The Relationship between Personality Traits with Life Satisfaction

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The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between personality traits with life satisfaction among employed women in higher education centers of Rasht. This study was performed on 206 employed women in higher education centers of Rasht selected by classified random sampling they answered the NEO questionnaire (Costa & McCrae, 1992) and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener et al., 1985). Extraversion, conscientious and openness had a significant negative correlation with life satisfaction, and agreement has significant positive correlation with life satisfaction. The results of stepwise regression showed that personality traits can explain 19 percent of the variance in life satisfaction, interaction of income and education has not significant effect on the life satisfaction. The results of one way ANOVA indicated that there isn't significant difference between employed women life satisfaction and personality trait in diversity higher education centers. Life satisfaction is influenced by interaction of different factors that one of these factors is personality traits.

Keywords: Personality Traits; Life Satisfaction; Employed Women

Introduction

Subjective well-being as a cognitive process involves comparison of individual's perception from their current position with their expectations that is associated with life satisfaction. Expectations of an individual are the main factors in judging the well-being (McDowell, 2010). The subjective well-being became surge of interest when positive psychology established as a branch of science in 2000 (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Shyder & Lopez, 2002; quoted by Jovanovic, 2010). From the view point of Diener (1984) subjective well-being consists of three components of life satisfaction, existence of positive excitations, and inexistence of negative excitations. Life satisfaction is cognitive aspect of well-being and it refers to general assessment of individual's life (Diener, Suh, & Oishi, 1997).

In other words, in order to achieve well-being there must be life satisfaction which is its indicator and it is closely associated with physical and mental health (Melendez et al., 2009). The concept of life satisfaction is main issue that has to be study, because life satisfaction is foundation of welfare and health, hence parallel to increasing longevity, quality, meaningful and welfare of life must to take in consideration as well (Ozer, 2000). Happiness and being satisfied from various aspects of life are the basic components of a positive attitude towards the individual's life, cheerful and life satisfaction are the top goals of life (Zaki, 2006). Investigation of subjective well-being are important due to: 1) To provide mental health, physical health and increasing longevity; 2) To demonstrate the value of cheerfulness for human being; 3) To measure index of life quality beside economical and social indicators as well as the degree of health or crime (Diener et al., 2003; quoted by Kochaki &

Goodarzi, 2007). However, attention to issue of life satisfaction in comparing with depression and anxiety was much less in humanities (Rindel, Miosen, & Hyez, 1999). So, the lack of research in this area is quite significant and requires further studies.

Some of the experts agree that well-being is quite resistant to changes because often determine by genes (Diener et al., 1999; quoted by Soons & Loiefbroer, 2009). Others, also believe that life satisfaction is influenced by interaction of different factors, for instance; Gibson (1986) underlines social interaction, Emmos & Diener (1985) focus on personality factors, according to George (1981), social economical status is other vital factor, Willits & Krider (1988) believe that religion is other factor that affects on degree of life satisfaction. The quality of life is outcome of complex interaction between the internal and external factors. Personality is internal factor that associate with life satisfaction (Larsen & Buss, 2005; quoted by Masthoff, 2006). In a review study by Diener shed lighted that effect of personal factors on life satisfaction is important as environmental factors (Borg et al., 2008). Even though the important events of life have long effects on the individual's well-being, but we expect to have the personality traits more effective (Soons & Loiefbroer, 2009).

Traits are defined as fixed structure, hierarchically, and inborn (Remero et al., 2009). Some researchers believe that five factor of personality traits could explain one of third variance in life satisfaction (Schmmal et al., 2004; quoted by Wood et al., 2008). According to different researches five factors model of personality (Big Five) is a dominant model in psychology of personality (Jovanovic, 2010). Assessment about model of personality five factors includes neurosis, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness (Costa & McCrae, 1992; quoted by White, Hendrick, S., & Hendrick, C., 2004).

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There are several researchers found that personality attributes are predictors of subjective well-being (Jovanovic, 2010); since MacCrae & Costa several times has been proved that extraversion related with positive emotion and neurosis is related with negative emotion (Hills & Argyle, 2001). Conscientious factor, also could be predictor for cognitive assessment of subjective well-being (DeNeve & Cooper, 1998); some of the studies have been shown that conscientious is the strongest predictor of life satisfaction that could explained by aim of progressing (DeNeve & Cooper, 1998; Joseph & Hyes, 2003; quoted by Schimmack, Schupp, &Wayner, 2008); conscientious people are leaning to progress and to get more well-being (Boyce, Wood, & Brown, 2010). Conscientious people are tending to life statuses that are beneficial for well-being (McCrae & Costa, 1991; quoted by Wood & Brown, 2010). Although, generally the conscientiousness has positive relationship with well-being and performance that this relationship has been reported between the 2% to 3% (Steel et al., 2008), but depending on the situations this pattern might reversed, thus high level of conscientiousness could threat the well-being (Bass, Wood, & Brown, 2010), agreeableness facilitate positive experiences in social situations and progressing and increases the well-being (Hayes & Joseph, 2002).

Attribution of openness people could lead to experience new things in order to facilitate well-being (McCare & Costa, 1991; quoted by Stephan, 2009), also openness people try to experience new things in order to develop themselves, and people with these characteristics have positive life satisfaction, because they are involved in activities that satisfy their psychological needs (Stephan, 2009); various studies highlight different agent of the factors that raised in the personality five factor model, according to various studies, different factors play a greater role in explanation of life satisfaction, the five factor personality traits can explain the one of third variance on life satisfaction since by factors such as personality traits can influence to life satisfaction (Schmmal et al., 2004; quoted by Wood et al., 2008), present study examines the role of this factor on life satisfaction. On the other side, we still do not have adequate data about relationship between employ of women with their life satisfaction despite of presenting women in working area have increased significantly, because until recently main researches focused on male's experiences rather than females (Beatty, 1996; Long & Kahn, 1993). In any case, with respect to importance of quality of life in employed women, this study examines the relationship between personality traits and life satisfaction among employed women in higher education centers of Rasht.

Research Hypothesis

1) There is a significant relationship between personality traits and life satisfaction of employed women in higher education centers.

Research Questions

1) Is there any significant relationship between personality traits and life satisfaction among employed women whether they are married or not?

2) Are there any significant differences between personality traits and life satisfaction among married and single groups?

3) Which one of the personality traits has a greater role in explaining women's life satisfaction?

4) Are there any significant differences between life satisfaction among employed women either married or single?

5) Are there any significant differences in personality traits among employed women who are married or not?

6) Are there any significant differences in degree of life satisfaction among employed women in various higher education institutions such as Islamic Azad University, Payame Noor University, University of Medical Science and Guilan University?

Method

Research method of present study is correlation and the research design has been an anticipative study. The population of study included all women who hold higher than bachelor degree except scientific commission in higher education centers of Rasht. According to the collected information from personnel department of higher education institutions, cases are in total 448 that are as follows due to the university separation: 14 women from Payame Noor University, 114 women from Islamic Azad University, 200 women from University of Medical Science and 120 women from Guilan University. We used method of Krejcie-Morgan (1970) sample size which is 46%, thus 206 samples chosen by classified random sampling respectively are as follows: 7 from Payame Noor University, 52 from Islamic Azad University, 92 from University of Medical Science and 55 from Guilan University (n = 90).

Instruments

Five Factor Personality Shorts Form Questionnaire: It comprised on 60 buoys and also, scale is scoring with continuum of five degrees (from completely agree to completely disagree). Several studies have confirmed the reliability and validity of this scale, for instance in a seven year longitudinal study were obtained that reliability coefficients between 0.51 to 0.82 and the validity coefficients between the 0.63 to 0.81 (McCrae & Costa, 1992). Psychometric attributions of this test are calculated among Iranian samples. The coefficients of Cronbach's alpha in each main factors of neurosis, extraversion, agreement, openness, and conscientious respectively are obtained as 0.86, 0.73, 0.80, 0.87, and 0.70, to investigate content validity of this test between two form of self report (observer assessment form) was used to correlate the maximum rate of 0.66 extraversion factor and minimum rate of 0.45 in the agreement factor (Grossi Farshi, 2001).

Satisfaction with Life Scale (*SWLS*): This scale designed by Diener and his colleagues (1985). It has five questions, which examines life satisfaction of individual in a seven degree of Likert scale (from strongly agree to strongly disagree) which individual could achieve score of 5 - 45 on this scale, Diener and his colleagues has been reported adequate validity (convergent and discriminative practices) and also adequate reliability for this scale.

Results

Out of 206 participations after eliminating values and throws, 200 participations put into final analysis that 57 were single and 143 were married. Mean of age and income in sample group respectively are 35.47 years and 500$. Statistic of variable is presented on **Table 1**. It should be noted that scores for NEO in scale are from 0 - 4 and life satisfaction is in the average of 1 - 7.

According to **Table 1** average of life satisfaction among employed women in higher education is equal with 4.47, which is moderate level. Also, between the personality dimensions,

highest mean related to the neurosis (2.40) which is in moderate level, while the lowest mean is related to extraversion (1.41), which is low level. On the other side, scores of neurosis and openness respectively allocated the highest and lowest dispersion due to experience. **Table 1** shows which there is significant negative correlation ($p \leq .01$) between life satisfaction and extraversion (r = −26%) and conscientiousness (r = −21%). Thus, sample groups that have higher scores in these traits, have lower level of satisfaction. Conversely, trait of agreement has a positive correlation with life satisfaction (r = 15%, $p \leq .05$). Positive and significant correlations Between the NEO five personality traits in the range of .15 to .46 are normal and expected. **Table 2** presents the matrix correlation among variables to distinguish the single and married women.

According to **Table 2**, average of life satisfaction respectively in the married and single groups is 4.51 and 4.39. The average range of personality traits in the single group are between 1.59 - 1.89 and in the married ones are 1.44 to 2.38. **Figure 1** shows profile of NEO personality traits for both groups. According to the chart, profile of both groups is very similar and traits like extraversion, openness, agreeableness and conscientiousness are on lower levels and the neurosis trait is located on the middle level. Conversely according to **Table 2**, correlation of agreement (r = .19, $p \leq .05$) and conscientious (r = .24, $p \leq .01$) with life satisfaction is significant in the married group.

Table 2, has also shown that extraversion correlation (n = −.40, $p \leq .01$) and openness (r = .39, $p \leq .01$) with life satisfac-

tion in a single group is significant and inverse. Also, it has been mentioned correlation of variables in the married ones respectively are −.23 and −.19 which is meaningful on scale of .01 and .05, Fisher Z test was used to compare correlation between extraversion and life satisfaction in a single and married ones, which the results was significant (Z = 3.83, $p \leq .01$). As a result the inverse correlation between extraversion and life satisfaction of single women was stronger than married ones. Results of Fisher test has been shown that to compare openness correlation with life satisfaction in the both groups are significant (Z = 2.11, $p \leq .05$). Thus, correlation of openness and life satisfaction variables are stronger in single group.

According to **Table 3**, none of the F statistics outcome of one-way ANOVA analysis is significant. Thus, between both groups there is no significant difference in average of life satisfaction and personality traits. According to **Table 2** and **Figure 1**, the mean value of the descriptive variables in the two groups is statistically significant, which is also confirmed by **Table 3**. The test result of one-way ANOVA analysis has also shown that between life satisfaction between employed women in various higher education centers (Guilan University, Islamic Azad University, Payame Noor University and University of Medical Science) statistically there is no significant differences ($f_{(3,197)} = .16$, $p \geq .05$). The test also showed that type of institution does not have any effect on personality traits ($p \geq .05$).

According to **Table 4**, has been observed that by using stepwise model, in the last step out of personality traits, 4 traits

Table 1.
Mean, standard deviation, coefficients of correlation between variables and Cronbach's alpha.

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1) Life satisfaction	4.47	1.14	.89					
2) Neurosis	2.40	.40	.11	.43				
3) Extraversion	1.41	.39	−.28**	.15*	.53			
4) Openness	1.82	.32	−.26**	.25**	.41**	.48		
5) Agreeableness	1.92	.38	.15*	.45**	.29**	.26**	.50	
6) Conscientious	1.60	.30	−.24**	.19**	.45**	.46**	.34**	.49

Note: Notice: Alpha coefficients are on the diameter of the sub-matrix. *$p \leq .05$, **$p \leq .01$.

Table 2.
Mean, standard deviation, correlation coefficients between variables, separation to different status.

			1	2	3	4	5	6
Statistics		M	4.51	2.38	1.44	1.83	1.93	1.68
Variable	M	SD	1.11	.39	.37	.31	.38	.30
1) Life satisfaction	4.39	1.19	-	.12	.23**	−.19*	.19*	−.24**
2) Neurosis	2.46	.42	.10	-	.23**	.30**	.48**	.26**
3) Extraversion	1.35	.43	−.40**	.04	-	.38**	.35**	.43**
4) Openness	1.79	.34	−.39**	.17	.44**	-	.28**	.45**
5) Agreement	1.89	.41	.05	.18	.18	.21	-	.33**
6) Conscientious	1.59	.31	−.25	.04	.49**	.48**	.37**	-

Note: Notice: On higher of original diameter statistics related to the married women (n = 143) and on the lower of statistics related to single women (n = 57). *$p \leq .05$, **$p \leq .01$.

Table 3.
Analysis of one way ANOVA for the effects of marital status on the research.

		SS	MS	$F(1, 198)$
1) Life satisfaction	Between group	.45	.45	.50
	Within group	255.16	1.29	
2) Neurosis	Between group	.25	.25	1.55
	Within group	31.41	.16	
3) Extraversion	Between group	.35	.35	2.34
	Within group	29.39	.35	
4) Openness	Between group	.08	.08	.76
	Within group	19.86	.10	
5) Agreement	Between group	.05	.05	.34
	Within group	29.31	.15	
6) Conscientious	Between group	.01	.01	.07
	Within group	18.34	.09	

Table 4.
Summarizes the analysis of stepwise regression to predict life satisfaction (n = 200).

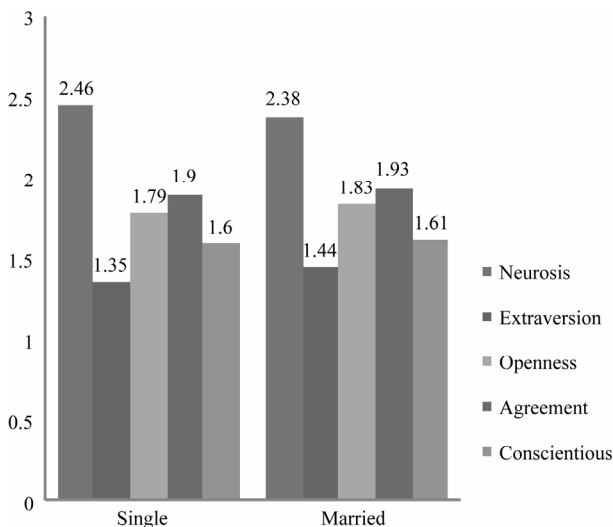| Variables	B	SEB	β	R^2	ΔR^2	F
First step				.08	.08	16.63[**]
Extraversion	−.82	.20	−.28[**]			
Second step				.13	.05	15.15[**]
Agreeableness	.73	.21	.25[**]			
Third step				.17	.04	13.65[**]
Openness	−.79	.25	−.22[**]			
Fourth step				.19	.02	11.65[**]
Conscientious	−.64	.29	−.17[*]			

Note: [**]$p \leq .01$, [*]$p \leq .05$.

Figure 1.
Profile of NEO personality traits for married and single women.

(extraversion, agreeableness, openness and conscientious) of personality traits are able to explain 19% of variance in life satisfaction. On the first step, variable of extraversion inversely and significantly is predicting 8% of life ($F_{(1,198)}$ = 16.63, $p \leq$ 0/01). So that each of standard deviation change in extraversion is associated with −0.28 followed by change in the variable of satisfaction (t = 4.08, $p \leq$ .01). In the second step, also with adding agreeableness to extraversion model is successful in predicting life satisfaction and ability of predicting increases about 5% ($F_{(2,197)}$ = 15.15, $p \leq$ .01). Beta coefficient of agreement directly and significantly engaged to predict life satisfaction (t = 3.56, $p \leq$ .01). On the third step with adding openness due to experience has ability to predict significant model and increases about 4% ($F_{(3,196)}$ = 13.6, $p \leq$ .01). According to the third step each deviation that decreases in openness is associate with increasing deviation −0.22 in life satisfaction (t = 3.06, $p \leq$ .01). In the final model, with adding conscientiousness to the previous three variables, the ability of prediction was significant and increased about 2% ($F_{(4,195)}$ = 11.65, $p \leq$ .01). According to the fourth step, every deviation that changes in conscientiousness with −.17 is associated with changes in life

satisfaction (t = 2.21, $p \leq .05$). Likewise as seen, only neurosis is not located in the model. At the final step, regression equation to predict life satisfaction for 200 samples is as follows:

(Conscientiousness) (−.17) + (Openness) (−.22)
+ (Agreeableness) (.25) + (Extraversion) (−.28)
= Life satisfaction

Table 5 has been presented result of stepwise regression analysis to predict life satisfaction by personality traits to differentiate both groups of single and married women which lead to different results.

According to **Table 5** has been observed that in the group of single employed women, extraversion and openness have ability to predict reversely and significantly the life satisfaction. In contrast with the married group of employed women, extraversion, conscientious and agreeableness are the most appropriate personality traits to predict the life satisfaction ($F_{(3,139)} = 10.43$, $p \leq .01$). Equation of regression to differ- rentiate married and single women are as follows:

(Openness) (−.27) + (Extraversion) (−.27)
= Life satisfaction of single women (Agreement) (.36)
+ (Conscientiousness) (−.25) + (Extraversion) (−.25)
= Life satisfaction of married women

Discussion

Present study has taken place to determine the relationship between personality traits and life satisfaction among Iranian employed women in higher education centers. In investigating profile of NEO personality traits has been observed that among sample of Iranian employed women traits such as extraversion, agreeableness, openness and conscientiousness are lower than average level which can explained by cultural and religious differences. On the whole according to post extraversion: they are introversion, conservative and serious, regarding to post openness: they are humble, dominant on their works, regarding to post agreeableness: they are stubborn, skeptical, supercilious and likely to be rivalry, and according to after conscientiousness: they do not prefer to have pre-determined program. On the other side, usually according to the mean point of neurosis, they are calm and they have ability to cope with their pressures. The mean point of life satisfaction between sample groups was on the moderate level that in order to explain, precisely their family relationship and job satisfaction must be measured.

Due to the research findings, there is no significant relationship between neurosis and life satisfaction which this result is

not consistent with research findings of Hills & Argyle (2001), Soon & Loief broer (2009), Keyes, Shmotkin, & Ryff (2002). These discrepancies, can explain with previous studies which examined relationship between neurosis and well-being that indicated there is negative correlation between neurosis and post subjective well being, because according to the previous studies neurosis is the main factor to develop emotional disturbance, while the presented study focused on the post cognitive well-being (life satisfaction).

There is significant and direct relationship between agreement and life satisfaction that these findings are consistent with research findings of Hayes & Joseph (2002) which showed that agreeableness could facilitate the positive experiences in social situations. Results of correlation analysis showed that there is negative significant relationship between conscientiousness and life satisfaction. This outcome is not consistent with some of the previous studies as DeNeve & Cooper (1998), Hayes & Joseph (2002) and Steel & colleagues (2009), found that there is positive significant relationship between conscientious and life satisfaction, they underline that conscientious people are tending to achieve success and further progress which could support well-being.

Consistent to this study Boyce, Wood and Brown (2010), found that sometimes when people experience failure, there could be negative significant relationship between conscientiousness and life satisfaction. In terms of failure, well-being reduces between the conscientious people, at this point conscientiousness become dangerous for well-being and production. Conscientious people may linage their failure with lack of ability (lasting reason for failure) which this attribution style is associate with depression, anxiety and consequently leads to low life satisfaction. Analysis of this result needs to further researches, because we found that according to some interviews with employees of this study, the fact in their employment is their economical needs rather than their personal interest. This factor can justify lower conscientiousness and inverse correlation of life satisfaction.

Results of one-way ANOVA analysis showed that there is no significant differences of life satisfaction between married and single women which this conclusion is consistent with results of Myers & Diener (1997), stated that there is no significant relationship between marital status and life satisfaction. This finding could explain without consideration their marital status, only employment itself could lead them to positive emotional such as economically being independent and sense of being

Table 5.
Summarizes the stepwise regression analysis to predict life satisfaction to differentiation of marital status.

Variable	B	SE B	β	R^2	F
Final step of single women				.22	7.39[**]
Extraversion	−.77	.38	−.27[*]		
Openness	−.94	.47	−.27[*]		
Final step of married women				.18	10.43[**]
Extraversion	−.75	.26	−.25[**]		
Conscientious	−.92	.32	−.25[**]		
Agreement	1.05	.25	.36[**]		

Note: [**]$p \leq .01$, [*]$p \leq .05$.

valuable that finally results with life satisfaction.

Also results of one-way ANOVA analysis showed that there are no significant differences in personality traits between married and single women, to support this finding by Bergman and colleagues (1993), pointed out that some of the characteristics and dimensions of such traits raised in the five factors model of personality are inherited, so marital status does not have significant effect on them.

On the other side, analysis of one-way ANOVA test showed that there is no significant difference in extend of employed women between life satisfaction and personality traits in the various higher education centers (Guilan University, Payame Noor University, Islamic Azad University, University of Medical Science). This means that there are no significant differences in degree of life satisfaction between women who work at Guilan University with their colleagues in other universities. Because of similarity between activities, needs, job demands, environment, role of social status, days, hours, salaries and benefits between samples, the type of universities that they are working in, could not be facts for making differences in life satisfaction or personality traits.

Presented study only focused on employed women, regarding to this, might be suggest that in further researches to study various backgrounds like house wife's to compare between variables, thus relationship between personality traits and life satisfaction could study very carefully. Second limitation could be social factors. Based on this findings suggest that in further studies to include factors such as optimism, hope, religious and other factors that could affect life satisfaction.

Thanks and Appreciation

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