

A STUDY OF BIG FIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS OF B.Ed. FIRST YEAR STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL RACES OF THE UNION

Nant Rosalin*

Abstract

The purpose of the study was to measure and compare the Big Five personality traits of B.Ed. first year students at the University for the Development of the National Races of the Union (UDNR). To fulfil the study, a simple random sampling technique was used in selecting 150 students of B.Ed. first year (65 males & 85 females) who were chosen from three specialized subjects (Arts, Science and Combination of Arts & Science). The students' Big Five personality traits were examined by using the International Personality Item Pool (IPIP) (Goldberg, 1999) which comprised of the fifty statements about personality traits (10 statements about each personality trait) by collecting demographic information of the participants such as gender and specialized subject. The Big Five personality traits are Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism and Openness. Collected data was analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques such as mean, independent sample t- test and ANOVA. It was found that B.Ed. first year students' Agreeableness personality trait was the greatest factor among participants in this study and Neuroticism personality trait was the smallest factor among them. Male students got greater scores on their Big Five personality traits instruments as compared to female students. There were significant differences between male and female students on Neuroticism and Openness personality traits; female students were stronger than male students on their Neuroticism personality traits and then male students were stronger than female students on their Openness personality traits. But there were no significant differences on remaining personality traits between male and female students. Another finding pointed out that there were no significant differences between specialized subjects on each Big Five personality trait.

Keywords: Personality, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, Openness.

* Associate professor, Department of Educational Psychology, University for the Development of the National Races of the Union

Introduction

As students proceed from childhood to adolescence, they experience increasing adjustments to perform well in a wide range of areas, both academic and non-academic. Having good adjustment and personality traits can fulfil part of a well-being of excellence and may be adaptive in achievement situations where striving of pedagogue could provide students with needful personality traits to do their best and thus achieve better grades.

Today, the conception of education is entirely new. According to this new conception every child grows spontaneously. Education must aim to make this spontaneous growth harmonious and progressive. Students should be given opportunities to think and to learn in their preferable ways of learning, so that their talent may contribute to the advancement of social welfare. Education must aim to make them creative in thought and original in matter of thinking and acting (Schunk, 2008, cited in Geta, M.,2012). In order to accomplish these aims of education, the spontaneous growth of students should not be interfered with other factors. This aspect is very important to prepare the leaders of the next generation in one country. Thus, the system to build the next generation should be focused the development of becoming a man with qualities, who has a winning and productive personality to pursue and achieve success entirely (cited in Geta, 2012).

There is a large variety in the study of personality (Mischel, 1999) but the tradition that has gained a lot of attention over the last few decades is the one focusing on the five factor model(Matthews, Deary,& Whiteman, 2013, cited in Jensen, 2015). This model is based on five distinguishable personality traits. These personality traits, often called the Big Five, are named Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism and Openness (cited in Jensen, 2015).

The present study emphasizes to investigate B.Ed. first year university students' big five personality traits. It is hoped that this study will be able to provide useful information for the teachers and students so that the teachers can understand and assist their students, and students can perform and behave with positive attitude around their environment.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to measure the Big Five personality traits of B.Ed. first year students at the University for the Development of the National Races of the Union (UDNR).

The three specific objectives are as follows:

- (1) To investigate B.Ed. first year students' Big five personality traits (Extroversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, Openness) at UDNR.
- (2) To find out the differences on the Big five personality traits of B.Ed. first year students in UDNR by gender
- (3) To compare the Big five personality traits of B.Ed. first year students in UDNR by specialized subjects.

Definition of Key Terms

Personality refers to the pattern of thoughts, feelings, social adjustment, and behaviors consistently exhibited over time that strongly influences one's expectation, self-perceptions, values, and attitudes (Winnie and Gittinger, 1973; Krauskopf and Saunders, 1994, cited in Khatibi & Khormaei, 2016).

The APA Dictionary of Psychology (2015) describes these as follows:

Extraversion is an orientation of one's interests and energies toward the outer world of people and things rather than the inner world of subjective experience.

Agreeableness is the tendency to act in a cooperative, unselfish manner.

Conscientiousness is the tendency to be organized, responsible, and hardworking.

Neuroticism (vs Emotional stability) is a chronic level of emotional instability and proneness to psychological distress.

Openness is the tendency to be open to new aesthetic, cultural, or intellectual experiences.

Review of Related Literature

Psychologists have studied personality over the past several decades and many theories have been developed regarding its definition and the traits that it encompasses. A major consensus was reached in the 1990s (Digman, 1990) with Five Factor Model (FFM) exemplified by Costa McCrae's work (1987). Norman (1963) and Tupes Christal (1962) have been regarded as original fathers of the FFM which states that individual differences in personality can be categorized into five major traits; Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism and Openness. These traits also known as the "Big Five", have become universally known and are used by researchers and practitioners alike. There is, in fact, substantive evidence for the use of the FFM as a framework to describe individual differences in personality which are generalizable across culture (Costa McCrae, 1992; McCrae John, 1992, cited in *Using Visual Questionnaires to Measure Personality Traits*).

Although different taxonomies and labels exist for each of the personality dimensions, the model is generally agreed upon and is used as the main classification of personality traits. These traits are defined as personal dispositions that are stable over time and that influence a person's patterns of behaviors in different situations (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2007, cited in *Using Visual Questionnaires to Measure Personality Traits*).

Personality may be viewed as the dynamic organization of traits and characteristics of behavior that are unique to the individual (Callahan, 1966, cited in Arif, et al., 2012). Some social psychologists express that personality is entirely a matter of social awareness –which is pointless to talk about anyone's personality separated from the particular people who intermingle with him, get impersonation about him, and use trait terms in unfolding him (Holt, 1971, cited in Arif, et al., 2012).

According to Allport (1966, cited in Arif, et al., 2012), a trait

- (1) is more wide spread than a habit,
- (2) is forceful and determinative in behavior,
- (3) may be viewed either in the light of the personality which contains it, or in the light of its division in the population at large, and

- (4) cannot be proved non-existence by the absolute reality that some acts are incoherent with it.

Becoming aware of one's own personality type and the personality of other can be helpful in mounting intra-personal and inter-personal development. Personality recognition has been used for many purposes in various organizations; to focus a worker's aptitude to fill definite role, to set up pleasant-sounding relationship, to conclude team effectiveness, and to predict future behavior (Barbian,2001,cited in Arif, et al., 2012).

The personality theory of Jung (1971,cited in Arif, et al., 2012) assumes that people are dissimilar from each other in realistic types consisting of pairs of opposites. The first pair describes the way people gain their energy. Some people are thrilled by interacting with others and are tuned to the outer world of measures. Others are more thoughtful with the inner self and are thrilled by their own judgment and thought. The second pair in Jung's theory relates to the way individuals recognize and acquire information. Individual's principal in the sensing direction carefully examines information and employs all of their senses in their investigations. They are reality based and are thorough in investigating the data they have carefully collected. Individuals who are spontaneous rely on their instincts and trust their "sixth sense" to collect information. Two modes of decision and methods of reaching decisions are Thinking and Feeling. Thinkers are objective, logical and reasonable, and consider data in reaching conclusions. They are able to suspend their personal feelings when they logically resolve a dilemma. In contrast, Feelers are subjective and thoughtful of sentimental outcomes to precise situation. Feelers consider how their decisions will crash others. Myers and Briggs (1987, cited in Arif, et al., 2012) elaborated on Jung's theory by adding the Judgment/ Perception polarities. These functions indicate the mode in which people act together with the environment. Judgers prefer an organized and stable environment, and strive to regulate and manage their lives. Whereas, Perceivers are elastic and impulsive and favor to stay open to opportunities as they unfold.

Personality theory and measurement have begun quite early in the

history of psychology. However, it was only recently that researcher and practitioners generally embraced a unified or standardized theory and application in measurement and conceptualization of personality. According to Costa and McCrae (1992), people who score high on the Extraversion/Assertiveness facet are forceful and are likely to become group leaders. Those who score high on the Extraversion/Activity facet need to keep themselves occupied, are energetic, and live life at a fast pace. People who score high on the Agreeableness/Altruism facet care about the well-being of others and express this tendency by being generous and helping others. Individuals with high scores on the Agreeableness/Compliance facet are meek and try to avoid expressing anger and aggression. Those who score high on the Conscientiousness/Order facet are well organized and tidy. People who score high on the Conscientiousness/Self-Discipline facet are able to start and finish projects regardless of distractions and are self-motivated. Those who score high on the Neuroticism/Anxiety facet are apprehensive and inclined to worry. Individuals with high scores on the Neuroticism/Depression facet are likely to feel unhappy and despondent. People who score high on the Openness/Aesthetics facet have a heightened interest in art and beauty. Those who score high on the Openness/Ideas facet are intellectually curious and open to new ideas. (cited in Althoff, 2010)

Design and Procedure

Sampling. A simple random sampling technique was used in selecting 150 students (65 Males and 85 females) of B.Ed. first year students by specialized subjects. Fifty students from each of three specialized subjects were randomly selected in this study.

Research Method. The descriptive research design was used to carry out this study.

The Big Five Personality Traits Questionnaire. The study was utilized the instrument of the International Personality Item Pool (IPIP 50) (Goldberg, 1999) to measure B.Ed. first year students' Big five personality traits. The "Big Five" factors of personality are five broad domains or dimensions of personality which are used to describe human personality.

These Big five personality traits are Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism and Openness. This inventory comprised of fifty statements about personality traits (10 statements about each personality trait). It consisted of a 5-point Likert scale. The responded categories to each of items were in descending order of weighting: “Strongly Agree” as “5”, “Agree” as “4”, “Neutral” as “3”, “Disagree” as “2”, and “Strongly Disagree” as “1”.The internal consistency was 0.72 for the whole scale.

Data Collection. Students had to complete the Big Five personality questionnaire during approximately 25 minutes. Time duration responding to the questionnaires was from 8th January to 12th January 2018. After that, all the data fed into the computer and calculation was made through the utilization of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The collected data was analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques such as mean, independent sample t-test and ANOVA.

Data Analysis and Findings

An Analysis of B.Ed. First Year Students’ Big Five Personality Traits by IPIP. Based on the descriptive statistics shown in Table (1) results revealed that mean score of B.Ed. first year students on Agreeableness personality trait was the greatest factor and mean score on Neuroticism personality trait was the smallest factor. Mean scores on Extraversion and Openness personality traits were nearly the same and mean score on Conscientiousness personality trait was moderate. So, it was found that the Agreeableness personality trait of B.Ed. first year students was stronger as compared to remaining four personality traits.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Big Five Personality Traits of B.Ed. First Year Students

Personality Traits	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Neuroticism	Openness
Total Items	10	10	10	10	10
Range of Scores	1-50	1-50	1-50	1-50	1-50
Mean Score	33.34	39.89	35.65	30.85	33.83

Table 2 shows that there was no significant difference in Extraversion personality trait by gender ($t = -.07, p=.94$); there was no significant difference in Agreeableness personality trait by gender ($t = -.53, p=.60$); and there was no significant difference in Conscientiousness personality trait by gender ($t = -.51, p=.61$). So, it could be interpreted that the male and female students did not differ in Extraversion, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness personality traits. Another finding shows that there was significant difference in Neuroticism personality trait by gender ($t=2.71, p<.01$); and there was significant difference in Openness personality trait by gender ($t=2.97, p<.01$). Thus, it could be also that Neuroticism and Openness personality traits of male and female students differed significantly.

Table 2: Results of Independent Sample *t*-test for Big Five Personality Traits of B.Ed. First Year Students by Gender

Personality Traits	Gender	<i>St.dev</i>	<i>Mean Score</i>	$df=(n1+n2)-2$	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p</i>
Extraversion	Male ($n_1=65$)	5.511	33.31	65+85-2=148	-.07	.94
	Female ($n_2=85$)	4.456	33.36			
Agreeableness	Male ($n_1=65$)	4.464	39.71	65+85-2=148	-.53	.60
	Female ($n_2=85$)	3.175	40.04			
Conscientiousness	Male ($n_1=65$)	5.81	35.40	65+85-2=148	-.51	.61
	Female ($n_2=85$)	4.74	35.84			
Neuroticism	Male ($n_1=65$)	6.11	32.55	65+85-2=148	2.71	.007*
	Female ($n_2=85$)	4.74	35.84			
Openness	Male ($n_1=65$)	5.06	35.31	65+85-2=148	2.97	.004*
	Female ($n_2=85$)	5.58	32.69			

* $p<.01$

In order to see vividly the mean difference, the mean scores of big five personality traits between male and female students were compared in Figure 1.

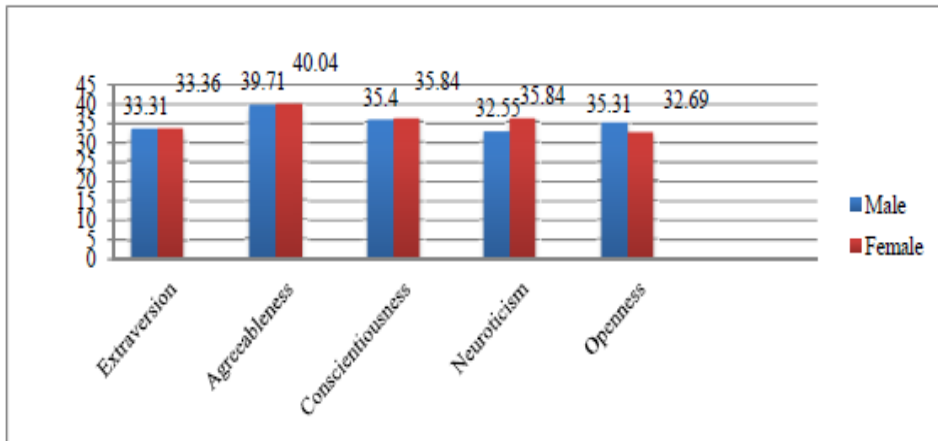


Figure 1: Mean Comparison for Big Five Personality Traits of B.Ed. First Year Students by Gender

According to Table 3, Arts, Science and Combination of Arts & Science students had the highest mean scores on Agreeableness personality trait. Arts, Science and Combination of Arts & Science students had the lowest mean scores on Neuroticism personality trait.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation for Big Five Personality Traits by Specialized Subjects

Personality trait	Specialized Subjects	N	Mean	SD
Extraversion	Arts	50	32.78	4.82041
	Science	50	34.22	4.63919
	Combination of Arts & Science	50	33.02	5.26634
Agreeableness	Arts	50	39.34	3.85772
	Science	50	40.26	3.60731
	Combination of Arts & Science	50	40.08	3.87477
Conscientiousness	Arts	50	35.14	5.30695
	Science	50	36.54	5.04757
	Combination of Arts & Science	50	35.26	5.27145
Neuroticism	Arts	50	29.92	6.58644
	Science	50	32.12	6.73292
	Combination of Arts & Science	50	30.52	7.19195

Personality trait	Specialized Subjects	N	Mean	SD
Openness	Arts	50	34.02	5.25858
	Science	50	34.44	5.47728
	Combination of Arts & Science	50	33.02	5.75163

In order to see vividly the mean difference, the mean scores of big five personality traits among specialized subjects were compared in Figure 2.

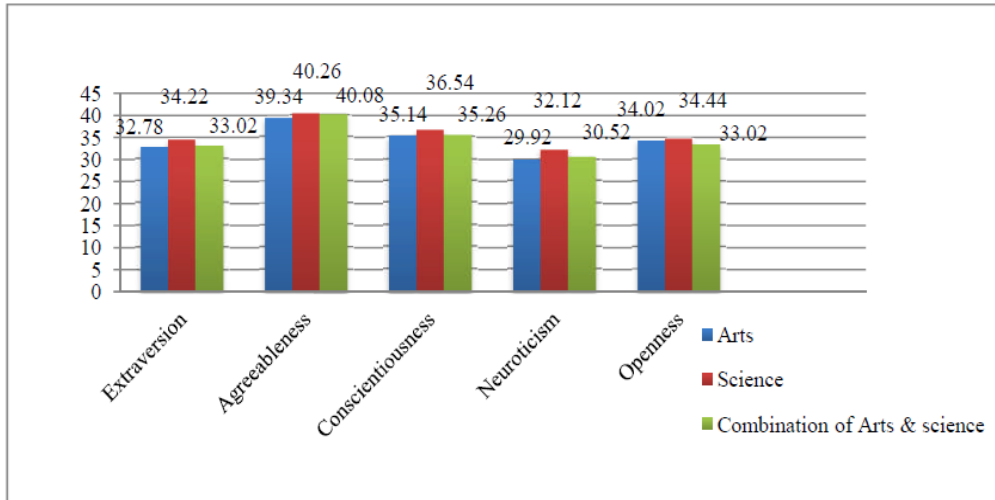


Figure 2: Mean Comparison for Big Five Personality Traits of B.Ed. First Year Students by Specialized Subjects

ANOVA results in table 4 was found that the obtained values $F(2,147) = 1.23$, $p = .295$ for Extraversion, $F(2,147) = .83$, $p = .438$ for Agreeableness, $F(2,147) = 1.11$, $p = .333$ for Conscientiousness, $F(2,147) = 1.38$, $p = .254$ for Neuroticism and $F(2,147) = .89$, $p = .417$ for Openness did not differ at 0.05 level. Thus, there were no significant differences in big five personality traits of B.Ed. first year students according to specialized subjects.

Table 4: ANOVA Results for Big Five Personality Traits of B.Ed. First Year Students by Specialized Subjects

Personality trait		Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	P
Extraversion	Between Group	59.52	2	29.76	1.23	.295
	Within Group	3552.14	147	24.16		
	Total	3611.66	149			
Agreeableness	Between Group	23.77	2	11.89	.83	.438
	Within Group	2102.52	147	14.30		
	Total	2126.29	149			
Conscientiousness	Between Group	60.21	2	30.11	1.11	.333
	Within Group	3990.06	147	27.14		
	Total	4050.27	149			
Neuroticism	Between Group	129.33	2	64.67	1.38	.254
	Within Group	6881.44	147	46.81		
	Total	7010.77	149			
Openness	Between Group	53.21	2	26.61	.89	.417
	Within Group	4446.28	147	30.25		
	Total	4499.49	149			

Discussion and Conclusion

According to the table 1, results revealed that mean score of B.Ed. first year students on Agreeableness personality trait was the greatest factor and mean score on Neuroticism personality trait was the smallest factor. Mean scores on Extraversion and Openness personality traits were nearly the same, and mean score on Conscientiousness personality trait was moderate. So, it was found that the Agreeableness personality trait of B.Ed. first year students was stronger as compared to remaining four personality traits. It may be said that B.Ed. first year students are more likely to act in a cooperative, unselfish manner.

Another finding pointed out that having more mean score on Agreeableness personality trait of B.Ed. first year students in UDNR tends

to value their academic performance, interest in self-improvement and grade orientation.

Table 2 indicated that the male and female students did not differ in Extraversion, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness personality traits and then Neuroticism and Openness personality traits of male and female students differed significantly. Female students are greater than male students on Neuroticism personality trait and then male students are greater than female students on Openness personality trait. It may be said that female students are more likely to be a chronic level of emotional instability and proneness to psychological distress than male students and then male students are more likely to be open to new aesthetic, culture, or intellectual experiences than female students.

According to research finding, it can be concluded that having less mean score on Neuroticism personality trait of B.Ed. first year students tends to be more likely to display hopeful tendencies and are positively associated with well-being and more Conscientious personality trait of B.Ed. first year students are more likely to complete their educational programs, which is likely to be due to the same conscientiousness-related abilities and behaviors promoting academic performance.

In table 3, it was found that there were no significant differences in big five personality traits of B.Ed. first year students according to specialized subjects. It may be said that B.Ed. first year students possess equal big five personality traits according to specialized subjects.

To become well-being persons, all the students need to fulfil the personality traits on Agreeableness, Extraversion, Openness and Conscientiousness. In conclusion, it is expected that this research will contribute to the teachers and students who desire to become dutiful, responsible and accountable citizenship, and to enhance personality traits they need.

Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to acknowledge Dr. Khin Zaw (Retired Rector, Yangon University of Education), Dr. Htoo Htoo Aung (Retired Pro-Rector, Yangon University of Education), Dr. Aye Aye Myint (Rector, Yangon University of Education), Dr. Naing Naing Maw (Professor and Head of Department of Educational Psychology, Yangon University of Education) for their kind support and encouragement.

I would also like to offer my respects to U Mya Win (Rector, University for the Development of the National Races of the Union), U Thein Htay (Pro-Rector (Administration), University for the Development of the National Races of the Union), Dr. Cho Cho Mar (Pro-Rector (Academic), University for the Development of the National Races of the Union) for their encouragement, administrative supports, official permission and providing facilities throughout the research. I would like to thank Daw Khin San Tint (Retired Professor, Department of Methodology, University for the Development of the National Races of the Union) for her precious advice and valuable suggestions that encouraged me.

I am most grateful to Daw Yin Yin Myint (Professor and Head of Department of Educational Psychology, University for the Development of the National Races of the Union) for her tolerance, altruism, encouragement and her precious guidance in planning research design, amending textual material, editing and reviewing.

I am especially indebted to all students involved in this study. Finally, I wish to express special thanks to my family for their kind support.

References

- Althoff, R.W, (2010). *The Big Five Personality Traits as Predictors of Academic Maturity*. A thesis for the Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology. Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, Illinois.
- Arif, M. I., Rashid, A., Tahira, S. S. & Akhter, M. (2012). Personality and Teaching: An Investigation into Prospective Teachers' Personality. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science. Vol. 2 No 17; September 2012*.
- Conrad, N. & Patry, M. W. (2012). Conscientiousness and Academic Performance: A Mediation Analysis. *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*. Vol. 6: No. 1, Article 8.
- Geta, M., (2012). *An Investigation on the Relationship between Achievement Goal Orientation Approach to Learning and Academic Achievement of College Students: The Case of Bonga College of Teacher Education*. Master Thesis. Addis Ababa University Press.
- Guenole, N. (2005). The Suitability of Goldberg's Big Five IPIP Personality Markers in New Zealand: A Dimensionality, Bias, and Criterion Validity Evaluation. *New Zealand Journal of Psychology Vol. 34, No. 2, July 2005*.
- Jensen, M., (2015). Personality Traits, Learning and Academic Achievements: *Journal of Education and Learning; Vol. 4, No. 4; 2015*.
- Khatibi, M. & Khormaei, F. (2016) Learning and Personality: A Review. *Journal of Educational and Management Studies, J. Educ. Manage. Stud.*, 6(4):89-97, Dec 15, 2016
- Using Visual Questionnaires to Measure Personality Traits. Retrieved January 26, 2018, from <http://www.visualdna.com/financial-solutions>
- Vanden Bos, G. R. (2015). *APA Dictionary of Psychology*, (2nd ed.), American Psychological Association, Washington, DC, USA.
- Vedel, A. & Poropat, A. (2017). Personality and Academic Performance. Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark. DOI:10.1007/987-3-28099-8_989-1