

Personality Factors of Drug and Non-Drug Abusers in Kashmiri Youth

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ABSTRACT

The present study is an attempt to investigate the differences between personality dimensions of Drug and Non-Drug Abusers of Kashmiri Youth. The study was conducted on a sample of 100 male respondents; of these 50 were Drug Abusers and 50 Non-Drug Abusers. The Eysenck's Personality Questionnaire Revised (EPQ- R) was used to assess their personality traits. The results revealed that the two groups significantly differed on Psychoticism, Extraversion and Neuroticism dimensions of Eysenck's Personality scale. Thus, it is concluded that the personality traits do influence drug abuse behavior and it is suggested that mental health professionals should give due importance to the personality traits of drug abusers in formulating therapeutic plans for drug de-addiction.

Keywords: Drug abuse, Personality traits

The notion that an individual's pattern of drug use is based, in part, on personality characteristics and/or psychopathology has received some clinical acceptance (Mattoo, et.al 2001). Personality traits have also been implicated in the etiology of drug addiction, Adolescents who score high on negative emotionality, a trait akin to neuroticism, or low on constraint, a trait akin to conscientiousness, are at greater risk of developing a substance dependence disorder by age 20 (Elkins et al., 2006). The availability of drugs in the neighborhood, social norms, and low socio-economic status (SES) increase the likelihood of drug use (Degenhardt & Hall, 2012). The relationship between narcotic substance abuse disorders and personality disorders, means whatever the person take disorders of abnormal issues in terms of personality, his consumption of narcotic drug will be high (Timoty, 2000). There is a correlation between personality features and drug addiction and addicts suffer from mental disorders and disturbances (Heydari Pahlavian, 2003). Many psychological and social reasons explained the attraction of addictive behavior such as adverse experiences during childhood, mental illness, discord, violence, stressful family life, peer pressure and psychological complications (Khan & Salman, 2003).

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Personality Factors of Drug and Non-Drug Abusers in Kashmiri Youth

Personality characteristics such as aggression, maladjustment, being anti-social, psychopaths, lack of social interest, disregard for social customs, irresponsibility, personality disorder, lack of attention to social rules can lead to increased crime, delinquency, violence, murder and etc. All these factors create chaos in society (Ajil, 2010). The relationship between Five-Factor model domains and substance-related behavior found that neuroticism and conscientiousness were linked to substance-related behavior; however the dimensions of extraversion and agreeableness were not associated with addictive behavior (Ruiz et.al, 2003). Eysenck and Eysenck, (1975) in their writings expressed that only three traits like extraversion, neuroticism and Psychoticism are enough to explain the personality of individuals. Looking into the importance of personality traits in relation to drug abuse, the present study was conducted to assess the personality differences between drug abusers and non-drug abusers in Kashmiri youth.

Objective

1. The primary objective of the research was to study the personality dimensions between Drug Abusers and Non-Drug Abusers of Kashmiri Youth.

Hypothesis

2. There would be significant difference between Drug Abusers and Non-Drug Abusers with regard to their personality dimensions, i.e., Psychoticism, Extraversion, and Neuroticism.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The sample consisted of 100 respondents. Of these 50 were Drug Abusers and the other 50 were Non-Drug Abusers. The age of the respondents ranged between 16 - 24 years. The Drug Abusers were selected from Drug De-addiction and Rehabilitation Center Police Control Room, Srinagar Kashmir, where as Non-Drug abusers were selected from various high schools and colleges of Kashmir. Only males were taken for the study.

Tools

Eysenck Personality Questionnaire Revised (EPQ-R): The EPQ-R constructed by Eysenck and Eysenck (1975) was used. It consists of 90 items, with each two alternative answers Yes, No designed to assess the personality traits of Psychoticism, Neuroticism, and Extraversion. A Lie scale also is included in the instrument to measure dissimulation. Responses to one item from the EPQ-P scale ("would you take drugs which may have strange or dangerous effects?") were not considered during scoring because this question inquires directly about drug use. The test-retest reliability of the scale was between .80 to .90.

Personality Factors of Drug and Non-Drug Abusers in Kashmiri Youth

Procedure

Each subject was tested individually. They were briefed about the purpose of the study in detail. They were assured about that all information would be kept confidential. Necessary explanation was provided to the respondents to make the questionnaire easier and understandable.

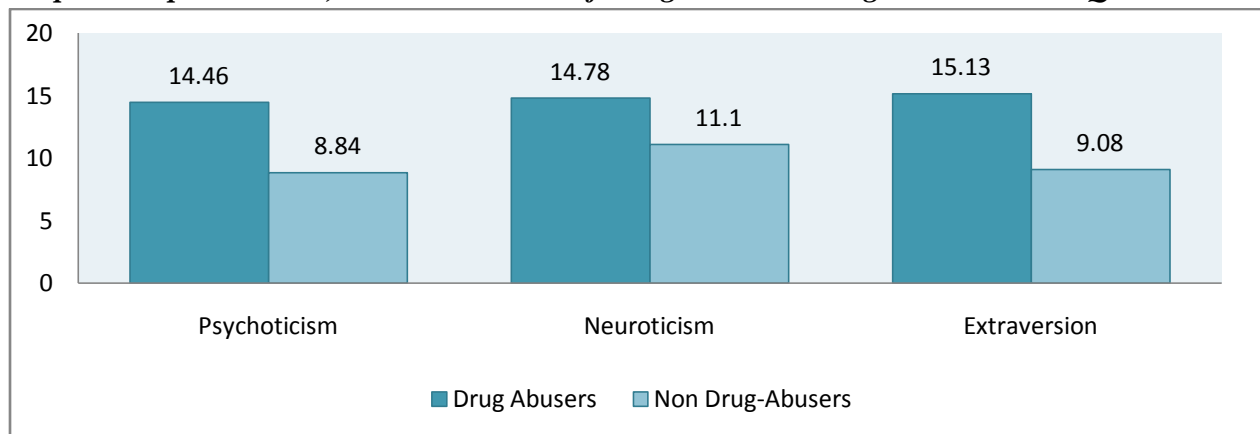
RESULTS

Table 1: Means, SDs and t- values of Drug and Non- Drug Abusers on EPQ- R Scale.

Personality Dimensions	Drug abusers N=50		Non- drug abusers N=50		t-value
	M	SD	M	SD	
Psychoticism	14.46	6.45	8.84	4.27	5.15**
Neuroticism	14.78	3.10	11.1	3.80	5.33**
Extraversion	15.13	4.15	9.08	3.98	4.17**

*** $p < 0.01$

Graph 1: Depicts Means, SDs and t-values of Drug and Non-Drug Abusers on EPQ-Scale.



DISCUSSION

The results of the present study revealed that the Drug and Non -Drug Abusers of Kashmiri youth significantly differed on all the dimensions of Eysenck's Personality Questionnaire i.e., Psychoticism, Neuroticism, and Extraversion. In context of Psychoticism the mean was found to be 14.46 in Drug Abusers and 8.84 in Non- Drug Abusers. It was concluded that there is significant difference found between Drug and Non- Drug Abusers for Psychoticism dimension indicating higher Psychoticism trait in Drug Abusers in comparison with Non- Drug Abusers. In context of Neuroticism, the mean of data collected was found to be 14.78 in Drug Abusers and 11.1 in Non- Drug Abusers, thus showing significant difference between Drug and Non- Drug Abusers for the Neuroticism trait.

Personality Factors of Drug and Non-Drug Abusers in Kashmiri Youth

These findings are in line with the earlier researches that have also reported higher scores on Neuroticism and Psychoticism traits for drug abusers than the non-drug abusers (Charu et.al 2010; Cohen et.al 2004). Neuroticism reflects level of emotional adjustment and instability. Individuals high on Neuroticism trait are associated with irrational ideas, reduced impulse control, and poor management of stress (Costa & McCrae, 1992). In context of Extraversion dimension the mean of data was found to be 15.13 in drug abusers and 9.08 in Non- drug abusers thus, showing significant difference found between Drug and Non drug Abusers for extraversion. The results revealed that the trait of Extraversion is higher in Drug Abusers in comparison with Non- Drug Abusers. Research in the past have also found important personality differences between Drug Abusers and Non-Drug Abusers in the context of Extraversion dimension and reported drug abusers to be more assertive, excitement seekers and group oriented as compared to non-substance abusers (Sher et.al, 2000). Extraversion is primarily an interpersonal dimension and has been associated with activity, sociability, risk-taking behavior and impulsivity (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Drug use and abuse are strongly discouraged by conventional cultural standards risky activities because of their illicit nature. Thus, it is concluded that the personalities of drug and non-drug abusers differ significantly and the mental health professionals should give due consideration in assessing the personality profiles of drug abusers and in formulating de-addiction plans for them.

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Conflict of Interests

The author declared no conflict of interests.

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Personality Factors of Drug and Non-Drug Abusers in Kashmiri Youth

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