

## Analyzing personality pattern for MDD Patients and Non-Depressive Adults

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### ABSTRACT

The present research was conducted on patients suffering from MDD and on a normal population to analyze their personality pattern. The age range considered suitable for the study was 18-35 years. Females and males of the married and unmarried population were considered. 32 data from MDD patients and 41 data from the normal population were collected for analysis. Neo Five Factor Inventory, Beck Depression Inventory and General Health Questionnaire-28 were the prime questionnaires mentioned in the study. Descriptive and Inferential statistics were computed which revealed that MDD patients scored less in the four domains of personality except the Agreeableness domain. **Background:** MDD is a type of mood disorder that is consistent with low mood, sadness, loss of interest and dejection. This affects a person to the inner levels causing difficulty to conduct daily life activities both in private and public sphere. The Major Depressive Disorder has been more common with alarming frequency i.e., 15 to 20 times higher than schizophrenia. The epidemiological study results from National Comorbidity Survey Replication (NCS – R) have revealed that the lifetime prevalence rate was nearly 17 percent. This has accountably been higher in females than in males. Fortunately, depression is curable but has increased enormously especially after COVID-19 pandemic. **Aim:** The research aims to assess and compare the personality patterns for individuals suffering from major depression and normal population. **Materials and Methods:** This study was conducted by taking prior consent of individuals and hospitals or clinics. 32 data from clinical population and 41 data from normal population were gathered. For the clinical population, the questionnaires administered were Beck Depression Inventory ((Beck, Shaw, Rush and Emery (1979) and Neo Five Factor Inventory (McCrae and Costa, 1989). For the normal population, the tests conducted were General Health Questionnaire- 28 and NEO-FFI-III. **Results:** The four domains of personality namely Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience and Conscientiousness have shown similar evidence in all respects, but the domain Agreeableness have shown contrasting results for both the samples. **Conclusion:** The research could be concluded that the several domains of personality have been hindered and affected due to the presence of depressive symptoms for MDD patients and also for environmental circumstances. The cross-sectional study has corroborated with many of the studies as stated in review of literature. With gradual advancement in technology and medications the conditions of MDD patients would certainly increase.

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**Keywords:** *Depression, Personality, MDD Patients, Normal Participants*

**D**epression is real. Many think, Depression is not a disease and they fail to understand its basis. It is like saying a diabetic patient just to come out of diabetes or an epileptic patient to snap out of his epileptic convulsion. It is an illness which requires treatment and needs to be cured. This can make even the simplest parts of daily living difficult. There has been a glowing emphasis on a recovery model across the world that involved empowering people with depression to take charge of their own illness, their treatment, and their lives. According to WHO, only 25 percent of people across the world have access to treatments for depression and in some countries, it is even as low as 10 percent. People have the wrong perception that psychiatric treatments are more harmful than helpful. There is an utmost need to uncover about the depressive illness and its impact on livelihood if it is not treated in appropriate time. Depression can strike sometimes like a bolt from the blue, with no warning or rational justification. This can reduce a person's capacity to interact with the surroundings thus leading to suffering from isolation. (Saha,2011)

The present study has just been a venture in striking the assessment and comparison for individuals with major depression and normal participants based on personality patterns with the help of empirical analysis and research studies for a better understanding and clear conception.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### ***Objectives***

- To assess and compare personality patterns between individuals suffering from major depression and normal controls.
- To assess and compare males and females diagnosed with major depression with that of their normal counterpart based on personality pattern.
- To assess and compare married and unmarried adults diagnosed with major depression with that of their normal counterpart based on personality pattern.
- To determine the relationship of personality pattern for the individuals facing major depression and normal participants.

#### ***Sample Selection***

Participants were selected from the married and unmarried population only from urban and sub-urban areas. They were males and females of the age range 18-35 years residing in Kolkata. For the clinical population, patients primarily diagnosed with MDD were considered and for the normal population, adults who didn't have any episodes of psychiatric illness were selected.

#### ***Description of Tools***

- The consent letter and information schedule were provided to participants and hospitals or clinics as it was considered necessary for the data collection process.
- **Beck Depression Inventory-II and General Health Questionnaire-28** were used as a screening test for MDD patients and normal population respectively. BDI-II consists of 21 items representative of symptoms and attitudes. Reliability of the inventory is very high; Cronbach's reliability of the inventory is .827 significant at .001 level. Test – Retest reliability was also done, and the correlation was .93 which was significant at .001 level. GHQ-28 has 4 subscales in it and total score ranges from 0 – 28. The inter test reliability varies from 0.90-0.95 and test-retest reliability ranges from 0.80-0.85.

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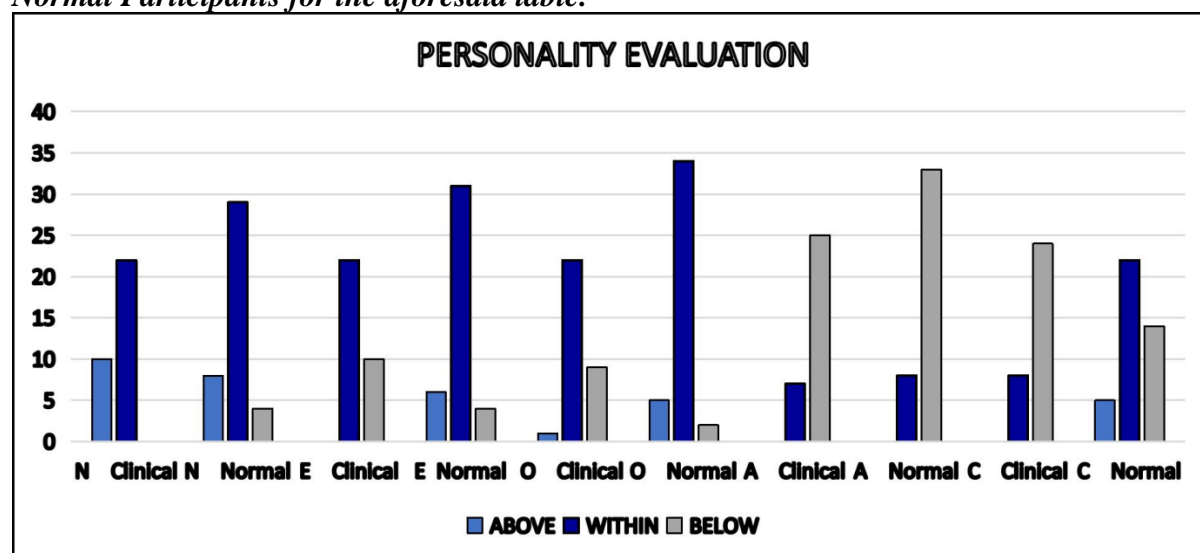
- Neo Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI III)** -This instrument was developed for quick assessment of personality by using the five – factor model proposed by Costa and McCrae. This consists of 60 items in it. The test consists of five domains, namely, neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. The reliability had been established by Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficients. The coefficient values for the five domains, neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness are 0.90, 0.78, 0.76, 0.86 and 0.90, respectively.

### RESULTS

*Table: 1 – Overall Evaluation in respect of different domain of Personality viz. Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness for both MDD Patients and Normal Participants*

DOMAINS	CLINICAL PATIENTS 32 MDD PATIENTS.	NORMAL PARTICIPANTS 41 PARTICIPANTS.
<b>Neuroticism</b> Range – (12.93 – 28.5)	ABOVE – 10 (31.25%) WITHIN – 22 (68.75%) BELOW - 0 (0%)	ABOVE - 8 (19.51%) WITHIN – 29 (72.5%) BELOW - 4 (9.75%)
<b>Extraversion</b> Range – (22.34 – 33.98)	ABOVE – 0 (0%) WITHIN – 22 (68.75%) BELOW - 10 (31.25%)	ABOVE – 6 (14.63%) WITHIN – 31 (75.60%) BELOW - 4 (9.75%)
<b>Openness to Experience</b> Range – (21.11 – 32.85)	ABOVE – 1 (3.125%) WITHIN - 22 (68.75%) BELOW - 9 (28.125%)	ABOVE – 5 (12.95%) WITHIN – 34 (82.92%) BELOW - 2 (4.87%)
<b>Agreeableness</b> Range – (29.02 – 38.50)	ABOVE – 0 (0%) WITHIN – 7 (21.875%) BELOW - 25 (78.125%)	ABOVE – 0 (0%) WITHIN – 8 (19.51%) BELOW - 33 (80.48%)
<b>Conscientiousness</b> Range – (29.26 – 40.82)	ABOVE – 0 (0%) WITHIN – 8 (25%) BELOW - 24 (75%)	ABOVE – 5 (12.195%) WITHIN – 22 (53.65%) BELOW - 14 (34.146%)

*Graph – 1: Personality Evaluation of different domains in respect of Clinical Patients and Normal Participants for the aforesaid table.*



## DISCUSSION

The four domains of personality namely Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience and Conscientiousness have shown similar evidence in all respects, but the domain Agreeableness have shown contrasting results for both the samples.

The findings suggest that for domain Neuroticism, the individuals suffering from MDD are more likely to be termed as neurotic and are less emotionally stable and considered to possess traits like fear, sadness, anger, disgust, embarrassment, worry, insecurity, nervousness, unable to decide etc. (Costa and McCrae, 2003) and more frequently depending on situations than the normal controls. They also may have generally higher tendency to experience negative effects more often and are less able to control their impulses along with poor coping ability with stress as compared to normal participants. This is in concurrence with study done by Steunenberg, Beekman et.al. (2010) where the recurrence of depression was associated with high level of neuroticism and low level of mastery and the effects of personality remain comparable and important in strength for predicting the recurrence of depression. Thus, this can be attributed due the symptoms of recurrent thoughts of death, feelings of worthlessness, insomnia or hypersomnia, sudden weight loss or gain (Butcher, Hooley et.al. 2017) have contributed to a larger extent for individuals suffering from major depression and is likely to be considered as emotionally unstable. Whereas, normal participants may be possessing traits of emotionally stable, calm, even tempered and better ability to cope with stressful situations depending upon circumstances.

It can be inferred from domain Extraversion that clinical patients with MDD may be considered as less extravert having traits of aloofness, sober, reserved, task oriented, retiring and quiet while the normal participants may possess traits of sociability, activeness, optimistic, talkative, fun loving, affectionate towards life and situation (Costa and McCrae, 2003). This is ascribed due to presence of symptoms of loss of energy and depressed mood for almost whole day along with psycho-motor agitation and retardation in patients with major depression (Butcher, Hooley et.al. 2017) contributing to the fact of being introvert.

The results evident for domain Openness to Experience have shown that clinical patients suffering from MDD may have generally a higher tendency to be conventional, down to earth, with narrow interests and non-artistic and non-analytical abilities than that of normal controls. The normal population may be possessing traits of curiousness, creative, original, imaginative, having broad interests and non-traditional (Costa and McCrae, 2003). This is assigned due to symptoms of diminished interest and pleasure in all kinds of activities and lack of concentration or inability to think for individuals with MDD (Butcher, Hooley et.al. 2017) thus contributing to the reality of being lack in innovation and interests.

The domain Agreeableness, findings thus could be inferred that female and married patients along with total normal population, normal male and normal married are more likely to possess traits of cynical, rude, suspicious, uncooperative, manipulative, ruthless and irritable while the other remaining categories may have expectation of being more matured, soft hearted, helpful, trustworthy, forgiving, gullible and straightforward (Costa and McCrae, 2003). This variation in the results of both clinical and normal ones is attributed to the fact of having diminished interest and pleasure in activities along with excessive anxiety and tension related to the present situation (Butcher, Hooley et.al. 2017).

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The domain Conscientiousness suggested that clinical patients suffering from MDD are more likely to be aimless, unreliable, lazy, careless, weak and negligent than those of the normal participants who may be considering to be more organized, hardworking, reliable, neat, ambitious and preserving towards their life goals (Costa and McCrae, 2003). Thus, this is ascribed to the presence of symptoms of getting easily fatigued and tired and reduced concentration ability in the individuals suffering from major depression (Butcher, Hooley et.al. 2017) contributing to the fact of being purposeless and unfocused in life.

The above mentioned findings is in concordance with the study conducted by Hakulinen, Elvainio et.al (2015) which stated that personality traits are prospectively associated with the development of depressive symptoms and depressive symptoms, in turn, are associated with changes in personality that may be temporary or persistent.

The aforesaid suggested findings is also in concordance with the study done by Klein, Finsaas et.al. (2018) which discusses the association and emphasis on the five-factor model of personality and several additional traits from clinical literature. It explains personality research has important implications in the prevention of depression and can also inform treatment of depressive disorders post onset.

### ***Correlation:***

For clinical population, Neuroticism, has shown negative correlation with Extraversion and Agreeableness and positive correlation with other domains and for domain Extraversion, there has been a negative correlation with openness to experience and positive relationship with the others. For domain Openness to Experience, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness there exists a positive correlation in all dimensions. Whereas in normal population, the domain Neuroticism has negative relationship with all the other domains and positive relationship exists in all dimensions for domain Extraversion, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness. For domain Openness to Experience positive correlation has been evident with all domains except Conscientiousness where a negative relationship is shown. Thus, this could be deduced that positive correlation may contribute to the fact that if a domain in a particular variable changes it is likely to infer changes in the other domains too by hypothesizing the reality that if one increases the other is likely to increase and vice versa. Negative correlation may be attributed to the fact that if one domain in a variable, changes, it may not be likely to change the other dimensions causing any kind of fixed increase or decrease shown in the domain.

## **CONCLUSION**

The research could be concluded that the several domains of personality have been hindered and affected due to the presence of depressive symptoms and also for environmental conditions for MDD patients. The cross-sectional study has corroborated with many of the studies as stated in review of literature. With gradual advancement in technology and medications the conditions of MDD patients would certainly increase.

### ***Limitations***

- Sufficient amount of data could not be gathered for clinical population.
- Limited cooperation and apathy received from hospitals and clinics.
- The pandemic situation may have created partial influence in human minds.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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