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Neuroticism as a Predictor of Depression, Anxiety, and Stress in Adults

Abstract

The current study aimed to compare early adult neuroticism between the sexes. Investigating the relationship between early adult neuroticism and stress, anxiety, and depression was the other objective. The current study was carried out using a cross-sectional survey research approach. Each subject was contacted directly by the researcher, and each person's data was gathered separately. The study's 200 participants included an equal number of male and female pupils. A purposive sample method was used when selecting the participants. A Big Five Inventory (BFI) subscale was used to quantify neuroticism.Generally,the BFI dependability varied from 0.80 to 0.89. The scale for stress, anxiety, and depression was also used. Among young adults, neuroticism is a positive predictor of stress, anxiety, and depression. In summary, this research offers valuable insights into how personality traits impact mental health and how neuroticism plays a part in predicting the likelihood of internalizing psychological issues in early adulthood.

Keywords: Adults, Neuroticism, Anxiousness, Depression, Stress

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Title

Neuroticism as Predictor of Depression, Anxiety, and Stress in Adults

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Contents

Abstract

The current study aimed to compare early adult neuroticism between the sexes. Investigating the relationship between early adult neuroticism and stress, anxiety, and depression was the other objective. The current study was carried out using a cross-sectional survey research approach. Each subject was contacted directly by the researcher, and each person's data was gathered separately. The study's 200 participants included an equal number of male and female pupils. A purposive sample method was used when selecting the participants. A Big Five Inventory (BFI) subscale was used to quantify neuroticism.Generally,the BFI dependability varied from 0.80 to 0.89. The scale for stress, anxiety, and depression was also used. Among young adults, neuroticism is a positive predictor of stress, anxiety, and depression. In summary, this research offers valuable insights into how personality traits impact mental health and how neuroticism plays a part in predicting the likelihood of internalizing psychological issues in early adulthood.

Introduction

Early childhood is a time when physical, emotional, and psychological changes are developing.

Personality also develops throughout this time of life. A person desires to advance beyond their friends at this point in their lives. We are in a

competitive period, and if something isn't right, we get uncomfortable. We feel agitated and have pessimistic thoughts about life when we are unable to meet the objectives and predetermined aims. His pessimistic thoughts lead to psychological issues on the inside for people. These issues might include anxiety, stress, and sadness. While these issues are minor, we are oblivious to them until they begin to interfere with our day-to-day activities.

Individual disparities in negative emotional responses to threat, frustration, or loss are known as neuroticism, a personality characteristic. Berg's neuroticism is characterized by negative emotions such as despair, wrath, worry, and guilt, according to Costa and Gold. There are five main elements of personality, according to decades' worth of research. According to Rentfrow (2009), neuroticism is the only personality component among the Big Five. According to research by Costa (2001), women score higher than males on neuroticism when it comes to the Big Five trait level and most of the neuroticism-related aspects contained in the NEO-PI-R, a typical Big Five assessment.

Numerous individuals suffered from melancholia, the original name for depression. One of America's most well-known presidents, Abraham Lincoln, the sixteenth, also experienced it. Depression first appeared in literature in the 19th century. Despondency, melancholy, wrath, delusion, terror, and obsessions are among its components (Kendler, 2006). Depressed individuals are said to find their condition interferes with day-to-day functioning. It is believed that 5–10% of people worldwide experience recognized depression at any given moment, necessitating psychiatric and psychological support. For females, the lifetime chance of having depression is 10–20%. Prior research found that women experience anxiety and sadness at a ratio of 30–66%. Zainab and Fatmi (2012).

When an individual's anxiety symptoms prevent them from sleeping or from performing any other activity, it is deemed a problem. Anxiety typically arises when a response deviates from what would be considered reasonable in the given circumstances (Costa, 2002). The American Psychiatric Association first recognized first-time anxiety disorder in 1980. With prompt diagnosis and efficient treatment, the majority of impairments are avoidable. (Tracy, 2008). Anxiety is explained by learning theory and Freud's theory.

Stress has many different definitions. It characterizes a state of mental or emotional tension or stress brought on by challenging or demanding circumstances. The doctor has never worked with stress before. Han Seley. He created the term "general adaptation syndrome" to characterize the body's response to extended periods of intense stress. Selye states that this paradigm is composed of three components. Stress sets off the autonomic nervous system, which results in the alarm reaction, the first stage. Resistance is the second phase of an organism's effort to use coping mechanisms to adapt to stress. The last one is exhaustion, which causes an organism to perish or sustain irreversible damage (Selye, 1950&(Davison,2004).

Some studies used the term "stressor," which is another word for a stimulus, to distinguish stress from a reaction. In 2008. Neale and Johnson. According to the APA poll, bodily symptoms are one way that women express their stress. Compared to males, women disclosed more health-related issues (Herscher, 2014). Herscher (2014) also mentioned the intriguing fact that, despite males not dying from stress-related illnesses, women visit doctors more frequently for problems connected to stress. A person with a higher neuroticism is more likely to endure stressful situations in life, which increases their risk of developing depression. These two elements have a substantial correlation with one another (Ormel et al., 2001); Os& Jones, 1999).

High anxiety symptom sufferers also have a higher likelihood of becoming neurotic. According to Hettema and Neale (2007) and Prescott (2006), they are prone to being diagnosed with a variety of anxiety disorders, such as panic disorder, social phobias, and fundamental phobias. According to research by Gross and Hen (2004), neuroticism may be a phenotype that falls between mood disorders and anxiety.

Feletzen (2002) asserts that neuroticism is associated with heightened psychosocial vulnerability to stress, including heightened stress reactivity to cumulative psychosocial stressors and a temperamental sensitivity to negative stimuli.

According to Clark (1994), neuroticism is a temporal component that serves as the foundation for emotional illnesses and adverse consequences.

An emotionally competent individual with neuroticism is able to control and regulate their various emotional states as well as acknowledge and comprehend the effects of them. Researchers discovered that although there is a substantial correlation between emotional intelligence and the big five elements, there is also a link between emotional intelligence and academic intelligence (Van Der Zee et al., 2002) & Chowdhury, 2006).

According to earlier research, neuroticism is a predictor of anxiety and depression, both of which lower performance. Therefore, the primary goal of the current study is to investigate how neuroticism may influence students' levels of anxiety, stress, and depression. Every student possesses unique personality traits, emotional processing styles, and personal beliefs. Previous research has shown that neuroticism has a significant impact on students' academic progress, well-being, and general performance. In such circumstances, students are

unable to meet their duties. Furthermore, the negative effects of neuroticism on a student's emotional, social, and physical health include stress, anxiety, and depression (Hass & Rowland, 2005). In order to improve students' well-being, the factors influencing their performance will be investigated.

Psychological issues can be classified as either internalizing or externalizing. While internalizing psychological issues are hidden and difficult to notice, externalizing psychological issues are readily visible. The current study's goal is to investigate internalizing psychological issues that are difficult to pinpoint and subtle. The goal is to look at the variables that may be predictive of these psychological issues in young people. It was postulated that among early adults, neuroticism will positively predict stress, anxiety, and depression.

Approach and Participants

Participants

The study's 200 participants were adults, of which 100 (50%) were male and the remaining 100 (50%) were female. A purposive sample method was used to choose the participants. For this study, a cross-sectional survey research approach was adopted. Data was gathered from Sargodha's residential neighborhoods.

Instruments

Personality characteristics were measured with the Big Five Inventory (BFI). It was made in 1999 with 44 parts by John and Srivastava. This test examines the Big Five personality characteristics; in this study, only the neuroticism subscales were used. Five points make up the Likert scale, where one represents a strong disagreement and five represents a strong agreement. Items 9, 14, 19, 24, 29, 34, and 39 evaluated neurotic personality characteristics. The reliability of the BFI often varied between 0.79 and 0.88.

Lovibond and Lovibond (1995) created the Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale, which has 42 items. However, the research uses a shortened version of it, with 21 questions total and 3 subscales

of 7 items each. This rating system is derived from the 4-point Likert scale. The response distribution is 1 = seldom, 2 = occasionally, and 3 = usually. Each subscale has a score between 0 and 21, correspondingly. Scores are not subject to cutoffs. The DAS-21 scales have alpha reliability values of.88 for depression,.82 for anxiety,.90 for stress, and.93 for the entire scale.

Technique

Every participant in the current study was approached by the researcher directly, and their individual data was collected. First, details on the purpose, relevance, and nature of the study were included in a formal letter of authorization that was addressed to the relevant authorities. The participants were told about the study and their signed informed permission was obtained before the scales were distributed. The researchers give instructions to each person before they use the scale. Almost all respondents take between twenty and thirty minutes to complete the questionnaire. The information is voluntarily provided by the volunteers; they are not paid. The participants were thanked for their significant participation in the research when it was over.

Results

Table 1

Linear regression analysis showing the effect of neuroticism on depression, anxiety, and stress among early adults

Predictor	Outcome: Depression			Outcome: Anxiety			Outcome: Stress		
	B	*LL*	*UL*	*B*	*LL*	*UL*	*B*	*LL*	*UL*
Constant	18.33***	18.12	23.12	20.32***	17.74	22.10	14.11***	15.22	20.10
Depression	.43***	.40	.80	.52**	.30	.71	.78***	.55	.82
R^2	.15			.11			.19		
F	33.69***			22.41***			42.22***		

***p<.001

Regression analysis using neuroticism as a predictor and depression as an outcome variable is displayed in Table 1. The findings indicated that among early adults, neuroticism is a good predictor of depression. Regression analysis is displayed in the table with anxiety serving as the outcome variable and neuroticism as the predictor. The findings indicated that among early adults, neuroticism is a good predictor of anxiety. Regression analysis is displayed in the table with neuroticism serving as the predictor and stress serving as the outcome. The findings indicated that among early adults, neuroticism is a good predictor of stress.

Conversation

The primary aim of the current research was to examine the impact of neuroticism on students' internalization of psychological issues and to look into gender variations in this regard. First, reliability analysis was used to determine that all of the measures (neuroticism, depression, anxiety, and stress) were reliable and had acceptable internal consistency.

Within the current study, there was evidence for the first hypothesis: "Neuroticism will positively predict depression, anxiety, and stress among early adults." Previous research demonstrates that neuroticism is a reliable indicator of when depressive illnesses may manifest (De Graaf, 2002; Kendler, 2006; Ormel, 2004; Barnhonfer, 2010). In their 2007 study, Bienvenu, Hettema, Neale, Prescott, and Kindler examined neuroticism as a predictor of anxiety and found that people People who are neurotic are more likely to suffer from anxiety disorders such as panic disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, social anxiety disorder, simple phobia, generalized anxiety disorder, and obsessive-compulsive disorder.

More stress reactivity to cumulative psychological stressors is associated with neuroticism, according to the results of the current study, which are consistent with earlier studies (Felsten, 2004). According to similar findings from earlier studies, older persons with high neuroticism reacted more strongly to stress (Neupret, 2006). The current study offered some evidence for the second hypothesis, which states that female students will score higher on stress, anxiety, and depression than male students. According to research, almost 70% of women experience depressive symptoms at some point in their lives (National Institute of Health UK, August 2013).

Men are more likely than women to experience traumatic experiences, according to research on how men and women react in stressful and traumatic situations. Nonetheless, it was observed that the disease is more common in women. The findings somewhat supported the depression theory, however, the current investigation did not find any evidence for it. The scale utilized in this study was created in an individualistic society, which might account for the inconsistent results. The scales used were not tested in light of our cultural context and were only available in English.

Restrictions and Suggestions

Future research may be able to address some of the limitations of the current study. Only data from the

Haripur region was included in the sample, which restricts its generalizability. To enable cross-cultural comparisons, it will be helpful to gather data from other parts of Pakistan in future studies. Participants had trouble comprehending the research's scales since they were written in English. Thus, using an Urdu-translated version of the school would be more relevant for future study. Another drawback is that the data was solely gathered via scales, which leads to single-source bias. It would have been better to get information by observation, interviews, and other means.

Conclusion

This study sheds light on the relationship between neuroticism and the likelihood that early adulthood may internalize psychological issues and experience greater psychological issues. The results suggest that internal psychological issues are triggered by neuroticism. Compared to male early adults, females scored higher on internalizing psychological issues and neuroticism. This study offers a perceptive grasp of how personality variables impact the types, causes, and mental health of diseases.

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