness, which showed a significant result with the close dimension of the attachment scale. Where $r = .201$ and a $p\text{-value} = .045$, which indicates that there exists a positive weak correlation between the two variables. Here, the positive correlation tells us that as conscientiousness increases, the close dimension of the attachment scale will also increase. Conscientiousness traits (sense of duty/obligation, self-efficacy, competence, etc.) increase, and there will also be an increase in the individual's ability to form close and intimate relationships with others. This correlation is significant at a 0.05 level. (*Referring to Table 2.1*)

Conscientiousness showed non-significant results with both the depend dimension and the anxiety dimension of the attachment scale.

From the above-mentioned results, it is drawn that some NEO-FFI facets have significant results with the dimensions of the attachment scale whereas, some of the NEO-FFI facets also show non-significant results with the dimensions of the attachment scale. So, our hypothesis, that personality significantly correlates with dimensions of the attachment scale is partially true. (*Petronzi, Masciale, 2015*)

5. Future Implication

Certain personality traits predict or correlate to dependent or anxious attachment type (neuroticism and agreeableness), certain interventions can be created to help realize individuals of the same so that they can manage these negative personality traits and are focused on more positive and healthy personality traits. Similarly, family therapy can also help caregivers or parents to provide the best environments for their children for them to grow and become healthy individuals.

6. Limitations of the study

The present sample for this study was restricted to the age group of 20-30 university students, hence we cannot generalize about a larger population. As the forms were a self-report measure, there are possibilities for self-report biases. One of the major limitations of this study, as this research was only conducted on the Indian population, it is difficult to generalize about the results worldwide. Lastly, there could also be socially desirable bias present, where individuals might have provided answers that they think are more socially desirable, rather than answering honestly.

7. Conclusion

From the above-mentioned results and discussion, we can conclude that all of our hypothesis is partially true as only some of the facets of the personality traits are significantly correlated with attachment dimensions.

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