



GENDER SPECIFIC PREDICTORS OF LIFE SATISFACTION BEYOND PERSONALITY TRAITS

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ABSTRACT This study aimed to examine the association between personality traits and life satisfaction among young adults. The sample comprised 104 participants (55 males and 49 females), aged 18–35. Participants were randomly selected, and data were collected using the Big Five Inventory–2 Short Form (BFI-2-S) and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS). Data analysis included correlation, regression analysis, independent samples t-test, mean, and standard deviation. Correlational results indicated that extraversion and negative emotionality significantly influenced life satisfaction. However, regression analysis revealed no overall predictive contribution of personality traits to life satisfaction. The t-test showed no significant gender difference in life satisfaction. These findings suggest that while specific traits relate to satisfaction, personality alone is not a sole predictor.

KEYWORDS : Life Satisfaction, Big Five Traits, Gender Difference, Personality, Emotionality, Extraversion

INTRODUCTION

Personality traits are enduring patterns of thoughts, emotions, and behaviors that remain relatively stable over time and influence how individuals perceive and interact with their environment (Roberts et al., 2017). The Big Five personality traits extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism (often labeled as negative emotionality), and openness to experience are widely accepted as the fundamental dimensions of personality structure (Soto & John, 2017).

These traits play a significant role in influencing various life outcomes, including well-being, career success, relationship satisfaction, and psychological health (Strus & Cieciuch, 2017). Among these outcomes, life satisfaction a cognitive, evaluative component of subjective well-being has gained considerable attention. It reflects the degree to which individuals judge the overall quality of their lives according to self-defined criteria (Diener et al., 1985; Pavot & Diener, 2008).

Empirical studies consistently demonstrate that certain personality traits have strong associations with life satisfaction. For example, extraversion is positively related to life satisfaction due to its link with sociability, positive affect, and reward sensitivity, while neuroticism (or negative emotionality) is negatively related because it is associated with stress, anxiety, and mood instability (Anglim et al., 2020; Steel et al., 2008).

Recent research by Jovanović and Sakan (2021) suggests that conscientiousness is also a reliable predictor of life satisfaction, as it is linked to self-regulation, goal achievement, and emotional resilience. However, the relationships between agreeableness and openness with life satisfaction appear to be more context-dependent and less consistent across studies (Kuppens et al., 2019; Lachmann et al., 2018).

Moreover, some scholars argue that the predictive power of personality traits on life satisfaction may vary across genders, cultural contexts, and developmental stages (Joshnloo & Jovanović, 2019). For instance, gender-specific socialization patterns could moderate how traits like extraversion or neuroticism influence subjective well-being in males versus females (Schmitt et al., 2017).

Given these nuances, the present study aims to explore the relationship between personality traits and life satisfaction in a gender-specific context among young adults. While previous literature has established general associations between traits and well-being, this study attempts to uncover whether the predictors differ for males and females and whether personality traits alone can significantly explain life satisfaction levels.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative, correlational research design to

examine the relationship between the Big Five personality traits and life satisfaction among young adults. The design also incorporated a comparative component to explore gender-specific differences in these associations. This non-experimental approach was selected to allow for statistical analysis of naturally occurring individual differences without manipulating any variables. The cross-sectional nature of the research enabled data collection at a single point in time, facilitating the evaluation of relationships among variables within the target population.

Sample

The study sample consisted of 104 participants, comprising 55 males and 49 females, aged between 18 and 35 years. Participants were selected through simple random sampling from the general population of young adults. Inclusion criteria required participants to be within the specified age range and fluent in English. All participants voluntarily consented to take part in the study. Ethical guidelines were followed, ensuring anonymity, confidentiality, and informed consent.

Instruments

This study utilized two standardized psychometric tools to assess personality traits and life satisfaction:

Big Five Inventory–2 Short Form (BFI-2-S)

The Big Five Inventory–2 Short Form (BFI-2-S) is a 30-item self-report questionnaire developed by Soto and John (2017) to assess the five major dimensions of personality: Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Negative Emotionality (commonly referred to as Neuroticism), and Open-Mindedness (also known as Openness to Experience). Each item is rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. In addition to measuring the five broad domains, the BFI-2-S also captures 15 facet-level traits to enhance psychometric depth.

The BFI-2-S has demonstrated acceptable psychometric properties across multiple samples. Internal consistency reliabilities (Cronbach's α) typically range from .73 to .83 across domain scales (Soto & John, 2017). The short form retains much of the predictive validity and reliability of the full version while minimizing participant burden.

Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS)

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) is a widely used 5-item scale developed by Diener et al. (1985) to measure global cognitive evaluations of one's life satisfaction. Respondents rate each item on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 7 = Strongly Agree.

The SWLS yields a single-factor structure, and higher scores indicate greater satisfaction with life. The scale has demonstrated strong psychometric properties, including: High internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha \approx .85$). Strong construct and convergent validity across different populations and cultures (Pavot & Diener, 2008)

This tool is suitable for use across diverse cultural and demographic groups, and it remains one of the most validated instruments in well-being research.

Procedure

Before initiating data collection, participants were provided with an overview of the study's purpose and were assured that their responses would remain anonymous and confidential. All participants gave their informed consent to participate voluntarily.

The data collection involved the administration of two standardized tools: the Big Five Inventory–2 Short Form (BFI-2-S) and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS). Questionnaires were distributed in a paper-pencil format and completed individually in a quiet, classroom-like setting to minimize distractions. Standardized instructions were provided, and participants were encouraged to respond honestly.

Each session lasted approximately 15 to 20 minutes. After completion, responses were checked for completeness, and no identifying information was collected to ensure anonymity. The data were then compiled and entered into SPSS for further statistical analysis.

RESULT

Table I: Correlation Matrix Between Big Five Personality Traits And Life Satisfaction Among Female

Variable	Ext.	Agr.	Con.	Ne.Em.	Op.Mi.	Li.Sa.
Extraversion	1	-.273	.104	-.399	-.079	.459
Agreeableness	-.273	1	.394	.121	.027	-.181
Conscientiousness	.104	.394	1	-.297	.132	.239
Negative Emotionality	-.399	.121	-.297	1	-.040	-.554
Open-Mindedness	-.079	.027	.132	-.040	1	.055
Life Satisfaction	.459	-.181	.239	-.554	.055	1

Statistically significant at $p < 0.05$

The correlation analysis for female participants ($n = 49$) showed that extraversion was positively correlated with life satisfaction ($r = .459$, $p < .05$), while negative emotionality was negatively correlated ($r = -.554$, $p < .05$). Conscientiousness had a weak positive correlation ($r = .239$), though less pronounced. Agreeableness ($r = -.181$) and open-mindedness ($r = .055$) showed no significant association with life satisfaction. This suggests that extraversion and emotional stability are more relevant to life satisfaction in females.

Table II: Correlation Matrix Of The Big Five Personality Dimensions And Life Satisfaction Among Male

Variable	Ext.	Agr.	Con.	Ne.Em.	Op.Mi.	Li.Sa.
Extraversion	1.000	.117	.465	-.493	.307	-.039
Agreeableness	.117	1.000	.249	-.289	.233	-.138
Conscientiousness	.465	.249	1.000	-.483	.188	.076
Negative Emotionality	-.493	-.289	-.483	1.000	-.293	-.177
Open-Mindedness	.307	.233	.188	-.293	1.000	.097
Life Satisfaction	-.039	-.138	.076	-.177	.097	1.000

Statistically significant at $p < 0.05$

For male participants ($n = 55$), none of the Big Five personality traits showed a significant correlation with life satisfaction. The associations were weak and non-significant, with extraversion ($r = -.039$), agreeableness ($r = -.138$), conscientiousness ($r = .076$), negative emotionality ($r = -.177$), and open-mindedness ($r = .097$). These findings indicate that, unlike in females, personality traits did not significantly relate to life satisfaction among males in this sample.

Table III Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Life Satisfaction From Big Five Personality Traits ($n = 104$)

Predictor	B (Coefficient)	SE	t	p	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Intercept	23.82	9.11	2.61	.010	5.75	41.89
Extraversion	-0.07	0.21	-0.35	.724	-0.49	0.34
Agreeableness	0.02	0.25	0.09	.926	-0.47	0.52
Conscientiousness	0.13	0.22	0.57	.569	-0.32	0.57
Negative Emotionality	-0.10	0.17	-0.61	.541	-0.44	0.23
Open-Mindedness	-0.16	0.25	-0.64	.523	-0.66	0.34

$R^2 = .014$, $R^2 = -.035$, $F(5, 98) = 0.29$, $p = .916$

The multiple regression analysis indicated that the Big Five personality traits collectively did not significantly predict life satisfaction, $F(5, 98) = 0.29$, $p = .916$, with an R^2 value of .014, accounting for only 1.4% of the variance. None of the individual predictors—extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, negative emotionality, or open-mindedness—were statistically significant ($p > .05$). This suggests that personality traits had minimal predictive power in explaining life satisfaction in this sample.

Table: IV T-Test Results For Life Satisfaction Differences Between Males And Females

Parameter	Males (n = 55)	Females (n = 49)
Mean	20.15	20.61
Variance	40.20	47.95
Degrees of Freedom (df)	98	
t Statistic	-0.36	
p-value (two-tailed)	.722	
Critical t (two-tailed)	±1.984	

An independent samples t-test was conducted to examine whether there were statistically significant differences in life satisfaction between male and female participants. The results showed no significant gender difference in mean life satisfaction scores, $t(98) = -0.36$, $p = .722$. The mean score for males was $M = 20.15$, $SD = \sqrt{40.20}$, while for females it was $M = 20.61$, $SD = \sqrt{47.95}$.

Given that the p-value exceeds the significance threshold of .05, the null hypothesis was retained, indicating that the observed difference in life satisfaction between genders is not statistically meaningful. These findings suggest that gender alone does not significantly influence life satisfaction in this sample.

DISCUSSION

This study examined the relationship between Big Five personality traits and life satisfaction, focusing on gender-specific patterns among young adults. The findings revealed that, among females, extraversion had a moderate positive correlation and negative emotionality had a moderate negative correlation with life satisfaction. These results align with previous studies suggesting that sociability and emotional stability contribute positively to subjective well-being (Steel et al., 2008; Wilt & Revelle, 2009).

In contrast, for male participants, none of the personality traits significantly correlated with life satisfaction. This suggests that other non-personality factors may play a more substantial role in determining well-being in males. Additionally, the multiple regression analysis showed that personality traits collectively explained only 1.4% of the variance in life satisfaction, indicating their limited predictive power. This supports prior findings that emphasize the influence of broader variables such as life context, health, and social support (Zhang & Howell, 2011; Anglim et al., 2020).

Finally, the t-test found no significant gender differences in life satisfaction scores. Overall, the findings suggest that while some personality traits are linked to life satisfaction—particularly in females—personality alone is insufficient as a predictive model, supporting calls for more integrative frameworks (Joshi & Jovanović, 2019).

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to investigate the role of personality traits in predicting life satisfaction among young adults, while also examining gender-specific patterns. The findings indicate that although traits like extraversion and negative emotionality show significant correlations with life satisfaction in females, no such relationships were observed in males. Moreover, regression analysis confirmed that personality traits, taken collectively, do not significantly predict life satisfaction.

These results suggest that personality alone cannot fully explain individual differences in well-being. Future studies should adopt a more integrative approach by including environmental, relational, psychological, and cultural variables. Longitudinal studies may also offer deeper insights into how the interplay between personality and life circumstances evolves over time.

Understanding the limitations of personality-based predictions can inform more holistic interventions aimed at enhancing life satisfaction, especially among youth. Programs focused on emotional regulation,

social engagement, and personal goal setting may be more effective in promoting sustainable well-being across different demographic groups.

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