

An Analysis of Relationship between Happiness and Personality: A Literature Review

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ABSTRACT: *Over the years researchers have studied the relation between happiness and personality and the objective of this review is to study the literatures on this relationship. In this review it is found that personality traits are the stable and strongest predictors of happiness but the current literatures reveal that personality traits and happiness aspects reciprocally influence each other over time. Future study necessitates studying the relation between these two variables that reflects a causal effect of personality on happiness.*

Key Words: Happiness, Personality, Relation, Casual and Variables.

Introduction: Happiness, in recent times, appear to have hit the chord in Social science, organizational behavior and Psychology but in Philosophy it has been considered for a long time Today, happiness as a notion seems to be readily embraced by the mass of people and appears to be more esteemed than the pursue of money and ethical honesty .

Happiness in theory is often used interchangeably with the terms quality of life, subjective well-being, life satisfaction, peak experiences, and important in maintaining health. Ulrich Schimmack et al (2002) explained the two components (cognitive and affective) of happiness as- “the affective component is an individual’s (real or apparent) hedonic balance (i.e., the balance between pleasant affect and unpleasant affect) and the cognitive component is an individual’s life satisfaction (i.e., evaluations of one’s life according to subjectively determined standards)” and these components have been strongly predisposed by personality factors. (Diener & Lucas in Ulrich Schimmack et al, 2002).

This review primarily focuses on to study literature on the association between happiness and personality. The source of literatures include North Bengal University library, data bases (such as Science direct, Jstore, Willy and Springer etc) and internet search, such as Google and Google Scholar etc.

Happiness and Personality: Over the years many research have been done to examine the relation between personality traits and happiness and have yielded consistent results. Eysenck (1983) stated that happiness is a stable thing of extraversion and related with extraversion when easy sociability and pleasant interaction with other people make a positive effect in happiness. Similarly, it can be seen that unsteadiness and neuroticism are also

connected to unhappiness if happiness negatively influenced by worries and anxieties.

DeNeve, Kristina M., Cooper, Harris (1998) in their meta-analysis studied the influence of 137 personality traits on subjective well-being . Analysis revealed that personality was a good predictor of life satisfaction, happiness, and positive affect, but significantly less predictor of negative affect. The traits which were most closely associated with happiness were: repressive-defensiveness, trust emotional stability, locus of control, hardiness, positive affectivity, self-esteem, and leisure According to the Big Five theory Neuroticism was the strongest predictor of life satisfaction, happiness, and negative affect and personality traits Extraversion and Agreeableness were significant predictor of Positive affect .

In this study KENNETH O. DOYLE and SEOUNMI YOUN (2000) investigated self-reported happiness across a fourfold personality framework that synthesizes psychoanalytic and psychometric approaches to personality structure. Following survey approach data from a representative sample of adult population of USA collected. Four personality types were recognized to embed in two basic dimensions- Extraversion/Introversion and Tendermindedness/Toughmindedness. They discovered that in general Extraverts were happier than Introverts, and Tendermindeds were happier than Toughmindeds. In particular similarities and differences across personality types in the implication of happiness with respect to good eating habits, financial insecurity, anxiety and tension, financial optimism and health concerns.

Lyubomirsky (2001) in her work established that variables mood and temperamental traits (extraversion and neuroticism), social relationships,

purpose in life, and global life satisfaction were strongly correlated with happiness.

Ulrich Schimmack et al (2002) examined how the affective (hedonic balance) and the cognitive (life satisfaction) components of subjective well-being (SWB) were influenced by personality and cultural factors. They found that influence of Extraversion and Neuroticism on life satisfaction was mediated by hedonic balance and that the relation between hedonic balance and life satisfaction was moderated by culture.

In 2003 they stated that extraversion and neuroticism of the Big Five were the strongest predictors of life satisfaction. The Positive emotions/cheerfulness aspect of extraversion and the depression feature of neuroticism were the strongest and most reliable predictors of life satisfaction. The measures of these two facets are necessary and sufficient to predict life satisfaction from personality factor. Again in 2008 Ulrich Schimmack et al showed that besides personality traits affective well-being (AWB) and cognitive well-being (CWB), two components of subjective well-being were influenced by other factors-- Unemployment and regional differences.

The work of Jose´ Luis Gonzá´lez Guti´rrez (2005) analysed the association between the Big Five personality dimensions, demographic factors such as sex, age and relationship status etc. , and subjective well-being. Data were collected from 236 nursing professionals using the NEO Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI) and the Affect-Balance Scale (ABS). Results of regression analysis showed personality traits Extraversion and Neuroticism were the most important correlates of subjective well-being. Positive and negative components of affect and Openness to experience were positively related. Sex and age elements of demographic variables differently associated with personality and well being. The links between demographic variables and personality explained the reasons of such association.

LUO LU and CHIA-HSIN HU (2005) explored the relationships among personality, leisure involvement, leisure satisfaction and happiness. Findings of the study revealed that almost all kinds of leisure involvement significantly correlated with extraversion, but not with neuroticism. Extraversion significantly positively and neuroticism significantly negatively correlated with leisure satisfaction. At the same time personality traits extraversion and neuroticism were significant predictors of happiness

Eliseo Chico Librán (2006) conducted a study to determine the size of the relation between subjective well-being and its components and the personality dimensions of extraversion and neuroticism. Subjective well-being was associated both with extraversion and neuroticism, and

neuroticism was generally considered the more important. The sample consisted of a total of 368 students from the University of Rovira i Virgili. The tools were used to collect data like the Extraversion and Neuroticism subscales of the revised Eysenck Personality Questionnaire, the Satisfaction with Life Scale and the Positive and Negative Affect Scale. Regression analyses revealed that personality variable of neuroticism was one of the important correlates of subjective well-being. Regression analyses also showed that 44% of the variance of subjective well-being was accounted for by neuroticism, whereas extraversion only explained 8% of the variance. He concluded by raising doubts about the dimension of extraversion being the main trait that influences subjective well-being, and supports the viewpoint that neuroticism-emotional stability is the dimension that is consistently associated with the three dependent variables (subjective well-being, satisfaction with life, and affective balance). The result provided by this work suggests that the perception of subjective well-being, considered globally, is more closely associated to emotional stability than to the trait of extraversion.

Adrian Furnham and Irene Christoforou (2007) re examined happiness predictable traits as measured by the Oxford Happiness Inventory (OHI) and Morris Multiple Happiness Inventory . Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ), Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue-SF), Oxford Happiness Inventory (OHI Oxford Happiness Inventory (OHI), and Morris Multiple Happiness Inventory (MMHI) were administered to collect informations. The study hypothesized that happiness would be positively and negatively related with Extraversion and Neuroticism respectively and trait EI would be a positive predictor of happiness. Taking into account Morris' happiness types, it was also hypothesized that individual variables - Extraversion, trait EI, religiousness, Neuroticism would be extrapolative of different happiness levels or motivations -Sensation seeking, Interpersonal happiness, Spiritual happiness and Negative happiness respectively. The results of the study confirmed only one hypothesis that Neuroticism was not a negative predictor of happiness. This research illustrated that individual with high trait EI and extraversion tends to be happier and religiousness also increase degree of happiness.

Alexander Weiss et al (2008) investigate whether there was any commonality of genetic structure on personality and subjective well-being. The research hypothesis that the variance in subjective well being due to genetic architecture of the five factors personality model. The important result of the study was that personality trait genetically identical with happiness, specifically those reflecting in emotional stability or low Neuroticism, social and physical activity or high Extraversion, and constriction or high Conscientiousness. The

findings revealed that there is a common gene which linked personality and subjective well being.

Piers Steel, Joseph et al (2008) found that Subjective well-being (SWB) or happiness was a fundamental human concern and its area spans from management to mental health. In this article, the authors evaluated and dealt with measures of categories of SWB (e.g., life satisfaction) and personality on individual level (e.g., the Neuroticism-Extroversion-Openness etc ,personality factors) and using multivariate approach also assessed individually and jointly how much variance personality traits accounted for. Results showed that different personality and SWB scale could be substantively different and a much better association was found between the two than what previous studies had indicated.

Sharon Grant, Janice Langan-Fox, and Jeromy Anglim (2009) tried to established the relationship between Personality and subjective well being and psychological well-being. Results indicated that there was a strong and positive relation between personality factors and psychological well-being and this relation was stronger than the personality factors and subjective well-being. Big Five traits Extraversion, neuroticism, and conscientiousness correlated in the same way with both subjective and psychological well-being.

Barry R. Schlenker et al (2011) cited that Political conservatives were happier than liberals. They proposed that gap in happiness research was accounted for by particular attitude and personality differences related with positive change and mental health. The results of the study articulated that conservatives had greater personal control and responsibility, more positive outlook (e.g., optimism, self-worth), more transcendent moral beliefs (e.g., greater religiosity, greater moral clarity, less tolerance of transgressions), and a generalized belief in fairness. Liberals and conservatives differ in how they defined fairness, with the former promoting equality and the latter equity, and therefore how fair they thought the world generally was.

The purpose of Mansoor Momeni et al (2011) research was to study and perceive the relationship between personality variables and happiness among the students of University of Tehran. In this analytical research happiness was dependent variable and independent variables were extraversion, neuroticism, agreeableness, Openness to experience and conscientiousness. To elucidate the associations among the research constructs, structural equation modeling was used to examine the model fit and research hypotheses. Results demonstrated that extraversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness impacts positively on happiness, though Neuroticism and openness impacts negatively on happiness. Researchers recommend that managers should create a happier workplace, as organizational productivity and profitability to a

great extent depends on the amount of worker's and customers' happiness.

Leslie J Francis et al (2011) research was designed to assess how the level of individuals' happiness influenced by the concern of others happiness level and it also tested whether the concern for the others happiness occupies a special psychological space (within Eysenck's three dimensional model of personality). The data from adolescents in England revealed a high level of concern for the happiness of others. Most of the respondents answered other people's happiness matter for their happiness. Personality traits low neuroticism and high extraversion (stable extraversion) associated with high levels of personal happiness The survey recognized that high levels of concern for the others happiness tend to be associated with high neuroticism, high extraversion, high social compliance, and low psychoticism.

A research was conducted by Nooshin Pishva et al (2011) to study the relationships between happiness and personality of medical science participant. With the help of Esenck personality Questionnaire (EPQ) and The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire data were collected and regression method was used to analyze data. Results showed there was a positive direct relation between extraversion and happiness; and a negative direct relation between neuroticism and psychoticism with happiness. No firm casual inference was drawn by the researchers. Results indicate that, personality provides the context in which happiness operates.

To find the relationship between happiness and personality aspects among students of Tehran University Seddigheh Bahiraei et al (2012) administered Big-5 and MBTI model of personality and Oxford's happiness questionnaire. The results of T tests, correlation and regression analysis showed that all personality facets and happiness were significantly correlated. Happiness highly related with Extraversion followed by neuroticism. The results of regression analysis showed that personality dimensions - neuroticism, extraversion, conscientiousness, feeling and judicative, respectively accounted 45% variance in happiness and Personality traits agreeableness, openness and sensationalism had no considerable association with happiness. The results of t test showed that the students who considered best were less happy than other students. No significant difference had been found between male and female students on happiness level. In comparison to males females' average happiness levels were higher.

Stephen M. Schueller¹ (2012) conducted two studies to investigate influence of positive psychology interventions on introverts and extraverts. For study one Brief Big Five Inventory, Satisfaction with Life Scale, Positive and Negative Affect Schedule, Authentic Happiness Inventory and Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale and Big Five Inventory for personality and

other measures as study one for study two were administered. The variables measured contained different interventions such as three good things-gratitude visit, savoring, signature strength, and active-constructive responding etc. Finding of study one revealed that the gratitude visit and savoring exercises were more beneficial for extrovert. On the other hand active constructive responding, signature strength, and three good things exercises more beneficial for introverts. Findings of study two revealed that there was no significant effect of interventions. Combining the responses on gratitude visit in people, statistical test showed that extrovert was benefited more than introvert in the gratitude visit. These studies provided support the notion that introverts and extroverts might gain from pursuing special strategies to increase happiness level.

Marzihe Malekiha et al (2012) was conducted a correlations study between personality, self-esteem, happiness and depression among boys student in high school. In all 110 participants completed the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale, Beck Depression Inventory, and Oxford Happiness Inventory. The result of regressions analysis showed that there was no significant correlation between demographic variable and happiness and depression. It was found that students' happiness and depression level not influenced by parental status, mother employment and economic status. Another finding of the research was that there was significant relation between personality traits (Extraversion and intuition), happiness and depression. Self esteem, happiness and depression also significantly related. The study concluded that it is yet not clear how happiness boosts self-esteem and by which mechanism self-esteem influences human mental health as well as self-reported happiness.

The purpose of Greg Huszczoa and Megan Endres(2013) study was to investigate the individual and joint effects of gender and personality on choice of happiness strategies. Data were collected from a total of 204 participants on happiness strategies and were classified as Thinking or Feeling based on the MBTI Form M and a "true fit" workshop. The border effects exposed inclusive differences in participants that would be missed if gender or personality were studied in segregation. The results showed Females with "Feeling" preferences expressing significantly higher use of happiness strategies than Males with "Thinking" preferences. Females with "Thinking" preferences and Males with "Feeling" preferences showed few important differences from other types.

Oscar N.E. Kjell et al (2013) stated that there is a need to consider cross cultural facets of personality traits in well being research. They examined the domains of happiness such as life satisfaction, positive and negative affect of subjective well being and psychological well-

being in respect of positive relations with others, environmental mastery, self-acceptance, autonomy, personal growth, and life purpose. To gather information from 122 Iranian and 109 Swedish adolescents they administered Big Five inventory, subjective well-being questionnaire and psychological well-being scale. Findings revealed that Swedes had higher level of subjective and psychological well-being. Iranians reported higher degree of Agreeableness, Openness and Conscientiousness. No Cultural differences were found between Neuroticism and Extraversion. In both culture Neuroticism was related to well-being; while Iranians' and Swedes' well being related to Openness and Extraversion respectively. Psychological well-being functioned as mediator between subjective well-being and personality traits.

In this study Christopher J. Soto, (2014) examined longitudinal relations of the Big Five personality traits with three main dimension of subjective well-being: life satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect. Statistical tools- Latent growth models and autoregressive models were applied to analyze data, which were collected from 16237 Australian residents. Results indicated that higher levels of Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness, and lower levels of Neuroticism were associated with higher levels of subjective well-being. It was also found that change in well being level was predicated by personality traits and change in personality factors was predicted by well being. As per prospective trait effects individuals who were at first extraverted, agreeable, conscientious, and emotionally stable were able to improve well-being level. Prospective well-being effects showed that individual who had high level of well being become more agreeable, conscientious, emotionally stable, and introverted. These results augmented those relations of personality traits with subjective well-being are completely due to trait influences on well-being. The present study supports that over the time personality traits and well-being dimension equally influenced each others.

CONCLUSIONS: Happiness has been a subject of research for many centuries. Thousands of papers and researches have been conducted on the topic and a huge number of literatures are available on various aspects of happiness but in a single attempt it is not possible to review all. The present review aims to study the literature on the relation between happiness and personality. The personality characteristics that have been most frequently studied in relation to happiness are extraversion and neuroticism. The personality inventory which have been mostly used to measure personality trait in relation to happiness: 16 personality factors, the NEO Personality Inventory, the Eysenck Personality Inventory, the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire and BIG Five Factors. Very few researchers have administered other Personality

Inventory to assess personality traits/type .The present review finds that the two personality traits - Extraversion and Neuroticism is the strongest predictors of happiness levels and both together accounted for fifty percent of total variance in different measures. The verification of the earlier literatures of this review provides that personality traits are the stable and strongest predictors of happiness but the current literatures revealed that personality traits and happiness aspects reciprocally influenced each other over time.

The effect of other variables like- demographic, culture, environment, gene and religious etc with personality on happiness as mediator and moderator are rarely examined. Personality psychologists have yet to demonstrate that the

relation between personality traits and happiness measures reflects a causal effect of personality on happiness.

A recommendation for future research could be to employ other measures of happiness and personality. To gain a comprehensive knowledge of happiness; future research could determine the influence of both personality–genetic and social–cultural factors. The present review result revealed that most of the research works on the relationship between happiness and personality have been done on student and employee of profit seeking organization future research work could be to extend the focus to the employee of non-profit seeking organization.

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