



IMPLICATIONS OF PERSONALITY TYPES FOR EMOTIONAL REGULATION IN YOUNG WOMEN

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Abstract

Personality can be understood as “A dynamic organisation, inside the person, of psychophysical systems that creates a person’s characteristic patterns of behaviour, thoughts, and feelings” (Carver & Scheier, 2000). The affective component thus forms an integral aspect of the structure and dynamics of personality. Emotional regulation further refers to a person’s ability to understand and accept his or her emotional experience, to engage in healthy strategies to manage uncomfortable emotions when necessary, and to engage in appropriate behavior especially when distressed. Working on the assumption that personological typifications would lend colour to the psychological functioning of individual. The present study aimed at exploring how dominating personality types effect emotional self regulation styles amongst young women. The sample of the study comprised of 200 undergraduate female students. Personality assessment was carried out by using Myers- Briggs Type Indicator by Myers & Mccauley (1998) and emotional regulation was assessed using the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale by Gratz & Roemer (2004). Results of the study reveal the significant role of personality types in influencing typical emotional self regulatory patterns in young women. Identifying personality types thus becomes relevant in context of social and occupational adjustment of young women, since success in there domain largely depends upon effective emotional functioning.

Keywords : Personality, personality types, emotional regulation; women emotion.

Personality is the combination of emotional, attitudinal, and behavioral response patterns of an individual in particular. It focuses on major psychological processes of how people are unique and how they are alike. Every individual possesses a dynamic and organized set of characteristics that uniquely influences his or her cognitions, interpersonal orientations, motivations, emotions and behaviors in different situations. Our reactions to people, problems and stress are thus influenced by our specific personality types. Chaplin (1997) defined “Personality as that pattern of characteristic thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that distinguishes one person from another and that persists over time and situations.” There are many ideas developed by historical and modern personality theorists that actually arise from the basic philosophical assumptions of psychological schools they adhere to for eg. psychoanalyst, behaviorists and humanists. Jung (1921), described Personality as the psyche. It embraces all thought, feeling and behavior, conscious and unconscious. The psyche guides us in adapting to our social and physical environment. He gave general psychological types that were attitudes or predispositions to behave in a particular way. There are two opposing attitudes: introversion and extroversion. Both of these attitudes work as opposing, yet complementary forces in Jung theorizing (1921/1971)

The introverted attitude is more concerned with subjective

appraisal and is often given more optimization into fantasies and dreams. The extrovert, on the other hand, is characterized by the outward flow of psychic energy. This attitude gains more influence from the surrounding environment than by inner energies and cognitive processes. Further for Carl Jung(1921) there were four functions that, when combined with one of the two attitudes, formed the eight different personality types. The first function is ‘Feeling’, it is the method by which a person understands the value of conscious activity (Kennedy & Kennedy, 2004). The second function is ‘Thinking’, which allows a person to understand the meanings of things. This process relies on logic and careful mental activity (Higgs, 2001). The other two functions are— ‘Sensation’ and ‘Intuition’. Sensation refers to the means by which a person knows something exists (Kennedy & Kennedy, 2004) and intuition is knowing about something without conscious understanding of where that knowledge comes from (Higgs, 2001). Jung (1921/1971) developed a theory of eight different personality types consisting of: Extroverted Thinking – These are the people who understand the world through a mix of concrete ideas and abstract ones, but the abstract concepts are ones passed down from other people. Introverted Thinking – These people interpret stimuli in the environment through a subjective and creative way. The interpretations are formed by



internal knowledge and understanding. Extroverted Feeling – These people judge the value of things objectively. They are comfortable in social situations, they form their opinions based on socially accepted values and beliefs of majority. Introverted Feeling – These people make judgments subjectively and on internally established beliefs. They ignore prevailing attitudes often and defy social norms of thinking. Extroverted Sensing – These people perceive the world as it really exists. Their perceptions are not influenced by any pre-existing beliefs. Introverted Sensing – These individuals interpret the world through the lens of subjective attitudes and rarely see something for only what it actually is and finally Extroverted Intuitive – These people understand the meanings of things through subliminally perceived objective fact rather than incoming sensory information and Introverted Intuitive – which comprises individuals who are strongly influenced by their internal motivations even though they do not completely understand them.

When applying Jung's Orientations to a Complete Personality, it has been seen that a person is not usually defined by only one of the eight personality types. Instead, the different functions exist in a hierarchy. One function would have a superior effect and the other a secondary effect. Usually, according to Jung (1921) a person only makes significant use of two functions. The other two take inferior positions.

The essence of Jung's theory of psychological types is simple, when our minds are actively working and we are in awake state, we keep alternating between taking in information and using it to make decisions in our inner and outer worlds.

Jung's typology has helped researchers in various fields. Significance of a Typological approach in counselling and psychotherapy has shown great effectiveness. A systematic conception of normal personality differences such as that afforded by psychological type has enabled mental health practitioners to discriminate between behaviours that are normal for one type but may signal difficulty for another type. Yeakley (1983) developed communication style preferences for each of the types. High similarities in communication style was significantly associated with effective communication in marriage, in the types of parishioners ministers attract, in manager-subordinate relationships, in the grades teachers give to students and in sales of life- insurance prospects. Garden (1989) found that responses to burnout differed when samples of types who primarily preferred Thinking over Feeling were studied. It was found that people with Thinking preference were more likely to seek people out rather than avoid them, as has typically been found from samples of helping professionals, who attract types who prefer thinking. Sherman (1981) indicated that people

tended to marry similar rather than dissimilar types. Dissimilar types in marriage caused conflicts that would require professional help. Snyder, Abbott and Castellani (2002) found techniques of couple type assessment generate information that helped the couple construct a more optimistic formulation of their current difficulties, their origin, and how they were solved according to the individual personalities of couples based on Jung's typology.

Jung's description of various personality types has also helped to understand nature of occupational choices. Quenk and Albert (1975) worked on the importance of different work environments to different types. Among the findings, extraverted physicians favoured active involvement with the outside world including their patients and their communities. Feeling type emphasized involvement with people in their lives and practices. Thinking types seemed to concentrate more on the non-people aspects of their work such as their continued advancement. Judging type desired to maintain the boundaries in their practices between personal and professional lives. Garden (1989) worked on computer professionals in both large and small companies. People with I, N, and P preferences expected to leave their employer if they were a larger company; because they sought more autonomy, which is likely to come in a smaller company. Those with S and J preferences were more likely to leave smaller companies, perhaps seeking the more detailed regimen of a larger company.

Holland's (1997) theory proposes that people are attracted to work environments that conform to their personality orientation. Bradberry (2007) said that identifying one's career choice depends on one's personality types and how one perceives a particular job.

"Every type has its good and bad examples" (Myers, 1980). In educational settings understanding of dominant processes and 16 types has helped educators nurture the potential strengths and lessen the likelihood of problem amongst students. Provost et al. (1987) researched the general teaching styles of the faculty as well as lessons they had learned over the years about their natural pitfalls. It indicated a confirmation not only of their type preference but of the theory of type development as well. Elliott & Sapp, (1988) found that extraverted students preferred approaches to learning that were collaborative and they often depended upon the external world for suggestions on how to proceed. Jung's type approach predicted the same. Atman (1993) discovered that extraverts had a higher sense of goal- directedness and wilfulness than introverts (ages 12-14). In- contrast, introverted students preferred reflective observation (Hinkle, 1986) and lecture formats (Fourqurean, Meisgeier, & Swank, 1990). Pike (2006) found that students'



personality types appear to be an important element in the process underlying initial selection of an academic major. Moutafi et al. (2003) found grades to be negatively correlated with Judgment while positively correlated with Perception.

Personality typology has its implications in organizational setup especially the role played in influencing communication which is very important in effective working of any organization, Yeakley (1983) found that people who used similar extraverting styles (for example, both extravert their feeling judgement or both extravert their Intuition) reported more satisfying and effective communication with each other than do those with differing extraverting styles. Thinking types tended to be assertive and competitive in conflict situations, feeling types favoured cooperation and accommodation, and those preferring introversion avoid conflict. Research also indicates a link between leaders' emotional competence and their preferred personality type (Coetzee, Martins, Basson & Muller, 2006; Higgs, 2001). Carmeli, 2003; Kotze, 2004; McMurray, 2003 found that managers' emotional competency and personality attributes have a significant effect on organisational culture and thus employees' intention to withdraw from or stay in the organisation.

While extending the work of Jung, Myers et al (1985) created classifications by combining separate personality types typically such as the "FJs or The "Benevolent Administrators" cluster. All four Feeling Judging (FJ) types i.e. ISFJ, INFJ, ESFJ, ENFJ in this category seek smooth and harmonious relationships with everyone in one's environment through being highly attuned to people's desires and expectations. Characteristically, they are often misjudged as excessively emotional. But in fact, they express important values with the goal of ensuring that those values become actualized in the world that is accompanied by strong affect. They observe people, their needs and are often expressive leaders. They spend their energy to make people happy and bring harmony into relationships. At times they may risk overcommitment to other's welfare, that may prove to be successful when they try to fulfill all important obligations. FJs are generally quite loyal to others who share important values and goals, and people who deviate from these goals may be judged in a negative manner. Including others and being included is an important value that if not met, may lead FJs to experience a sense of failure and hurt feelings. Thus it can be concluded that regulation of affect is a prominent feature exhibited by the 'FJ' cluster.

Affect regulation or Emotion regulation is an automatic or controlled process which may be conscious or unconscious. Grolnick et al (1996, 2005) defined emotional regulation as "the set of processes involved in initiating, maintaining and modulating emotional responsiveness, both positive and negative". Since the FJ cluster has dominant affective under currents it was taken as an

appropriate group to analyse emotional regulation patterns. The present study thus is an attempt to explore whether emotional regulation would vary within the FJ cluster itself depending upon dominance of F or J function, leading to significant implications for personal effectiveness in various domains of human functioning.

Hypotheses

Introverted Feeling Judging Type females would have higher difficulties in Emotional Regulation as compared to Extraverted Feeling Judging Type females.

Intuiting Feeling Judging Type females would have higher difficulties in Emotional Regulation as compared to Sensing Feeling Judging Type females.

Research Design

The sample comprised of 200 undergraduate female participants. (Age ranging 18-21 yrs). Using the scores on MBTI four pure groups of Introverted Feeling Judging (IFJ), Extraverted Feeling Judging (EFJ), Intuitive Feeling Judging (NFJ) and Sensing Feeling Judging (SFJ) were extracted each comprising of 15 female participants based on their scores on MBTI.

Later the sample consisting of these pure groups of personality types were administered the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation scale to assess the emotional regulation difficulties present. t-ratio was calculated to find out differences between the personality groups on emotional regulation difficulties. Myers-Briggs Type Indicator by Myers & Mccaulley (1998) - The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) assessment is a psychometric questionnaire designed to measure psychological preferences in how people perceive the world and make decisions. The current version of the MBTI includes 93 forced-choice questions. It divides people into 16 personality types. Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale by Gratz & Roemer (2004)- The DERS is a brief, 36-item, self-report questionnaire designed to assess multiple aspects of emotion dysregulation. The measure yields a total score as well as scores on six scales derived through factor analysis. Nonacceptance of emotional responses (NONACCEPTANCE), Difficulties engaging in goal directed behavior (GOALS), Impulse control difficulties (IMPULSE), Lack of emotional awareness (AWARENESS), Limited access to emotion regulation strategies (STRATEGIES), Lack of emotional clarity (CLARITY) and Cumulative lower scores indicated effective emotional regulation.

Results

Table 1 - Showing t- score of Introverted Feeling Judging Type females (IFJ) & Extraverted Feeling Judging Type females (EFJ) on Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale:

| | IFJ | EFJ |
|----------|-------|------|
| MEANS | 112.1 | 87.6 |
| t- score | 8.8** | |



Table 2 - Showing t- score of Intuitive Feeling Judging Type females (NFJ) & Sensing Feeling Judging Type Females (SFJ) on Difficulties in Emotional Regulation Scale:

| | NFJ | SFJ |
|----------|--------|------|
| MEANS | 117.5 | 93.9 |
| t- score | 10.8** | |

Discussion

Systematic explorations in the effect of Personality variations among people have revealed a far reaching effect on the cognitive and motivational systems of the individual (Thomas and Chess, 1977, Ehrman,1996; Leaver, 1998 ; Myers et al., 1998 and Busato, et al., 1999).

The present study had aimed at unravelling how personological typifications were the basis for differing emotion regulation strategies in context of identifying personality types more prone to affect regulation difficulties. It was hypothesized that Introverted Feeling Judging Type females would have higher difficulties in Emotional Regulation as compared to Extraverted Feeling Judging Type females. In Table no.1 ,the t- score came out to be 8.8** which was significant at 0.01 level. This shows significant difference between IFJ type young females (i.e. ISFJ and INFJ) as compared to EFJ types young females i.e. ESFJ and ENFJ. These findings are best understood in the context of Yerkes Dodson Law (Yerkes & Dodson, 1908), extraverts have proven to outperform introverts in highly arousing situations because they are less prone to overarousability. Supportive evidence is provided by following Studies: Quenk & Quenk in 1996 found that, ISFJs are overrepresented among females as compared to ESFJs in substance abuse programs, overrepresented among members of a cardiac rehabilitation programs, overrepresented among female coronary heart disease patients and all these problems related to incorrect channelization of emotions Shelton (1996), found ISFJs as the reporting lowest level of assertiveness in college. Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, (1996) ranked ISFJ as second highest on both "Emotional exhaustion" & "Depersonalization". Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, (1988) found ISFJs as third highest in "Negative affectivity" and INFJs as third lowest in "Positive affectivity" among all 16 types. Marioles et al. (1996), found that INFJs were most dissatisfied in marriage/ intimate relationships whereas ENFJs were most satisfied.

The second hypotheses of the study stating that "Intuiting Feeling Judging Type females would have higher difficulties in Emotional Regulation as compared to Sensing Feeling Judging Type females" was tested using t- ratio , the value of which came out to be 10.8** and was significant at 0.01 level(Table no.2).This was indicative of NFJ type females to be suffering from higher affect regulation difficulties as compared to SFJ type females.

The Intuitive function as described by Jung orients a person to acquire and process information without conscious understanding of where the knowledge comes from, thus, distancing the person from reality. Contrarily the Sensation function orients the person to acquire knowledge via the senses thus laying a strong foundation in the real and factual. A host of studies have revealed that when reality based personality functioning occurs affective responses are normal and healthier. Vondran (1989) found that Sensing types obtained higher ratings as eighth graders in expressive writings. Chiang (1991) found that sensing teachers were given higher ratings by gifted learners. Chesborough (1994) found that sensing type students frequently get scholarships as athletes. Shelton (1996) found that sensing types were more likely to give care to their aged parents and balance well in their work & home fronts.

Thus despite common clustering in the FJ cluster, both the functions of Intuition and Sensing lend different colours to emotion regulation capacities (Higgs, 2001; Hirsch, 1985) (Dulewicz & Higgs, 1999). Many managers report using intuition in their decision-making, in spite of the deeply rooted bias against non-rational methods (Rowan, 1986).

Implications and Future Directions

By identifying clusters of Personality Types who are more prone to difficulties in emotional regulation i.e. Introverted Feeling Judging Type (IFJ) and Intuitive Feeling Judging Types (NFJ), special intervention strategies can be designed to help young women belonging to these groups to:

- a. Become aware of their heightened difficulties in emotional regulation styles which are present due to their personality types and
- b. Provide alternative successful emotional regulation strategies to enhance the interpersonal functioning of these young women.

This piece of research is extending the relevance of Myers - Briggs Typology which is based on Jung's analytical theorizing in successful interpersonal functioning. Further research needs to be conducted across gender & various age groups to ascertain the validity of the present findings.

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