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## Research Article

### BIG FIVE PERSONALITY FACTORS AND MENTAL HEALTH AMONG THE STUDENTS OF ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY

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#### ABSTRACT

The present research was an attempt made to investigate the relationship between Big Five Personality Factors and Mental Health among the students of Annamalai University. The sample-size for this study comprised of 100 students randomly selected from Annamalai University. Tools for data collection were the Big Five Personality Inventory (John & Srivastava, 1999), and the Mental Health Scale (Kamalesh Sharma, 2002) respectively. The duration for data collection was spread over a period of one month (approximately). The researcher met the participants individually and data was obtained through face-to-face interview. Mean, t-test and Pearson's moment correlation, and liner regression were the statistical analysis done. Results revealed that Big Five Personality Factors were significant predictors of Mental Health. The outcomes of the present study also demonstrated that there is significant relationship between Big Five Personality Factors and Mental Health.

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#### INTRODUCTION

Ever since the dawn of human intelligence the foremost psychological phenomenon to be studied was personality. The quest to understand personality still remains the primary motive for the many researchers in the field of psychology. The study of personality always remains a topic of paramount interest to the students, academicians, and researchers in psychology. Though there are many approaches to the study of personality but in contemporary times the Big Five Personality Factors Model has gained momentum and is widely employed in psychology (John and Srivastava, 1999). Initially the Big Five Personality concept was pioneered by Norman in 1963; nevertheless in 1990 McCrae and Costa formulated their original version and labeled it the Five Factor Theory (Boeree, 2006). The big five personality traits are generally represented as "OCEAN," which refers to "Openness to experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism. The significance of Big Five Model is that, it emphasized that true human personality structure can be depicted in terms of a plausibly small, universal set of traits.

The implication of personality to mental health necessitates precise definition of jointly personality and mental health. According to World Health Organization (WHO) health is defined as "a state of complete physical, mental and social

well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (WHO, 2001). Were as, Schacter, Gilbert, & Wegner (2009) defined "Personality as an individual's characteristic style of behaving, thinking, and feeling." even though there has been a great deal discussions on the concept of personality, two main ideas have encompassed almost every work at sphere of personality hypothesizing, human nature and individual differences (Buss, 2008). All our cognitions, conations and actions and our uniqueness has significant influences on our mental health. On the contrary mental health problems not only impinge on the individual but have impact on the entire populace. The consequences of excluding people with mental health complicatedness from a dynamic function in community life are soaring.

The apparent issue that has engrossed mental-health researchers for an elongated period is how individual's personalities affect their probability of emergent mental illness. Now days, there are numerous empirical findings that emphasizes the significance of personality traits in understanding various psychopathologies (Kotov *et al.* 2010, Malouff *et al.* 2005) and well-being (Steel *et al.* 2008). Many researchers have investigated the relationship between big five factors and mental health. Jansi and Anbazhagan (2017) establish that Big Five Personality Traits emerge as strong

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predictors of life satisfaction. Shirazi, Khan, and Ansari (2012) indicated that there is significant relationship between mental health and many personality characteristics. Furham and Cheng (1999); Goodwin and Friedman (2006) based on empirical observations stated that personality traits are associated with mental health, further the studies also exposed that higher level of conscientiousness significantly decrease the probability of mental disorders as well as extraversion and agreeableness.

The review of related empirical literature leads to the conclusion that research on the “Big Five Personality Factors and Mental Health of students” in Indian context is inadequate. Scanty information is available about the mental health of students in relation to the ‘Big Five Personality Factors’ pertaining to Indian scenario. Hence this research study is an attempt made to understand the relationship between the Big Five Personality Factors with the mental health of university student.

**Objectives of the present study**

1. To assess the big five personality factors among the students of Annamalai University.
2. To measure the mental health of the students of Annamalai University.
3. To investigate the relationship between big five personality factors and mental health among the students of Annamalai University.

**Hypotheses of the study**

1. There will be significant relationship between Big Five Personality Factors and Mental Health among students.
2. The Big Five Personality Factors will emerge as significant predictors of the Mental Health of students.

**METHOD**

**Sample**

The sample-size for the present study comprised of 100 students selected from Annamalai University, Tamil Nadu. Random sampling technique was employed. (Table 1: Shows the distribution of the sample).

**Tools Used**

The psychological tools for the present study comprise of two standardized questionnaires selected after a careful and comprehensive review of related literature, namely, (1) The Big Five Inventory, and (2) The Mental Health Scale.

**Big Five Inventory:** This inventory was developed by Benet-Martinez & John, (1998) to measures five personality traits, namely, Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism. This is Likert-type scale which contains 44 items, each item is followed by 5 responses, namely, Disagree Strongly to Agree Strongly. The reliability coefficients for all the extracted factors were above 0.70.

**Mental Health Scale:** Mental Health Scale was developed by Kamallesh Sharma (2002). There are 60 items in this scale. Every statement has three alternative responses, namely, “Yes,” “indefinite” and “No.” This scale contains positive and negative statements, for negative statements the scores are reversed. The test re-test and split-half reliability coefficient was found .86 and .88 respectively.

**Procedure**

This research was conducted in Annamalai University, Chidambaram, Tamil Nadu, India. The sample-size for this study comprised of 100 students randomly selected from different Faculties of the University. The duration for data collection was spread over a period of one month (approximately). Prior to data collection the participants were individually contacted by the research investigator and permission was obtained based on informed consent. Data was obtained through face-to-face interview by mean of standardized structured questionnaires carefully selected based on the comprehensive review of related literature. The obtained data were given appropriate statistical treatment and the results are given in the following tables.

**RESULTS**

**Table 1** Showing the distribution of sample

Variables	Sub-Variables	No	Percent (%)
Gender	Boys	49	49.0
	Girls	51	51.0
	Total	100	100.0
Age	19-24	69	69.0
	25-30	31	31.0
	Total	100	100.0
Residency	Urban	51	51.0
	Rural	49	49.0
	Total	100	100.0
Family Income	< 5000	32	32.0
	5,100- 10,000	8	8.0
	1,001-25,000	14	14.0
	25,001-50,000	24	24.0
	Above 50,000	22	22.0
Total		100	100.0

**Table 2** Correlation between Big Five Personality Factors and Mental Health

Big Five Personality Factors	Mental Health
Openness	.322**
Conscientiousness	.498**
Extraversion	.494**
Agreeableness	.513**
Neuroticism	1 .645**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

**Table 3** Regression analysis between Big Five Personality Factors and Mental Health

I.V	D.V	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig
O		.32 <sup>a</sup>	.10	.09	4.68	1.39	.32	3.37	.001
C		.49 <sup>b</sup>	.25	.24	2.96	.52	.49	5.62	.000
E		.49 <sup>c</sup>	.24	.24	4.37	.78	.49	5.62	.000
A	MH	.51 <sup>d</sup>	.26	.26	3.16	.54	.51	5.62	.000
N		.65 <sup>c</sup>	.42	.41	5.80	.66	.65	8.35	.000

O= Openness, C= Conscientiousness, E= Extraversion, A= Agreeableness, N= Neuroticism, MH= Mental Health

**DISCUSSION**

The findings of the present study demonstrated that all the five factors significantly correlated with mental health which confirms the formulated hypothesis that “There will be significant relationship between Big Five Personality Factors and Mental Health among students.” It is found that “Openness” is positively correlated with “Mental Health” (r= .322, p< 0.01). A positive correlation was found between

“Conscientiousness” and “Mental Health” ( $r = .498$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). There was also a significant positive correlation between “Extraversion” and “Mental Health” ( $r = .494$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). “Agreeableness” was positively related to “Mental Health” ( $r = .513$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Results also revealed that there is significant and positive relationship between “Neuroticism” and “Mental health” ( $r = .645$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The outcomes of this study is in accordance with prior research findings (e.g., Shirazi, Khan & Ansari (2012); Furnham & Cheng (1999); and Goodwin & Friedman (2006).

The results of this research also confirms the hypothesis that “The Big Five Personality Factors will emerge as significant predictors of the Mental Health of students,” divulges that Openness contributes 10% ( $R^2 = .10$ ), on mental health, Conscientiousness 25% ( $R^2 = .25$ ), Extraversion 24% ( $R^2 = .24$ ), Agreeableness 26% ( $R^2 = .26$ , and Neuroticism 42% ( $R^2 = .42$ ) respectively. Therefore on the basis of these findings it is inferred that “Big Five Factors” emerge as predictors of “Mental health.”

## CONCLUSION

The outcomes of the present research study reveal a significant positive correlation between the Big Five Personality Factors and Mental Health. The findings also indicate that the Big Five Personality Factors emerge as significant predictors of mental health.

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