



STUDY ON RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY ENVIRONMENT, PERSONALITY AND LIFE SATISFACTION AMONG YOUNG ADULTS

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ABSTRACT

Background : Life satisfaction is defined as an individual's overall assessment of his or her life and how they feel about the paths they are taking. As the family is the primary source of happiness and positivity in life, it leads to satisfaction with life's circumstances. Personality is the dynamic organization within the individual of those psycho-physical systems that determine his unique adjustment to his environment. Family plays an important role in forming the personality of an individual and also influences the life satisfaction of an individual. **Aim :** To find the relationship between family environment, personality and life satisfaction among young adults. **Methods :** The study constituted of 200 young adults (18-25 years) residing in different parts of Kerala through snowball technique. The data was collected using Family Environment Scale, Life Satisfaction Scale, Big Five Personality Test. **Results :** The study revealed that there is significant positive correlation between family environment and life satisfaction ($r = .833^{**}$), there is no relationship with personality. The demographic variable - gender were significantly related with life satisfaction ($r = 4.431^*$), Extraversion ($r = 13.148^{**}$), Conscientiousness ($r = 3.0820^{**}$), Neuroticism ($r = 3.003^{**}$) among young adults. **Conclusion :** The study showed that when a person has good family environment their life satisfaction increases. As the family is the primary source of happiness and positivity in life, it leads to satisfaction with life's circumstances.

Keywords : Family Environment, Life Satisfaction, Personality.

INTRODUCTION

Young adulthood is a time of dramatic change. Young adulthood is a unique developmental period that occurs between the ages of 18 and 25 years, during which there are key developmental tasks that allow the young adult to participate in self-exploration and identity formation (Daniel Offer 1988). Family plays an important role in forming the personality of an individual and also influences the life satisfaction of an individual.

According to Gordon Allport (1937), "Personality is the dynamic organization within the individual of those psycho-physical systems that determine his unique adjustment to his environment". Personality, we might say, is a dynamic totality that changes constantly as a result of its relationship with the environment. Personality is a distinct set of patterns that influence a person's behaviour, thought, motivation, and emotion. The most widely used system of traits in personality is the Five-Factor Model. This system includes five broad traits that can be remembered with the acronym OCEAN: Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism. (Goldberg, 1990; McCrae & John, 1992; McCrae & Costa, 1987).

The basic agent of socialization is the home environment. The surroundings and social context in which a family lives are referred to as the family environment. It encompasses interpersonal relationships, as well as individual development and system maintenance within a family. Each family is made up of unique individuals living in unique circumstances. Every family's environment is distinct.



The settings can be very different in a variety of ways. The notion of home concerns the cultural, demographic and psychological meanings we attach to this physical structure. The home is the primary setting in which children develop; it is one of several settings or ecological systems that have an impact on children's life (Rich, 1998). Home is undergoing structural, emotional, and interactional transformations, and plays a significant part in the development of young adults personalities.

Life Satisfaction is the central aspect of human welfare. It is ultimate goal and every human being strives to achieve this goal throughout the life. Life satisfaction is defined as the accomplishment of a desired goal and the fulfilment of necessary circumstances (Wolman, 1973). Life satisfaction is determined by how we use our days, not by how long they last. Even though a man lives a long life, he may not get much out of it. As a result, life pleasure is not determined by the number of years lived, but rather by the resolve to live (Bartlett, 1977). It's a feeling of satisfaction with one's own way of living. Life satisfaction is defined as an individual's overall assessment of his or her life and how they feel about the paths they are taking. As the family is the primary source of happiness and positivity in life, it leads to satisfaction with life's circumstances. Young adults' level of life satisfaction is affected by their family environment because a healthy and loving environment has a positive effect on their development.

METHODOLOGY

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the study is to understand the relationship between family environment, personality and life satisfaction among young adults. Further it was used to explore the gender difference between family environment life satisfaction.

HYPOTHESIS

H₀1: There is no significant relationship between family environment and life satisfaction.

H₀2: There is no significant relationship between family environment and personality.

H₀3: There is no significant difference between family environment, personality and life satisfaction with respect to gender.

SAMPLE

The sample consists of 200 people, of which 100 male and 100 female young adults, whose age ranges from 18 -25, which were selected from different parts of Kerala by using snow ball techniques. Participants were provided with the informed consent form before collecting the data. Totally 200 questionnaires were distributed to young adults of Kerala, all the questionnaires were found complete and taken for final analysis. The inclusion criteria include the young adults age ranging from 18-25 years. Those who are below and above the age range were excluded.

TOOLS

• **Family Environment Scale:** Family Environment Scale is a 88 item instrument developed by Dr Arun Kumar and Sundeep Kumar Shrivastava. The purpose of Family Environment Scale (FES) is to measure social and environmental characteristics of family. There are three major dimensions in this family environment scale (FES) and each dimension has five, four and two subdimensions, respectively. There are positive and negative items in the scale. In all positive items, marks 5 is assign for strongly agree, 4 for agree, 3 for undecided, 2 for disagree and 1 for strongly disagree. In all negative items marks 1 is assign for strongly agree, 2 for agree, 3 for neutral, 4 for disagree and 5 for strongly disagree.

• **Big Five Personality Test:** The Big Five Inventory (BFI) developed by John, O. P., & Srivastava, S. (1999). The Big Five are five broad factors (dimensions) of personality traits: openness,



conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism. The convergent validity coefficient is mean $r = .54$. Internal consistency was satisfactory for the Neuroticism, Extraversion, and Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness subscales respectively (Cronbach's alpha = 0.83, 0.82, 0.79, 0.82, 0.90) for males and (Cronbach's alpha = 0.74, 0.83, 0.85, 0.81, 0.92) for females. This is a 50- item tool. Person answers questions on a scale of 1- 5 where, 1 = Disagree, 2 = Slightly disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Slightly agree, 5 = Agree

• **Life Satisfaction Scale:** Life satisfaction scale (Dr. Promila Singh and Gorge Joseph, 1971): The scale measures life satisfaction on 5 dimensions - 1. taking pleasures in everyday activities, 2. considering life meaningful, 3. holding a self-image, 4. having a happy and optimistic outlook, 5. experience of Success in achieving goals. It covers 35 items based on the dimensions describe above. Each item has 5 response categories specifically; always, often, sometimes, rarely and never. All these responses have a numerical weight age on 1 – 5 scale in descending order; where always is rated 5 and never as 1 respectively. Scoring of response can be done by summing up the individual responds weight age and interpreting it against norms; which indicate scores ranging from 136 – 175 as high, 81 – 35 as average and 35 – 80 as low life satisfaction. It’s test- retest reliability is 0.91 and validity compared to life satisfaction scale of Alam and Srivastava (1971) is 0.83; also, it has content and face validity since every item was judged by experts.

PROCEDURE

The participants were asked to record their rating in the space provided that most accurately reflects their opinion how often they perform such behavior in any one of the five or six responses for all the statements. The participants were told that there was no time limit but work as quick as possible. The informed consent was acquired from the participants. The participants were given Family Environment Scale (FES), Life Satisfaction Scale (LSS), Big Five Personality Test (BFPT) to respond. The confidentiality of the personal data and the test responses of the participants was assured and maintained.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The data was coded for SPSS 20 analysis. Frequency and percentages were used for categorical variables. The mean and standard deviation values of the variables were used. The Pearson coefficient of correlation was used to see the significant relationship between variables. The independent t-test was used to see the gender difference between the variables.

Table 1 Shows the Frequency and Percentage of the Socio Demographic Variables of the Respondents (N=200)

Socio Demographic Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage %
Age	18	17	8.5
	19	22	19.5
	20	22	30.5
	21	32	46.5
	22	22	57.5



	23	34	74.5
	24	27	88.0
	25	24	100.0
Gender	Male	100	50.0
	Female	100	50.0

Table 1 shows the frequency and percentage of socio demographic variables. From the table the age category is 18-25 years with more samples in the age of 21 and 23 when compared to the other age groups. The age category of 18-25 comes under the young adults. Among the 200 samples there are 100 (50%) male and 100(50%) female participants.

Table 2 Shows Correlation Between Family Environment, Personality and Life Satisfaction (N=200)

Variables	Family Environment	Life Satisfaction	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Openness	Conscientiousness	Neuroticism
Family Environment	1						
Life Satisfaction	.833**	1					
Extraversion	.026	.075	1				
Agreeableness	.010	.037	.149*	1			
Openness	.133	.131	.191**	.088	1		
Conscientiousness	-.015	-.013	.259**	.211**	.144*	1	
Neuroticism	.168*	.176*	.369**	.106	.437**	.145*	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).



The results from table 2 shows the correlation coefficient between family environment, life satisfaction and personality traits. The correlation result indicates that the factor family environment has a strong level of positive correlation with life satisfaction($r=.833$). Which implies that there exists a significant level of correlation between these two factors. Young adults who have good family environment will have good life satisfaction. Thus rejects the null hypothesis (H_0). The correlation results indicates that there is positive relation between personality dimension neurotics, family environment and life satisfaction ($r=.168$ & $.176$) among young adults and no relation relationship with other personality dimensions.

Table 3 Shows the gender difference between Family Environment, Personality and Life Satisfaction.

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T-value
Family Environment	Male	100	3.5040	35.57257	.007NS
	Female	100	3.7116	32.77586	
Life Satisfaction	Male	100	1.4516	21.22116	4.431*
	Female	100	1.5492	14.31371	
Extraversion	Male	100	25.5200	6.77709	13.148**
	Female	100	25.9000	4.40271	
Agreeableness	Male	100	28.5700	6.60770	.448NS
	Female	100	26.3400	6.47641	
Openness	Male	100	24.9000	8.49420	.376NS
	Female	100	25.1400	8.12779	
Conscientiousness	Male	100	27.6900	7.32602	3.0820**
	Female	100	28.2500	6.11898	
Neuroticism	Male	100	23.4200	8.64587	3.003**
	Female	100	26.4900	8.19275	

NS - not significant, *Significant at 0.05 level , **Significant at 0.01 level

Table 3 Shows the gender difference between Family Environment, Personality and Life Satisfaction. The result indicates that there is no significant difference in family environment with respect to gender, since the t-value is .007. Also there exists no significant difference under the dimensions of personality, agreeableness ($p = .448$) and openness ($p = .376$) with respect to gender at any level. Hence, the null hypothesis was partially accept that there is no significant difference in family environment and significant difference in life satisfaction with respect to gender.

While the personality dimension extraversion tends to have a significant difference with respect to gender, with a t-value of 13.148 at 0.01 level. Also it was found that there exists a significant difference between the personality dimensions, conscientiousness ($p = 3.0820$) and neuroticism ($p = 3.003$) with respect to gender at 0.01 level.

CONCLUSION

1. There is significant positive correlation between family environment and life satisfaction, there is no relationship with personality
2. The demographic variable - gender were significantly related with life satisfaction, Extraversion Conscientiousness, Neuroticism among young adults.



LIMITATIONS

This study was conducted among 200 young adults (male and female). The individual dimensions under personality weren't taken into considerations. The role of demographic variables was excluded from this study (except gender). Study has been collected through self-report questionnaires, the inferences based on the results has all the limitations of the selfreported responses. Since this study is conducted through survey method, the control of extraneous variable is limited.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study restricted to a smaller sample size of 200 young adults, it won't be enough to generalize outcomes of this research to the entire populations. Therefore, it would be more accurate and informative if future researchers could examine a large sample. The role of other demographic variables excluded in this investigation can be observed through future researchers. Other suggestions for future studies are more qualitative and longitudinal studies to be conducted. Collecting data from different geographical areas will be noteworthy.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to understand the relationship between family environment, personality and life satisfaction among young adults. This study finds that there is a positive relationship between family environment and life satisfaction people who had good family environment has high life satisfaction in their life. Young adulthood is a unique developmental period that occurs between the ages of 18 and 25 years, during which there are key developmental tasks that allow the young adult to participate in self-exploration and identity formation.

It is common knowledge that the majority of those who achieve success in life come from homes where parental attitudes toward them are positive and where a healthy relationship exists between parents and children, resulting in happy and friendly children who are constructive and affectionate members of the group. Those that are unsuccessful in life, on the other hand, come from homes where the parent-child bond is strained. The importance of family functioning in shaping children's personalities and social development cannot be overstated. The interactions within a family play a significant impact in a person's development. Children require a happy and secure parental environment as well as a supportive social network for their overall growth and development.

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