Research Paper

Neurotic Personality in Convicted Drug Offenders

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ABSTRACT

Each person possesses unique characteristics that distinguish them from others. One's personality traits determine whether they have an average, exceptional, or abnormal personality. Neurotic behaviour is a concerning abnormality in behaviour. This study aimed to determine the neurotic personality of inmates convicted of drug offences. The study was conducted across nine prisons in Madhya Pradesh, India, using purposive sampling method to collect data. The research tools employed were an interview schedule and the NEO-FFI-3 personality inventory. The researcher analyzed the inmates' neurotic personalities and found that their neurotic behaviour was remarkably high.

Drug trafficking is challenging to the criminal justice system in India as well as in other countries around the entire globe because it is the largest organized crime in the world; Nanjunda (2018) argued, "Human trafficking is the third largest organized crime after drug and the arms trade across the globe." In addition, Lampe (2016) has also written that "Arguably the drug trade is currently the main problem of this kind globally". In India, the illegal trade or trafficking of narcotic drugs is strongly interlinked with each other from a small local street to at the global level. As added, "India has been a traditional consumer of opium and various cannabis derivatives (bhang, marijuana/ganja and hashish)" (Das, 2012). Drug trafficking is an organized crime, including criminals, which means it is an organized illegal activity which has occurred by a group of people. Knowing about the causative factor of an offence is a complicated phenomenon due to its complex nature in terms of psychological, sociological and circumstantial behaviour (Pabbathi et al., 2014). As psychology defines personality, there are many types of personality of individuals. This study, with the believe that the personality of an individual comes from daily life behaviour, has tried to examine the neurotic behaviour of drug offenders.

If a person's personality is observed since ancient times, it is found that every person has a personal identity. A prima facie inference is made about a person's personality from his social and personal behaviour. Personality traits reflect people's characteristic patterns of thinking, feelings and reactions towards the public or individuals. If seen, in the last three

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decades, the importance of the Five Factor Model for the study of personality has been given widely in cross-culture studies, whose main domains as neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, and conscientiousness are known as Big Five (John et al., 2008).

Personality is about what a person makes a personal as well as social identity of himself or herself. Among most of the researchers, German-British psychologist Professor Hans Eysenck worked on personality and antisocial behaviour. His identification of three dimensions of personality is psychoticism, which is about an individual's aggressive behaviour as well as egoistic; secondly, neuroticism which reveals low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, feeling guilty, tense, irrational, shy, emotions, and mood swings; and third is extraversion which describes sensation seeking, carefree, dominant and assertive behaviour of a person (Eysenck, 1996).

The 'personality' word has been derived from the Latin word 'persona' meaning to mask, used by theatre artists in Rome (Lanyon & Goodstein, 1971) and (NCERT, 2023). The concept of personality has been studied for nearly two thousand years, starting with Hippocrates in 370 BC. Since then, many scholars have studied and examined the behaviour patterns of an individual. There are various psychological scales for the measurement of an individual's personality. Many researchers and psychologists have studied and developed tools to measure an individual's personality as the Eysenck personality inventory, the Maudsley junior personality inventory etc. While going thorough study on personality structure, there should be attention to factors analyzing self-report ratings of descriptive analysis (Cattell, 1946). To follow this approach, the five-factor personality model came into existence to demonstrate the individual's personality. Moreover, as a result, the five-factor model is supposed to be widely used in psychology (Rosellini & Brown, 2011).

A neurotic personality indicates a psychological trait featured by a tendency of negative thoughts, self-doubts, sad emotions, anxiety, irritability, worries and emotional disbalance. Simply, it refers to a person who has neuroticism traits. This personality experiences negative emotions such as anger, anxiety or depression. It can also be called emotional instability. Neurotic people are vulnerable to stress and are likelier to perceive ordinary situations, distress and minor frustrations as hopelessly complicated. Neuroticism includes more than susceptibility to psychological distress. People with neuroticism may be less able to calm themselves down when upset or worried. It is important to note that an individual having neurotic behaviour does not necessarily declare the presence of a mental or psychotic disorder in a person. Neurotic behaviour do not include symptoms like delusions or hallucinations where an individual loses touch with reality. Instead, in neurotic behaviour, an individual obsesses over negative emotions and stress, which leads to emotional instability. Studying neurotic personality traits allows a researcher to understand how people respond to certain situations and what they prefer and value.

Eric Shiraev states traits are 'distinguishable and stable patterns of behaviour and experience'. In the field of personality psychology, there are many contributions. However, Hans Eysenck's (1916-1997) hights on extraversion and neuroticism are recognized as a path breaker for all who are wandering to know about neuroticism. Eysenck's neuroticism is about the level of emotionality. An individual who scores high in neuroticism, his/her brain measured quickly activated on new problems and tends to be quick-tempered, anxious and often moody (Shiraev, 2017). As time demands in psychological research and studies, the Big Five theory existed. In other words, this is called OCEAN, examined to describe five factors of an individual's personality (Shiraev, 2017). The five personality traits theory was

first introduced by D.W. Fiske in 1949 and later, some scholars extended this as Norman in 1967, Smith in 1967, Goldberg in 1981, and Costa and McCrae in 1987 (Darby, 2023). A High neuroticism score in the Big Five indicates vulnerability to stress and tends to be more sensitive, concerned, and anxious than others (Shiraev, 2017).

The five-factor inventory (NEO-FFI) developed by Paul T. Costa Jr. and Robert R. McCrae explores five domains of personality as neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness and conscientiousness. In recent times the Five-Factor Model (FFM) is one of the most commonly examined tools of personality around cultures (John et al., 2019).

Developed by Paul T. Costa Jr. and Robert R. McCrae, the 60 items NEO five-factor inventory (NEO-FFI-3) was to provide a concise measure of the five basic personality factors (McCrae & Costa, 2010). Each scale has 12 items for the measurement of personality.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

D and Maheshbabu (2020) examined the personality traits and self-concept among prisoners and non-prisoners in the state of Karnataka. The study revealed that there was no difference between prisoners and non-prisoners in terms of personality traits such as neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness. The study was carried out on 71 individuals, including 30 male prisoners and 41 non-prisoners in Karnataka, using NEO five-factor inventory. On prisoners, the study scores Mean 22.57 for neuroticism, 32.57 for extraversion, 25.70 for openness, 26.03 for agreeableness, and 39.17 for conscientiousness. The study concluded that prisoners had higher level of neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness than non-prisoners.

Dargis and Koenigs (2018) studied personality traits using the MPQ-BF trait scale on 2,388 males incarcerated at medium security prisons in Wisconsin. The study found that offenders were on average about psychopathology, criminality, substance use and impulsivity but about cognitive, scored high. The researcher concluded that the results study significantly and strongly supports the utilization of personality traits to differentiate offender subtypes and also identifies unique treatment-relevant variables associated with each offender subtype.

John et. al. (2019) conducted a study for psychometric evaluation of BFI-10 and NEO-FFI-3 on 1117 Indian school adolescents. The study was carried out with BFI-10 on 679 students and NEO-FFI-3 on 438 students aged between 15-18 years in the Indian states of Kerala and Madhya Pradesh. The study further concluded that by applying CFA and EFA, the results provided evidence against using adult personality measures with adolescents without having a separate psychometric validation.

Gibert et. al. (2012) studied personality and antisocial behaviour to find out the differences in personality dimensions and antisocial behaviour between groups of first, driving under the influence of substance offenders and second, comparison group. The study was conducted on 51 DUI offenders and 47 drivers who have no criminal record. For the personality measure, the NEO-FFI inventory has been used. The result shows a 32.62 mean and 6.54 SD on neuroticism for DUI offenders and a 32.00 mean with 4.40 SD for the comparison group. Neuroticism emerged as a significant predictor with controlled antisocial attitudes.

Azkhosh and Asgari (2014) study reveals the five-factor model of personality, and it has also increased attention towards this model. This study stands to investigate the construct validity and factor structure of the NEO-Five Factor Inventory in the Iranian culture population. The sample size of the study was 780 males and 859 females aged between 15-71. The findings of explanatory factor analysis describe that there were no notable differences between the factor structures extracted by oblique and orthogonal rotations and did not replicate the scoring key also. The female NEO-FFI factor structure was more precise than males. Confirmatory factor analysis highly supported the male latent model of the 31-item, but unfortunately, it failed to fit the female model. In Neuroticism, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness, women scored higher than men, who scored significantly higher in the Extraversion personality trait.

Manga et al. (2004) study is based on the psychometric properties of the Spanish version of the NEO-FFI. The study was conducted on 1136 adults, of which 444 were men and 692 women. Respondents belong to 65 percent university students, 27 percent professionals of education and health 8 percent from a small group of older people. Item-level analyses of the study basically provided the reliability measures and factor structure of the NEO-FFI. Scale N, E, and C showed higher internal consistency and homogeneity than scale A and O. The study also provided similar means of scales and intercorrelation between the five-factor model. The present study concluded that normative data of neuroticism and conscientiousness scales could be further improved in the Spanish edition of the NEO-FFI.

Chouhan and Kackar (2016) study is based on understanding and exploring the relationship between personality traits or the five factors of an individual's personality as well as the study habits of postsecondary school students. For the fulfilment of this study, a hypothesis was tested, which assumed that on all the factors of NEO-FFI and study habits, there is no significant relationship between private and government school students. This is basically a co-relational study where the independent variable is the study habits of private and government school students, and dependent variable is five factors of personality. The sample size was forty, and three factors included extraversion, conscientiousness and openness to know the significant relationship with study habits. The study concluded that all three factors have a significant relationship with study habits.

Pereira et al. (2008) study examined the relationship between the Psychopathy Checklist-Revised (PCL-R) and NEO-FFI on hundred male offenders with personality disorders who were hospitalized. There was a significantly negative correlation with PCL-R on agreeableness (r= 0.36) and neuroticism (r = -0.22) which means neuroticism is composed of six facets, which four termed anxiety, depression, self-consciousness and vulnerability found a negative correlation with the interpersonal and affective factor.

Pabbathi et al. (2014) studied 50 normal offenders, 40 mentally ill offenders and 90 persons who never had any criminal record to examine personality. The study used two tools; first Eysenck Personality Questionnaire, and second, Barratt Impulsiveness Scale. As a result, the study found no difference between normal offenders and mentally ill offenders. Both offenders had higher score on neuroticism compared to normal population which shows that offenders were anxious, tense, emotional and low-esteemed on comparison to the normal persons.

Objective of the Study
To know about the neurotic personality trait of convicted drug offenders.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted on 166 male convicted offenders under the NDPS Act from nine prisons in the state of Madhya Pradesh as the central prison of Ujjain and Indore, district prisons of Indore, Mandsaur, Neemuch, Ratlam, Khargone, Khandwa, and sub-jail Jaora. The purposive sampling method was used, and all the offenders were interviewed through the standardized interview schedule. The collected information was analyzed with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. In the brief research, data has been distributed in frequencies and percentages of religious status, residential area, educational status, marital status and neurotic personality.

NEO-Five Factor Inventory

The NEO Personality Inventory was developed by Paul T. Costa Jr. and Robert R. McCrae first in 1985 and further revised as time demanded. It came with a revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO PI-R), and NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI) were developed with the aim of assessing the five-factor model of personality, including 60 items of questions. The NEO-FFI was developed in 1992 and was revised in 2010 with the replacement as NEOFFI-3 for better readability (John et al., 2019). The inventory is a self-report analysis inventory which includes 12 items for each domain based on the Likert type scale. The professional manual of the inventory directs two ways of scoring procedure. In the neuroticism domain, there are twelve items having different scoring, i.e., for items 1, 16, 31, and 46 there are 4, 3, 2, 1, and 0 marking respectively for strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree. For items 6, 11, 21, 26, 36, 41, 51, and 56 there are 0, 1, 2, 3, and 4 marking, respectively for strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree. The responses of the offenders have been put accordingly to the manual for obtaining the raw score, which defines the T score for interpretation of the neuroticism behaviour. T score helps to examine the personality of an individual and demonstrates a brief interpretation of each domain according to the NEO summary.

NEO-FFI-3 form S describes personality as (a) neuroticism (N), the tendency to experience negative emotions and psychological distress in response to stressors; (b) extraversion (E), the degree of sociability, positive emotionality, and general activity; (c) openness to experience (O), levels of curiosity, independent judgment, and conservativeness; (d) agreeableness (A), altruistic, sympathetic, and cooperative tendencies; and (e) conscientiousness (C), a person's level of self-control in planning and organization (Rosellini & Brown, 2011).

RESULT

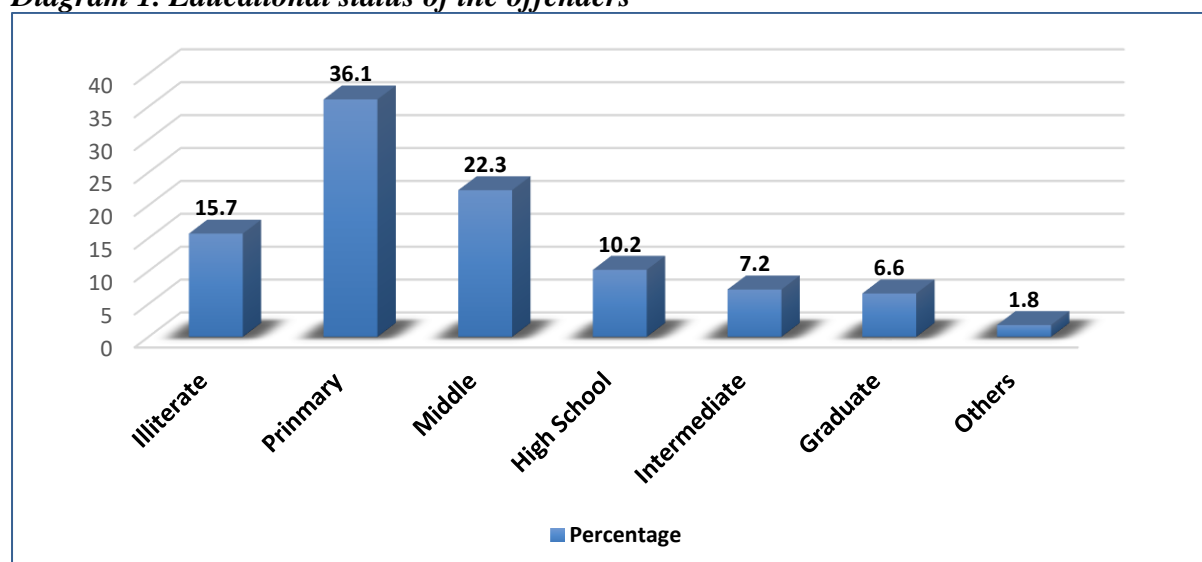### Table 1. Personal information of the offenders

Frequency		Percent
1. Religion		
Hindu	137	82.5
Muslim	25	15.1
Christian	2	1.2
Jain	2	1.2
Total	**166**	**100**
2. Caste		
General	37	22.3
Other Backward Class	96	57.8
Schedule Caste	18	10.8
Schedule Tribes	15	9
Total	**166**	**100**

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	Frequency	Percent
3. Marital status		
Unmarried	27	16.3
Married	124	74.7
Divorced	6	3.6
Widower	8	4.8
Others	1	0.6
Total	**166**	**100**
4. Residence		
Rural	127	76.5
Urban	39	23.5
Total	166	100
5. Family status		
Nuclear	121	72.9
Joint	45	27.1
Total	**166**	**100**

The researcher studied convicted drug offenders. The analyzed data shows the personal information of the offenders. In religious overview, the majority of the offenders (82.5 percent) belonged to the Hindu religion, followed by 15.1 percent Muslim, 1.2 percent Christian, and 1.2 percent belongs to the Jain community. In Indian culture, caste plays an important role after religion. The highest percentage (57.8 percent) was found to belong to Other Backward Class, called OBC in short. 22. 3 percent drug offenders belonged to the general category. Marital status is also associated with criminal activities. As the data shows the marital status of the offenders as they were unmarried, married, divorced, widowers or anything else. It was found that the majority of offenders, 74.7 percent were married, and 16.3 percent of offenders were unmarried. One offender (0.6 percent) comes under the ambit of other categories of marital status, which is about live-in-relationship. Based on the residence, the majority of offenders belong to rural areas that consist 76.5 percent and others 23.5 percent belong to urban areas. The nuclear family relates to criminal tendencies. Bhandari (2018) study found that family of procreation, 50 percent of women prisoners belonged to nuclear families with cited other work of Madhurima (2009) study found 57.5 percent of offenders were belonged to nuclear family and Pandey (2006) study showed 69.70 percent of offenders were from nuclear family. This study also found in the context of family orientation, maximum offenders, i.e., 72.9 percent were from the nuclear family.

Diagram 1. Educational status of the offenders

Education plays an important role in an individual's life; Diagram 1 describes the educational status of the offenders. The diagram categorizes education level into several categories. As the data shows, the highest percentage, 36.1 percent of offenders, have completed their primary education, followed by 22.3 percent of offenders had middle school education. There 15.7 percent of offenders were illiterate. Only 6.6 percent of offenders were college graduates, and the rest of the 1.8 percent had another educational background, like technical education.

Diagram 2. Age of offenders at the time of Crime
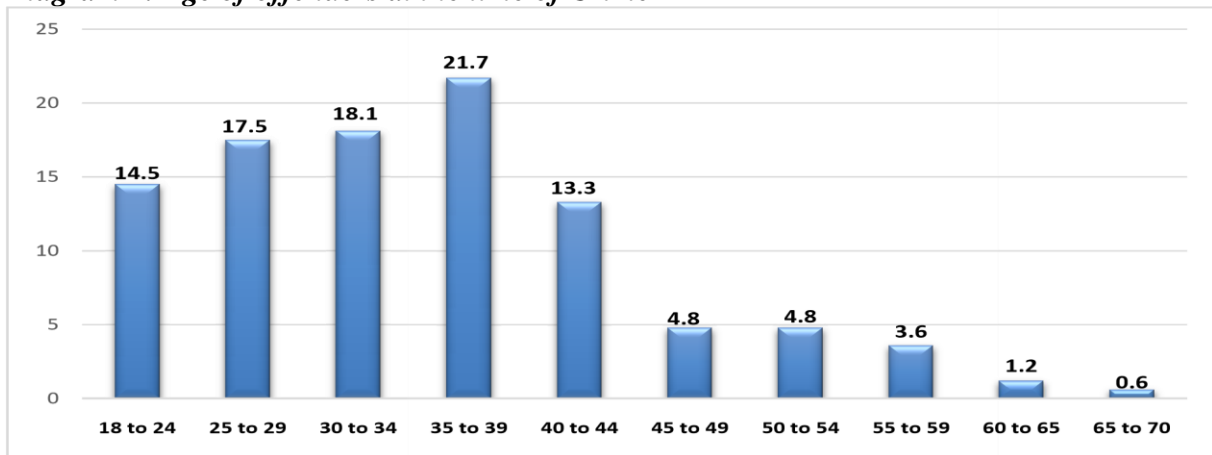
Age is a significant variable in human research. The combination of age and crime is considered very important by criminologists. French mathematician and famous criminologist Adolphe Quetelet recognized the relationship between crime and age. Diagram 2 reveals the age of the offenders at the time of the crime. The highest percentage (21.7 percent) of the offenders belonged to the age group of 35 to 39 years and the lowest percentage (0.6 percent) belonged to the age group of 65 to 70 years. Among all, 1/4th of the offenders belonged to the age group of 35 to 39 years. 50 % of the offenders were found between the age of 18 to 34 years.

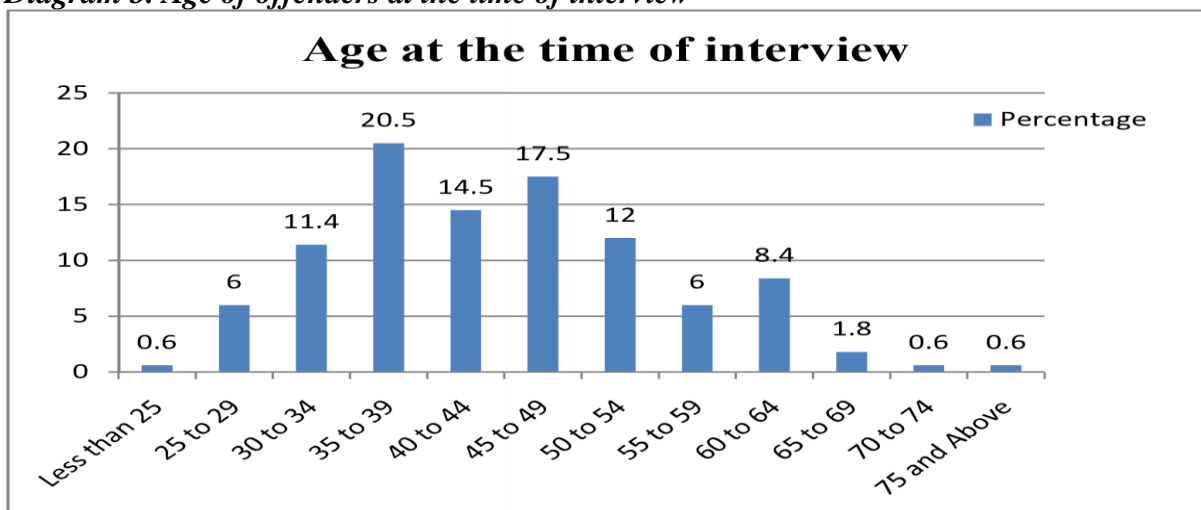*Diagram 3. Age of offenders at the time of interview*

Diagram 3 shows the age of the offenders at the time of the interview. It shows that the highest percentage (20.5 percent) of offenders belonged to 35 to 39 years age group. Only 1.2 percent of offenders were 70 and above years old.

Table 2. Neuroticism (N) as a personality trait of the offenders

Sr. No.	Raw score range of Neuroticism	Value of T	Frequency	Percent	Level of Neuroticism
1	Less than 1 – 8	≤ 25 – 34	1	0.6	Very Low
2	9 – 15	36 – 44	4	2.4	Low
3	16 – 23	46 – 55	29	17.5	Average
4	24 – 30	57 – 65	75	45.2	High
5	31 – 37 and above	67 ≥ 75	57	34.3	Very High
	Total		**166**	**100.0**	

Eysenck's theory reveals neuroticism, which is based on activation thresholds in the sympathetic nervous system or visceral brain. This is the part of the brain that is responsible for the fight-or-flight response in the face of danger. Costa and McCrae's inventory on personality puts the facets about neuroticism; an individual is anxious, generally apprehensive and prone to worry. The person may get angry at others and is prone to feeling sad, lonely and dejected (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Table number 2 discusses about the scoring, interpretation, and level of neuroticism of the offenders. According to the table highest percentage (45.2 percent) of offenders had high level of neurotic behaviour, and followed by them 34.3 percent of offenders come under the category of very high level of neuroticism. The offenders who come in the circle of 'high' and 'very high' level, have T value from 57 to 65 and 67 to equal or greater than 75, respectively, and they have been found sensitive, emotional, and prone to experience feelings that are upsetting. 17.5 percent of offenders were matched with a 46 to 55 T value, which comes under an average level of neuroticism and has been found to be generally calm and able to deal with stress. However, sometimes they experience feelings of guilt, anger or some amount of sadness. 2.4 percent and 0.6 percent of offenders exhibited 'low' and 'very low' level of neuroticism and they come in the range of 36 to 44 and 25 or less than 25 to 34 T value, respectively. The offenders who had low and very low level of neuroticism were found secured, hardy, and they found generally relaxed even during stressful situations. However, the result shows mostly 'high' and 'very high' neurotic behaviour of drug offenders.

Table 3. Age at the time of interview and Neurotic Personality

Crosstab						
Age at the time of interview	Neuroticism Score					Total
	Very Low 1-8	Low 9-15	Average 16-23	High 24-30	Very High 31 and above	
Less than 25	0	1	0	0	0	1
25 to 29	0	0	2	6	2	10
30 to 34	0	0	5	7	7	19
35 to 39	1	0	9	17	7	34
40 to 44	0	0	5	13	6	24
45 to 49	0	2	2	12	13	29
50 to 54	0	1	1	8	10	20
55 to 59	0	0	3	3	4	10
60 to 64	0	0	1	7	6	14
65 to 69	0	0	0	1	2	3
70 to 74	0	0	0	1	0	1
75 and above	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total	**1**	**4**	**29**	**75**	**57**	**166**

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	**df**	**Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)**
Pearson Chi-Square	73.606[a]	44	.003

The highest number of offenders (75 percent) were found between the age group of 30 to 54 at the time of the interview. Nearly 50 percent of the offenders belonged to high and very high neuroticism. 60 percent of offenders aged between 30-54 were highly or very highly affected by neuroticism.

Generalized as a nonparametric test, the Chi-Square test defines whether two variables are associated with each other or not. The chi-square test statistic can be used to evaluate an association between the categorical data (Rana R, & Singhal R, 2015). The chi-square test shows that there is an association between age (at the time of the interview) and the neurotic personality of the offenders. The output of the tests reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value (p-value) was calculated to 0.003, which is less than 0.05. Through this Chi-Square test, it was found that there is a significant association between the age and neurotic personality of the offenders.

DISCUSSION

This study found the neurotic personality behavior of the drug offenders. The study found that most of the offenders belonged to the Hindu religion. Highest percentage belonged to the OBC category. Most of the offenders were married, from rural backgrounds, and belonged to a nuclear family. When they had committed the crime, the majority of offenders, 21.7 percent the age group of 35 to 39 years but there were 0.6 percent of offenders from 65 to 70 years of age group, and 14.5 percent of offenders committed the drug offence when they were between 18 to 24 years of age group. Although the possibility of committing of drug trafficking offences in terms of age matters to understand the capability to do the drug offence but there are chances of being any age. When the interview has been conducted, there were no much differences of comparison to age at the time of crime. Maximum offenders, 20.5 percent found from 35 to 39 age group. On discussing matter about the education of the drug offenders, it is found that most offenders had primary level of education but there were 6.6 percent who were graduate and rest 15.7 percent of offenders were illiterate. Education plays an important role to understand any wrong activities in anyone's daily life; it may be in terms of criminal activities also. In spite of the fact that maximum number of offenders had only primary education or were illiterate, but graduate level of study is also unable to prevent someone from committing drug offences. The objective of the study was to know about the neurotic behavior of the offenders; the majority of the offenders had 'high' and 'very high' level of neuroticism. In spite of no significant correlation of the age and education with neuroticism, the study demonstrates significant association among the same. As Singh et al. (1985) discussed in their study that neurotic behavior differs on different types of offenders; as murderers, arsonists and dacoits are violent criminals had significantly higher neuroticism in comparison to less violent offenders as sex offenders, thieves, and assaulters.

CONCLUSION

Neurotic characteristics play an important role in the development of criminal behaviour among offenders. This study concludes that personality characteristic depends on the individual's way of means and goals in life. The majority of the offenders had 'high' and 'very high' levels of neuroticism. The first question of the inventory, 'I am not a worrier,'

was related to the neuroticism domain, which received responses 38.6 percent disagreed and 31.9 percent strongly disagreed, which shows that 70.5 percent of offenders found themselves worried. The majority of offenders (76.5 percent) belong to rural areas, and they do not have much knowledge or awareness about the severity of drug-related offences. However, after their arrest and conviction, they realised how horrifying the circumstances are after committing such a crime, leading to regret among them. As the inventory discussed and used in this study, neurotic personality includes traits such as anxiety, depression, angriness, impulsiveness, vulnerability and self-consciousness; most drug offenders have been found sensitive, emotional, and prone to experience feelings that are upsetting in their behaviour. The behaviour may change on environmental dimensions. In Indian prisons, there are routine activities of different works, and these routine works and working culture of togetherness in prison may be the factor to enhance the personality of individuals.

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