

Research Paper

Argumentativeness and Personality Among Young Adults

Olivia Antoinette D'cruz¹, Rajalakshmi V R^{2*}

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to examine the relation between argumentativeness and personality among young adults. The tool used to assess argumentativeness was Argumentativeness Scale (ARG) and the tool used to assess personality was Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI). This study included 90 participants (45 males and 45 females) between the age range 18-26. The results of the study revealed that there is no significant relationship between argumentativeness and personality among young adults. There is no significant difference between argumentativeness and gender and there is no significant difference between personality types and argumentativeness.

Keywords: *Argumentativeness, Personality, Young Adults*

Personality can be defined as the dynamic organization within an individual of various psychological factors that determines the person's characteristic thoughts and behaviors (Allport, 1937). A variety of factors blend together to create each person, and as a result of those factors the individual is most likely to think and act in somewhat predictable ways. According to Theodore Millon, a renowned clinician and theorist in the field of personality disorders, has sought a definition of personality broad enough to encompass both normal and abnormal personality.

Human beings continue to grow and change throughout their lives. Successful adjustment through the life cycle is, after all, mostly a matter of flexibly adapting to the changing demands, opportunities, and limitations associated with different stages of life. An individual's traits, coping styles, and ways of interacting in the social environment emerge during childhood and develop into established patterns by the end of adolescence or early adulthood. These patterns represent an individual's personality.

Argumentativeness is a generally stable trait which pre-disposes the individual in communication situations to advocate positions on controversial issues and to attack verbally the positions which other people take on these issues (Infante & Rancer, 1982). The reason many psychologists showed interest in the area of argumentation was because of the problem of how people decide what to believe. For example, people find it difficult to decide which position to support in political controversies. Usually, deductively valid

¹Research Scholar, Department of Psychology, Kristu Jayanti College (Autonomous), Bangalore, India

²Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Kristu Jayanti College (Autonomous), Bangalore, India

*Corresponding Author

Received: July 04, 2021; Revision Received: October 10, 2021; Accepted: October 23, 2021

inferences are not enough to lead to beliefs on such matters. Therefore, people are forced to make a decision with reasoning of a less compelling kind. The ability people have to come to conclusions in these uncertain contexts can vary in proficiency, especially from childhood to adulthood. The usual strategy of psychologists has been to apply philosophical models to identify the respects in which people follow or depart from correct methods for forming beliefs.

Related literature gives us an idea about the effect of argumentativeness on personality among young adults. Based on which, we can understand that argumentativeness correlated significantly with scores on assertiveness and openness. The scores obtained for openness to experience correlated significantly with those on the tendency to approach arguments. The scores obtained for extraversion significantly correlated with the tendency to avoid arguments (Blickle, 1997). Based on another study we can understand that there is a statistically significant difference between gender and argumentativeness. The same study also revealed that there is a statistically significant difference between personality types and argumentativeness (Donald A. Loffredo, 2006). Most of the studies have not taken place in the Indian setting. So, this study may help in verifying the results in the Indian setting. Similarly, there have been no studies that aimed to study argumentativeness and personality among the young adult population, so this study paves a way for the future researchers to look into this area.

METHODOLOGY

Research problem

To examine the effect of argumentativeness on personality among young adults.

Objectives

- To find the relationship between argumentativeness and personality among males and females.
- To compare the difference between argumentativeness and gender.
- To compare the difference between personality types and argumentativeness.

Hypotheses

H01: There is no significant relationship between argumentativeness and personality.

H02: There is no significant difference between argumentativeness and gender.

H03: There is no significant difference between personality types and argumentativeness.

Participants

A sample of 90 young adults (n=), 45 males and 45 females between the age range of 18-26 from various parts of India was taken for the study based on the exclusion and inclusion criteria of the study. Convenience sampling was used for collecting the sample which is a type of non-probability sampling that involves the sample being drawn from that part of the population that is close to hand.

Tools used for the study

1. **Argumentativeness Scale (Infante and Rancer, 1982):** The ARG is a 20-item scale designed to measure the tendency to argue about controversial issues (or argumentativeness). Ten items in the scale indicate a tendency to approach argumentative situations and the other ten involve the tendency to avoid argumentative situations. The ARG has good to excellent internal consistency, with

Argumentativeness and Personality Among Young Adults

the approach dimension (ARG ap) having a coefficient alpha of .91 and the avoidance dimension (ARG av) having an alpha of .86. The ARG also is a stable instrument with an overall ARG test-retest reliability (one week) of .91 and test-retest reliabilities of .87 for ARG ap and .86 for ARG av.

2. **Ten-Item Personality Inventory:** (Gosling, Rentfrow and Swann, 2003). It is a short measure of the Big Five phenotypic traits. The scale was designed with two items for each of the five dimensions of personality. The five dimensions are Extraversion, Emotional Stability, Conscientiousness, Agreeableness and Openness. Each of the items consists of a set of two adjectives and each two-item had an item scored in a positive and negative direction. The scale has a good validity of .87 and a reliability of .72.
3. **Socio-demographic data sheet:** The socio-demographic data sheet includes information such as name, age, and gender.

Procedure

The participants in this study were selected based on the inclusion-exclusion criteria. Informed consent was obtained from all the respondents before collecting the data. Two questionnaires regarding argumentativeness and personality were administered to the participants along with the socio-demographic data sheet. The scale was administered to the participants through Google Forms. The respondents were given assurance based on the ethical guidelines of this study.

RESULTS

Table 1: Spearman's correlation between the dimensions of personality and argumentativeness

	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Emotional Stability	Openness
Argumentativeness	-.210	.290	.250	.034	.055

Table 2: Mann-Whitney U test showing gender differences in argumentativeness

	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sig. value	Mann-Whitney U
Argumentativeness	Female	45	47.20	.537	936.00
	Male	45	43.80		

Table 3: Kruskal Wallis Test showing difference between personality types and argumentativeness

	Personality dimensions	N	Mean Rank	df	χ^2	p	Sig diff
Argumentativeness	Extraversion	13	30.46	4	7.510	.111	
	Agreeableness	22	49.80				
	Conscientiousness	23	51.20				
	Emotional Stability	11	36.86				
	Openness	21	48.60				

- There was no significant positive or negative correlation between argumentativeness and all the dimensions of personality.
- There was no significant gender difference seen based on argumentativeness.

Argumentativeness and Personality Among Young Adults

- There was no significant difference between personality types and argumentativeness.

DISCUSSION

From table 1, it was understood that there was no significant positive or negative relationship between argumentativeness and all the dimensions of personality. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted. In a study conducted by Blickle (1997) it was seen that argumentativeness correlated significantly with scores on extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability and openness. However, in the present study there was no significant positive or negative relationship between argumentativeness and all the dimensions of personality. Thus, the only difference between this study and the previous literature is that there is no significant relationship between argumentativeness and all the dimensions of personality.

From table 2, it was understood that argumentativeness does not have a significant difference based on gender. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted. A study conducted by Donald A. Loffredo (2006) revealed that there is a statistically significant difference between gender and argumentativeness. However, in the present study there was no significant difference between gender and argumentativeness. Thus, the only difference between this study and the previous literature is that there is no significant difference between argumentativeness and gender.

From table 3, it was understood that there was no significant difference between personality types and argumentativeness. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted. Donald A. Loffredo (2006) conducted a study which revealed that there is a significant difference between personality types and argumentativeness. However, in the present study there was no significant difference between personality types and argumentativeness. Thus, the only difference between this study and the previous literature is that there is no significant difference between personality types and argumentativeness.

CONCLUSION

According to the findings of this study there was no significant positive or negative relationship between argumentativeness and all the dimensions of personality. There was no significant difference between gender and argumentativeness. There was no significant difference between personality types and argumentativeness. The study included only male and female samples. Since, samples from other genders were not taken into consideration for this study, the results cannot be generalized to the whole young adult population. The sample size selected was 90 (45 males and 45 females), perhaps a larger sample could have produced different results. The age of the samples ranged between 18-26, future research can be conducted on various age groups to yield better results. The questionnaires were circulated online, so this also could have affected the concentration of the participant resulting in inaccurate responses. Since not many studies have been conducted on argumentativeness and personality among young adults, more studies can be conducted on the same topic within the Indian setting.

REFERENCES

- Blickle, G. (1997). Argumentativeness and the facets of the big five. *Psychological Reports*, 81(3_suppl), 1379–1385.
- Loffredo, D. A. (2006). Argumentativeness and Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® Preferences. *Journal of Psychological Type*, 66(7).

Argumentativeness and Personality Among Young Adults

- Kelland, M. D. (2010). *Personality Theory in a Cultural Context*. Kendall Hunt Publishing Company. <https://books.google.com.om/books?id=wyHMBwAACAAJ>
- Rips, L. (2009). Argumentative Thinking: An Introduction to the Special Issue on Psychology and Argumentation. *Informal Logic*, 29. <https://doi.org/10.22329/il.v29i4.2902>
- Michael Nussbaum, E., & Bendixen, L. D. (2003). Approaching and avoiding arguments: The role of epistemological beliefs, need for cognition, and extraverted personality traits. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 28(4), 573–595. [https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S0361-476X\(02\)00062-0](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S0361-476X(02)00062-0)
- Goodboy, A. K., & Myers, S. A. (2012). Instructional Dissent as an Expression of Students' Verbal Aggressiveness and Argumentativeness Traits. *Communication Education*, 61(4), 448–458. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03634523.2012.699635>

Acknowledgement

The author(s) appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: D'cruz O A & Rajalakshmi V R (2021). Argumentativeness and Personality Among Young Adults. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 9(4), 139-143. DIP:18.01.013.20210904, DOI:10.25215/0904.013