

Emotion Regulation and Personality Traits among Professionals

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ABSTRACT

This study intended to find the associations between emotion regulation and personality traits among professionals of different organizations. Co-relational research design was used and the data was collected using purposive sampling technique. The study was conducted in government or private hospitals and educational institutes. A sample of 160 professionals which were further divided into 80 Doctors (40 male and 40 female) and 80 teachers (40 male and 40 female) working in different private and government organizations. Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ) and Big Five personality traits were administered to the sample to measure the variables. The data was analyzed through SPSS 20. Using Pearson's product moment correlation a significant relationship between emotion regulation and personality traits was found. Moreover analysis of t-test shows that there was a significant difference of demographic variable (occupation) on the level of emotion regulation and personality traits among professionals of different organizations.

Key words: Emotion Regulation, Personality Traits, and Professionals.

INTRODUCTION

Emotions are strong navigators in people's lives and they try to regulate their emotions in order to be compatible with environment. Emotion Regulation (ER) consisted of full fledged procedure

of how to relating and handling one's emotions (Goldsmith & Davidson, 2004). Emotion regulation has a vital role in effective behavioral and psychological development and any disruption in ER may have been related to a numerous psychopathologies, such as mood deregulation, anxiousness and other mental illnesses (Kring & Sloan, 2010). Emotions have been studied under the light of three fundamental elements: cognitive- experiences (feelings), expressions of behavior that can be both verbal, non-verbal and bodily state (physical states). The notion of emotion regulation can be described as the procedure of changing stimulus and altering behavioral reactions which have of above described three elements (Eisenberg, 2004). There are several emotion regulation strategies some are more prominent than others. Cognitive reappraisal is one of them: which can be explained as a kind of mental manipulation or reinterpretation of emotion triggering stressful event. It is a sort of reassessment of one's own thoughts to resolve conflicted states. Expressive suppression is also used for the regulation of emotions but the strategy or a pathway has been used in this technique are different. Suppression is basically a hallmark difference in what is actually happening and what person personally feels about that particular event (Christophe et al., 2009).

The word personality develops from the word persona that is described as the aspect of someone's character that is presented to or perceived by others. Personality factors are those pillars that make up or provide foundation for person's personality to build up. Personality could be thinking pattern and means of person perception about his/her traits systematically. Personality has measured through the Big five inventory and its theory defined the personality model which consisting of five traits of personality, included Openness to experience, conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and neuroticism (Pervin & John, 2001). Matsumoto studied personality traits with the combination of emotion regulation and he discover relationship among temperament traits and strategies that are used to regulate our emotions such as neurotic dominating factor in association with adverse affects while the positive emotions strategies can be predicted by trait factors of openness and conscientiousness are interlinked with each other (Matsumoto, 2006).

This current study aimed to check processes of emotion regulation strategies such as: cognitive reappraisal and suppression in terms of their associational existence with personality traits of agreeableness, extraversion, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience. It was also need to find out either emotion regulation strategies can predict personality traits among professionals.

Hypothesis

- There would be a significant relationship between emotion regulation and personality traits among professionals of different organizations.

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- The personality traits would be significant predictors of emotion regulation among professionals of different organizations.
- There would be a significant difference on level of emotion regulation, and personality traits among doctors and teachers of different organizations.

MATERIAL AD METHODS:

Sample and sampling technique

This Co-relational study was conducted by using purposive sampling technique on a sample of 160 professionals which were further divided into 80 Doctors (40 male and 40 female) and 80 teacher (40 male and 40 female) working in different private and government organizations.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The inclusion criteria were (a) professionals having five year working experience (b) professionals who are having BPS-17 or above. In addition, those participants were excluded from the study that did not fulfill the inclusion criteria.

Instruments

The Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ)

The Emotion Regulation Questionnaire is a 10-item scale developed by Gross and John (2003) and Urdu translated by Khan and Kausar (2014) to measure participants' ability to regulate their emotions in two ways: (1) Cognitive Reappraisal and (2) Expressive Suppression. Participants required to answer each item on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Big Five personality Inventory

Big Five personality trait self-report measure consist of 44-item developed by John et al. (1999, Urdu translated by Ahmad (2013). This scale provides a score for each of the Big Five personality traits (Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, Neuroticism, Extroversion and Intellect or Openness). Participants required to answer each item on a five point scale ranging from 1 (disagree) to 5 (agree).

Procedure

In current article 160 professionals from the field of health and education were selected from different organization. Formal permission and Informed consent for data collection was taken. The participants' were assuring that the data will be used only for study purpose and will be kept confidential. The participants were approached by using the purposive sampling technique to measure the variables individually. In this study the scales of Emotion Regulation Questionnaire and Big five Personality Inventory was used to measure emotion regulation and personality traits. In the current research ethical considerations were followed. The participants were aware that they are free to depart whenever they feel uncomfortable with it. They are also make sure that the data will only be used for the research aim and whole information collected by them will kept confidential. The statistical analysis of the data on SPSS was with version 20

RESULTS:

TABLE 1

Inter Item Correlation of Emotion Regulation Questionnaire and Big Five Inventory (N=160)

Note; Emotion Regulation Questionnaire Reappraisal (ERQR), Emotion Regulation

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	M	SD
1 ERQ(R)	-	-.41	.39*	-.24**	.331**	-.25**	.119	27.45	5.35
2 ERQ(S)		-	-.071	.367**	-.392**	.120*	-.258**	18.04	4.48
3 EXT			-	.232**	.241**	-.268**	.126	25.42	3.35
4 AGR				-	.580**	-.411**	.187	31.90	5.18
5 CON					-	-.470**	.267**	32.99	6.30
6 NEU						-	-.096	22.30	5.32
7 OPE							-	33.63	3.67

Questionnaire Suppression (ERQS), Extraversion (Ext), Agreeableness (AGR), Conscientiousness (CON), Neuroticism (NEU), Openness (OPE).

TABLE: 2

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Linear Regression for prediction of emotion regulations on personality traits (N=160).

Variables	Reappraisal		Suppression	
	Δr^2	β	Δr^2	β
	0.21		.129	
Extraversion		.101		.035
Agreeableness		.015		-.136
Conscientiousness		-.022		-.252
Openness		.108		.014
Neuroticism		.103		-.206

TABLE 3

Differences in emotion regulation and personality traits of professionals (N=160).

Variable	Doctors		Teachers		<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			<i>df</i>
ERQ(R)	28.14	5.62	26.78	5.02	158	1.61	.108
ERQ(S)	18.91	4.74	17.18	4.06	158	2.47	.014*
EXT	25.73	3.39	25.12	3.31	158	1.15	.251
AGR	32.91	5.94	30.86	4.26	158	-2.41	.017*
CON	31.10	6.25	34.83	5.82	158	-3.91	.000**
NEU	23.79	6.06	23.85	4.01	158	1.713	.436
OPE	33.49	3.67	33.76	3.70	158	-.466	.642

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .001$

The findings reveal that key strategies of emotion regulation included reappraisal and suppression had significant negative correlation with each other ($r = -.41^*$, $p < .05$). Reappraisal was significantly correlated with conscientiousness ($r = .33^{**}$, $p < .01$). Reappraisal had significant correlation with extraversion ($r = .39^*$, $p < .05$) and also showed significant correlation with personality trait of openness to experience ($r = .13^*$, $p < .05$). Reappraisal has significant negative association with neuroticism ($r = -.25^{**}$, $p < .01$) and with agreeableness as well ($r = -.24^*$, $p < .05$). Suppression was significantly positively correlated with agreeableness ($r = .37^{**}$, $p < .01$) and neuroticism as ($r = .24^*$, $p < .05$). Result indicated that suppression had significant negative correlation with conscientiousness ($r = -.32^{**}$, $p < .01$). Table 2 shows that the results of

regression on Emotion regulation strategies were entered as dependent variable and extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness, and neuroticism added as independent variables which produced r^2 of 0.21 and 0.13 collectively explained a variance of 21% and 12% in reappraisal and suppression. The results of table 3 illustrated that doctors and teachers have no significant difference on Emotion regulation strategy of reappraisal but on suppression a significant difference exist between doctors and teachers as $p < 0.05$. Furthermore on Big Five personality traits there is no significant difference found on extraversion, neuroticism and openness but on Agreeableness and conscientiousness a significant difference is found between doctors and teachers.

Discussion

Doctors and teachers both have vital role in societal development and progress of nation. Medical and teaching both demanded high social interaction with people from different social and cultural values. Various studies evidence that type of job people are doing have immense effect on their personalities and emotional regulation strategies. The way they regulate their emotions and which strategy they have chosen is a hot topic to find out. Studies suggest that emotion management processes, understanding of human behaviors, mindful about current moment to moment situation all have influential impact on human personality (Perrewe, Rosen & Halbesleben 2013). In one study the relationships between 5 big traits and difficulties in emotion regulation have also been indicated Extraversion was positively correlated with emotion regulation, and neuroticism negatively and agreeableness has been related to how a person expresses his/her negative emotions In principle, the relations between personality and emotion regulation strategies are indirect, considering that personality causes individuals to become more vulnerable toward certain emotions. One of past studies discover that man have high tendencies of neurotic traits as compared to women, it is because now women are trying to become an equal of man they are searching an opportunities for them which are equal to man and working in several fields with males (Shah, 2015).

It was evident from various past and current research as well suppression has positive association with neuroticism and with some extent to agreeableness because suppression is one of emotion regulation strategy that provoke negative emotions in a person, effects personal wellbeing, cause depression, anxiety and other psychopathologies. Neuroticism is also a negative traits people who score high on this trait are anxious, frustrated, shy, socially avoidant and not expressive. Past researches support these findings of current research.

Studies of past researches demonstrate that suppression and neurotic trait have co-existence; they have positive bounding with each other if suppression increase then neurotic traits are also likely to be increased (Gresham & Gullone 2012). They have negative influences on human emotion regulation processes as well as on personality. To avoid any situation when individual try to inhibit emotional expressions, suppress their inner feelings and sensations may become a cause of maladaptive cognitive functioning. The use of negative emotion regulation strategies has

disastrous effects on human psychological health. it also influence person social and personal life as well.(Balzarotti, John & Gross2010).

Conclusion

Research findings demonstrate that there was a significant relationship between emotion regulation and personality traits. Correlation and t-test show that there were a significant differences between demographic variables (occupation) emotion regulation and personality traits.

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