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Relationship between Personality Traits and Stress Management and Anxiety among the Staff of Islamic Azad University of Bandar Abbas

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Abstract This study has been implemented with the aim of investigating the relationship between personality traits and stress management and anxiety among the staff of Islamic Azad University of Bandar Abbas. The method of this research is descriptive and application in terms of objectives and is correlation-based as a field study. The statistical population included all the staff of Islamic Azad University of Bandar Abbas that includes 250 people. Statistical sample formed 97 people (using Morgan table and returning the questionnaires). The data collection tools in this study were the standard questionnaire of NEO personality (short form) Five-Factor test, Beck anxiety, and the questionnaire of anxiety, depression and stress, and demographic questionnaire. In order to ensure the validity of questionnaire, the exploratory factor analysis was used. Pearson correlation test and regression were used in order to analyze the data. The results indicate that due to the achieved significant level that is greater than 0.01 except for neurosis component, in other components (openness to experience, duty-oriented, agreeableness and extraversion) there was no significant relationship with stress management. Moreover, except for duty-oriented and extraversion, there was a significant correlation in other anxiety components.

Keywords: personality traits, stress management, anxiety, staff of the Azad University.

Introduction

Most of the people who are exposed to continuous anxieties may find negative attitude towards life. But it should be noted that anxiety in the life of people is due to the selection that they have done for the continuity of their life and this selection may encounter them with problems for some reasons. But, the important point is that the tendency of people toward introversion in the time of facing with continuous anxieties will give them this ability to pay attention to their problems with more focus and try to solve them and be successful at last.

One of the important personality features as interests to researchers is five-factor model of personality (Digman, 1990). So that many researchers nowadays believe that the best conceptualization of personality is manifested in the five-factor model (Hosseini and Latifian, 2010). The five-factors model explains the personality based on main five factors meanwhile two factors of conscientiousness and agreeableness in the studies related to organizational behavior are particularly important. According to Witt et al, the people who follow their conscience do things better most often, and are conscientious, trustable, efficient and diligent people (responsible, accurate and reliable). They are ready to show creativity in solving the problems and fulfill their work ingenuity and completely (Rezaeian and Naejei, 2010).

One of the variables that have attracted researchers' attention in this field is anxiety. Anxiety, as one of the most important issues that we face, causes personal adaptations to compromise and consume a lot of energy for balance (Mir Samee and Ebrahimi Qavam, 2008). Ahadi and Bani

Jamali (1993) suggest that people, who are too anxious, are prone to disorders more and this anxiety ultimately makes their character's health and mental balance disturbed.

In reduction or emergence of exam anxiety, several factors such as personality factors can help. Personality factors such as introversion - extroversion and stability - instability (neuroticism) could be affective on the anxiety intensity and adaptive mechanisms as the forming components of character in the face of stressful and anxious resources (Khosravi and Bigdeli, 2008). Locus of control is a personality attribute that is been proposed by Router (1966) in line with social learning theory. The router stated the source of controls as the overall expectation of individual from the result of an event that exists within or beyond (outside) control and personal understanding of him. On the one hand, people with personality characteristic of external locus of control percept the events beyond their control and attribute the results and consequences of the event to chance, luck or controlled by others powerful sources or they believe that the events are unpredictable due to the high complexity of the environment. People with personality characteristic of internal locus of control believe that events depend on their relative behaviors and characteristics. Such people believe that they can affect on the results through rewards, and their abilities, skills and features (Masoud Nia, 2007). Researches indicate that individuals with external locus of control compared to internal people get more psychiatric disorders; for example, Fars (1976 and 1978) reported that people with external locus of control have a higher degree of anxiety and are classified with psychiatric labels less in terms of the self-esteem rather than the opposite group (Noferesti, Talebiansharif, 2002). Since the researches have shown that people with internal locus of control are better engaged or cope with stressful events rather than people with external locus of control (Benson and Dieter, 1992), the people's locus of control depends on whether internal or external can affect anxiety. However, recent research evidence shows the relationship between personality characteristics, type of work environment and mental health of staff (Samari and Laliphass, 2007). Stress is as one of the most important characteristics of workplace, physical or emotional exhaustion that is occurs based on real or mental problems (Hall et al., 2011). In another definition, the stress is stated as a collection of human body public reaction towards the internal and external unpredictable and inconsistent factors. Thus, when the internal or external balance is eliminated, the stress occurs (Kendall, 2003). However, the use of stress word in psychiatry has a long history. But its use in the management psychology and organizational behavior has become common in recent years and due to its popularity in people social life, part of the organizational issues was devoted to stress. Promoting the psycho-hygiene of workplace, as one of the important dimensions of development and improvement of human resources in organizations in recent decades, has attracted the attention of many researches in Iran and the world (Yazdi and Jafari, 2010).

Sheikh Bardsiri and colleagues (2012) did a study entitled as the relationship between personality traits and post-traumatic stress disorder that has been done on 321 personnel of 115 emergency and emergency of educational hospitals in Kerman. The results showed that employees with characteristics such as neuroticism, openness to experience and loyalty are at higher risk of post-traumatic stress disorder. Sarvghad et al (2012) in a study examined the relationship between attachment style and personality characteristics with anxiety of pre-university school students of Shiraz. In this study, 380 people (230 females, 150 males) were selected by multistage random cluster sampling and fulfilled the NEO personality traits, attachment styles and Beck Anxiety questionnaire. The results showed that anxious attachment style has a significant positive correlation with anxiety and there is a significant positive relationship between neuroticism and anxiety about personality traits and there is a

significantly negative relationship between extraversion, accountability, flexibility and anxiety. Among the components of personality traits, neuroticism, the predictability of girls' anxiety, neurosis and accountability have the ability to predict the boys' anxiety. Nick Rahan and colleagues (2011) did another study entitled as investigate the relationship between personality traits, coping styles with stress and stress levels in pregnant women which was conducted at 80 pregnant women who referred to Isfahan Shaheed Beheshti Hospital in the first three months of year. The results showed that personality traits and ways of coping with stress have relationship with stress levels of pregnant women. Also, most of the stress of pregnant women can be predicted through their personality characteristics and coping strategies. Furthermore, Ahmadi (2011) surveyed in a study entitled as the relationship between personality features such as depression-anxiety and shyness and the birth order of school students among 80 people of first and last children and their relationship with birth order and the studied population were the third grade of high school students in Abhar.

The results showed that there is a relationship between birth order, depression, anxiety and shyness and there is a difference between these scales in the first and last children and its significant level is equal to $\alpha \geq 0.05$.

Therefore, anxiety in people of a society has a crucial effect on the amount of their introversion and extraversion. So that it is possible that an extraversion person change to an introversion person slowly, because of the intensity of entered pressures and if these pressure continue permanently, they cause a sharp decline in the performance of people who has social jobs and should be in a permanent communication with community. However, the people and especially university students have a share of anxiety and stress that is widespread from the lowest to the highest levels. So, it is necessary to pay attention to the importance and widespread of issue, therefore this study which aimed to investigate the relationship between personality traits and stress management and anxiety among the staff of Islamic Azad University of Bandar Abbas is after this question that is there a relationship between personality traits, stress management and anxiety in the staff of Islamic Azad University?

Methodology

Considering that this study surveyed the relationship between personality features, stress management and anxiety in the staff of Islamic Azad university of Bandar Abbas, due to the research aim, existing circumstances and facilities, the research method was descriptive and correlation-based that was conducted by free method and by five-factor questionnaire of NEO personality (short form), stress and anxiety questionnaire. The statistical population of organizational personnel in present research includes all the staff of Islamic Azad University of Bandar Abbas and according to the statistic, there was 250 employees among the statistical population of which 97 people were selected by Morgan table and cluster-random sampling method as the sample volume. Also, according to the evaluation level of studied variables in descriptive statistics, the tables, proportional frequency percentage, average and standard deviation were used and in inferential statistics, Pearson correlation method was used to determine the relationship and simple and multivariable regressions were used for the prediction of statistical tests.

Results

To learn more about the nature of the research variables and recognize the patterns of data, first we review the results of the descriptive analysis. The results of age features showed that most of respondents were at the age of 31 to 35 years with 40 people and less than all aged over 40,

with 11 people. In the part of gender, the most options are related to the male gender (64%) and the lowest option is associated with female gender (36%). About the education level of respondents, the most option is related to BS (52%) and the lowest option is related to MS (17%). About the history of cooperation of respondents, the most options was related to work experience between 5 and 7 years (30%) and lowest option was related to more than 10 years' experience (10%).

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation for scores of personality traits

Variable	Number	Average	Standard deviation
Neurosis	97	20.58	6.19
Openness to experience	97	27.58	5.80
Duty-oriented	97	24.35	3.85
Agreeableness	97	31.31	5.25
Extraversion	97	32.16	7.07

Table (1) and (2) represent a statistical index for obtained rating from the variables used in this research and their mean and standard deviation are presented. As it is seen in table 1, the highest average is related to extroversion.

Table 2. Mean and standard deviation for scores of stress and anxiety.

Variable	Number	Average	Standard Deviation
Stress	97	159.03	50.16
Anxiety	97	20.60	2.38

The results of the research hypothesis

To examine the research hypothesis, Pearson correlation was used in order to determine the relationship and simple and multivariate regressions statistical tests were used for the prediction. The results of correlation test can be seen in order to determine the relationship between personality characteristics and stress management in Table 3.

Table 3. Matrix of correlations between personality traits and stress management

Variable	Correlation coefficient	Significant level
Neurosis	0.297*	0.002
Openness to experience	0.062	0.536
Duty-oriented	0.03	0.765
Agreeableness	0.087	0.438
Extraversion	0.019	0.835

*correlation is significant at level of 0.01.

According to Table (3) and due to gained significant level (0.000) that is less than 0.01, it can be said that there is a significant relationship between neurosis and stress management with the scale of 0.297. According to the existence amount of R^2 in above table, it can be concluded that the neurosis entered the equation in first step and explains about 8% of stress management variable variance in the presented model. The beta amount in the presented model is the indicator of predictor variables variance explaining the amount on the criteria. Based on these Beta standard coefficients, the most role and explanation on the stress management is on the

neurosis so much that by each unit change in neurosis variance, the created changes in the variance of stress management score is as 0.297.

Table 4. Results of multiple regression coefficients of the stress management toward neurosis

Criterion variable	Predictor	Standard coefficient		Beta coefficients	standard error	F	T	Sig
		B	Standard coefficients					
1	effect	4.198	0.299				14.043	.000
	psychosis	0.297	0.074	0.297		15.365	5.545	.000
2	R		0.297			R ²		0.088

Also, for surveying the relationship between personality traits and its components with the anxiety of staff of Islamic Azad University of Bandar Abbas, the results show that there is a significant correlation in the components with anxiety except the duty-oriented and extraversion due to the gained significant level (0.000) that is less than 0.01 (Table 5).

Table 5. Matrix of correlations between personality traits and anxiety

Variable	Correlation coefficient	Significant level
Neurosis	0.478*	0.001
Openness to experience	0.289*	0.001
Duty-oriented	0.129	0.765
Agreeableness	0.445*	0.001
Extraversion	0.056	0.568

*correlation is significant at 0.01 level.

Table 6. The results of multiple regression coefficient from neurosis

Criterion variable	Predictor	Standard coefficient		Beta coefficients	standard error	F	T	Sig
		B	Standard coefficients					
1	effect	2.981	0.258				11.559	.000
	psychosis	0.478	0.074	0.478		24.865	3.545	.000
2	R		0.478			R ²		0.135

According to the existing R² in above table, it can be concluded that the neurosis entered the equation in first step and explanation about 12% of anxiety variable variance in the presented model. The beta amount in the presented model is the indicator of predictor variables variance explaining amount on the criteria. Based on this Beta standard coefficient, the most role and explanation on the anxiety is on the responsibility of neurosis so much that by each unit change in neurosis variance, the created changes in the variance of anxiety score is as 0.478.

Conclusion

As it is observed in the analysis of results, the gained significant level is more than 0.01, except in the category of neurosis that achieved significance level (0.002) and the achieved correlation amount is 0.407 and it can be said that there is only a relationship between neurosis and stress management. The result of this study are in the line of the researches results of Yun and

colleagues (2007) that showed a relationship between neurosis and stress level in staff, beyond analysis study of Hartz and Danavan (2000) that suggests a relationship between certain personality traits such as responsibility, agreeableness, openness to experience and neuroticism with underlying performance as well as the research results of Farenham (2001) and Davis and Lafquist (1984).

In explaining the achieved results in this study, it can be said that stress is a response of staff to the unpredictable events and because all the staff do not comprehend and imagine an event at the same time, the stress of an event is different for the staff. The level of stress of staff is different based on their experience and personality features. The staff who has neurosis personality feature has no good control on their behavior and acts due to shyness, high tendency to anxiety experience, having irrational thoughts, depression and low self-esteem and as a result, the job quality and the way of their communication with clients is affected by these features. On the other hand, annoying environmental factors such as noise, congestion, overload of work and so on put a negative effect on them as being unpredictable and uncontrollable and causes the increase of mistakes and not presenting appropriate services in them and finally the stress would increase in them.

In addition, the results of research indicate that due to the achieved significant level that is less than 0.01, except for the duty-oriented and extraversion components, in other components including neurosis the achieved significant level is 0.001 and achieved correlation levels is as 0.478, in openness to experience the achieved significant levels is 0.001 and the achieved correlation is as 0.289 and in agreeableness the achieved significance level is 0.001 and achieved correlation is as 0.445 and it can be said that there is a relationship between these components with anxiety. Results of this study are consistent with the research results Sarvghad and colleagues (2012) which showed about personality traits that there is a significant positive relationship between neuroticism and anxiety and there is a significant negative relationship between extraversion, accountability, flexibility and anxiety, as well as the research results of Darmin Gara (2005), Korid (2008), Ahmadi (2011) and Khanjani and colleagues (2010), that there is a positive correlation between neuroticism and introversion with anxiety. In other words, by the increase of neuroticism and introversion, the anxiety would increase as well.

Therefore, considering the obtained results of a research, some suggestions are offered:

- Increasing concerns about the quality of management is a reason to responding that is considered as a desirable feature. Based on the theoretical and research foundations, the educational institutions should pay attention to these consequences in design and implementation of their responding mechanisms.
- Due to the effect of personality characteristics in the scale of anxiety and stress of staff, it is suggested for these findings to be considered by universities.

In addition, it is suggested that the next researchers in their research focus on the deep survey of these dimensions about the personality features. It is necessary for most of researches to be done in the field of relationship between personality features with stress and anxiety by use of other tools and other regulatory roles of variables and probable mediator should be more paid attention to.

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