



**A STUDY ON BELONGINGNESS, SOCIAL SUPPORT AND
PERSONALITY AMONG YOUNG ADULTS**

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DECLARATION

I declare that the Dissertation entitled: “A study on Belongingness, Social Support and Personality among Young Adults” has been prepared by me under the guidance of Dr. Shruti Shourie, Associate Professor of Department of Psychology, D.A.V. College, Sector 10, Chandigarh, India. No part of this report has formed the basis for the award of any degree or fellowship previously.

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ABSTRACT

A sense of belonging is a desire for humans to identify with another group of people and be accepted by them. The ability to feel welcomed inside a social group is defined as belonging. Social support is the perception and reality that one feels cared for, that one may get help from others and above all, that one is part of a supportive or helpful social circle. Personality refers to a person's permanent features and behavior that compose his or her different adjustment to life, including major traits, interests, desires, beliefs, self-concept, skills, and patterns of emotions. Our personalities are believed to be long-lasting, stable, and difficult to change. The research aimed to study the relationship of personality, belongingness and perceived social support among males and female young adults. Standardized tools were used to measure personality, belongingness, and perceived social support among young adults. A total sample of young adults in the age of 18-25 years from which a total 100 responses i.e., 50 male and 50 female responses were collected. The results found out positive correlation between Acceptance Belongingness and Agreeableness and Social support, but a negative correlation with Neuroticism. Though, positive correlation was found in Rejecting Belonging with Extraversion and Perceived Social Support. However, a negative relationship was seen in Rejecting Belongingness and Neuroticism. Moreover, Conscientiousness is positively associated with Social Support. Further, females were higher in conscientiousness than males. Moreover, no gender differences were found on other variables. Good physical and mental health depend on having a sense of belonging.

Key words: Belongingness, Social support, Personality, Gender differences, Young adults.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

*“If we have no peace, it is because we have
forgotten that we belong to each other.”*

Mother Teresa

Humans have an instinctive need to belong. Without a sense of belonging, it's easy to feel lost. Belongingness is the human emotional need to be accepted by others whether it is family, friends, co-workers. Sense of belonging impacts the emotional, physical, and psychological emotions. A sense of belonging is very important, it gives us a sense of purpose and meaning in life. This may include need to belong to a peer group at school, to be accepted by co-workers, to be part of an athletic team, or to be part of a religious group. Belonging revolves around gaining acceptance, attention and support from the group and giving the same amount of attention to others. Need to belong is the reason behind long-lasting relationships with other people. Belonging makes us feel like part of something bigger than ourselves. It improves mental and physical health. Much research from time to time have shown that reduced feelings of belonging has been associated with stress, depression, and other psychological struggles. Sense of belonging gives us a sense of purpose, and by having or finding a purpose one can lead a meaningful life. Thus, a sense of belonging is a desire that humans must be a part of a community of their choice. It is one of the most basic emotional needs we have as humans which affects our physical and mental health. The need to belong can occur for various reasons in different groups, such as being a member of a religious organization, a peer group in an institution, or a member of any club.

“Our prime purpose in this life is to help others.

And if you can't help them, at least don't hurt them.”

Dalai Lama

The most critical factor in preserving psychological well-being is social support. It entails a network of family and friends with whom you can share your joys and sorrows. We define social support in many different forms like helping someone in daily tasks when they are not able to do it or they are in need, giving advice to a friend or a family member when they are facing bad situations in life, providing care, empathy, concern for people you love. Individuals supported by close relationships, friends, family, and fellow members are mentally strong, sorted and can stay away from premature death consequences. Well-being and social support go hand in hand. People with close personal relationships cope better with various stressors like job loss, rape, and violence. Social support networks include many different groups of people, including partners, friends, family members, co-workers, neighbors, or professionals like counselors. People need other people. It helps us cope with setbacks, solve problems, improve self-esteem, and manage stress. Social support provides you the strength to be more resilient. Supportive relationships help one feel less alone and more connected to near and dear ones. It influences an individual's attitude and behavior towards life in a good way. Social support can be assessed in two ways, structural support and functional support. The level to which a recipient is connected within a social network, such as several social relationships or how integrated a person feels within his or her social circle is referred to as structural support (also known as social integration). Functional support considers the precise functions that members of this social circle may offer, such as the emotional, instrumental, informational and companionship support. Elflein's (2020) survey found that many American women and young adults obtain the social and emotional support they need. 78% of 18-year-old women said they always or usually got the social and emotional support they needed. This implies that most US adult women feel supported by friends, family, and community. 80% of US individuals aged 18–34 said

they always or usually got the social and emotional assistance they needed. This shows that young Americans receive the social and emotional support they need to handle life's obstacles. The poll also shows that not all adults feel supported. Only 52% of US individuals 18 years and older said they always received social and emotional support. This implies that half of US individuals lack social and emotional support. According to the poll, disabled adults feel less supported than non-disabled adults. 79% of persons without disabilities aged 18 and older indicated that they always or usually received social and emotional support, compared to 65.5% of adults with disabilities. This shows that persons with impairments may have more trouble getting social and emotional assistance, which could harm their health. The poll found that while many US citizens feel supported by their social networks, there are still large differences in social and emotional support, particularly for disabled adults.

“Always be yourself, express yourself, have faith in yourself,

do not go out and look for a successful personality and duplicate it.”

Bruce Lee

Different theories explain the structure and evolution of personality in different ways, but all agree that personality influences behavior. Everyone has a distinctive pattern of long-term qualities and a way of interacting with other people and the world around them. Personality refers to the established features and patterns to drive people to think feel and behave in a certain way. Our personality is the unique combination of how we see the world, understand events and act consistently across circumstances. A person's personality separates them from others by articulating distinct patterns of feelings, ideas, and behavior. The word 'personality' comes from a Latin word 'persona' which refers to a theatrical mask used by performers to play roles or conceal their identities. Personality can be affected by genes, parenting styles, life experiences and culture. Personality is described as relatively permanent and long-lasting features that shape our ideas, feelings, and behavior. It can change with age but most probably an individual stops developing by adulthood. It includes behavioral characteristics,

both inherent and acquired. Personality usually refers to the distinctive patterns of behavior (including thoughts and emotions) that are adapted from his or her life situations. The shared behaviors and customs in our society affects our personality. Culture is one of many aspects that play a major role in personality development. Personality can be defined as an individual's consistent psychological tendencies that influence how they interact with people and the events they encounter. Personality is a mirror of what a person does or says. Personality is about what people are typically like, not what they are able to do at their best. Differences between people in their psychological characteristics. The consistent psychological patterns in an individual that affect the way they interact with others, and they deal with situations all are part of personality. Personality is a complex phenomenon, and there are many ways to look at it.

Belongingness

According to Macmillan and Chavis (1986), "the sense of belonging and identification involves the feeling, belief and expectation that one fits in the group and has a place there, a feeling of acceptance by the group, and a willingness to sacrifice for the group."

According to Hagerty et al. (1992), "the experience of personal involvement in a system or environment so that persons feel themselves to be an integral part of the system of environment."

According to Hurtado and Carter (1997) "sense of belonging is the psychological feeling of belonging or connectedness to a social, spatial, cultural, professional, or other type of group or a community.

Winter-Collins and McDaniel (2000); asserts that "shared beliefs or ideals, a supportive environment, self-esteem, and opportunities for interaction can influence the development of a sense of belonging in an individual."

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Five different theoretical models of belongingness:

Identity-Proximity: Understanding one's identity through proximity with the "other"

According to Kohut (1971, 1977) and Kohut et al. (1984), there cannot be a cohesive self without someone else in proximity to mirror oneself in. That is the "other" in the connection provides a platform for one's value to be mirrored, for one to be appreciated reciprocally, and for one to experience a sense of closeness and likeness with the "other". In this sense, the experience of reactions from "the other" is what reinstates and encompasses self-experience, giving birth to the emergence of self-identification in proximity with "the other". Similarly, Baumeister and Leary (1995) argued that the subjective perception of oneself is experienced through one's social interaction, which preserves a certain level of belongingness based on their proximate distance from oneself. Any flaws or failures in one's relationships can endanger one's need to belong, leading to significant emotions of isolation and alienation (Gausel & Leach, 2011), anxiety and depression (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; McDonald & Leary, 2005). What we call "identity-proximity" is thus the concept of one's identity through the need to belong met by affiliation and relationship with the proximal "other".

Emotion Sharing - Reciprocal Connectedness

It is theorized that the need to belong involves the psychological feeling of social connectivity gained through emotion sharing. According to Lee and Robbins (1995), a sense of belonging develops from infancy to maturity through friendship, affiliation, and connectivity. Despite not being able to empirically prove this three-part argument, they convincingly claimed that one's need to belong is increasingly associated with a sense of worth gained through affiliations with other people, and after those relationships outside one's social circle. Their theory is because of the need to belong at these phases is characterized by the ability to reciprocally share feelings and

experience adult connectedness. According to Lee and Robbins (1995), the need to belong is satisfied through emotion-sharing and reciprocal connectivity.

Supportive-Proximity: Emotional Support from Others

Lazarus (1991) proposed that people evaluate stressful situations based on whether they believe that they have the resources to deal with the pressures. One of the most important coping methods for social stressors is to determine whether they have the necessary social resources to manage. As a result, when faced with a stressor, people often seek emotional support from their social relationships. By such appraising stressful circumstances should stimulate one's sense of belonging (or the urge to reach out for the emotional support) beyond significant others to re-appraise the stressor based on the emotional support received from whoever is close enough to provide support. Hill (1987) theorized that one's social affiliation motive can be organized around the want for constant emotional support, as one's desire for belongingness is sensitized depending on personal experiences and clues (Kelly & Barsade, 2001; Pickett et al., 2004). A desire to belong can therefore be understood as a need directed toward emotional support from proximal others.

Similarity of Self and Others: Social Identity

According to Social-Identity theory, how an individual identify with similar persons influences their understanding of who they are (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). According to Turner (1999), self-categorization becomes fully operative as a social identity only when someone is identified with his/her social type. As a result, one's worth is determined by the number of possible social circles to which one belongs. If belongingness is achieved through allocation with a group of similar individuals, one will prioritize one's group just because one is a part of that group. Thus, the need to belong is formed by a cognitive process in which one's self-worth depends on a resemblance of self and others as represented by a membership in a group (Tajfel, 1978, Turner et al., 1987).

Environmental-Satisfaction: Interactions and Experiences

A sense of belonging is connected to the influences of the environment one is interacting with. According to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological framework, human experiences and growth are linked to individual interactions and events of their environment as satisfying or unsatisfying. As a result, belongingness based on "environmental satisfaction" is interconnected to how one focuses or connects oneself to the overall satisfaction of an experience in their environment. This inspires one's need for participation and the effect of one's self-perception of belongingness, since this sensation of emotional connection within a context may end in the experience of rejection if unsatisfactory or belonging if satisfactory (e.g., Lynch, 1976; Relph, 1976; Canter, 1977).

Social Support

Shumaker and Brownwell (1984) defined social support as "an exchange of resources between at least two individuals perceived by the provider or the recipient to be intended to enhance the well-being of the recipient." Social support is a multidimensional construct that includes physical and instrumental assistance, attitude transmission, resources and information sharing and emotional and psychological support (Dunst & Trivette, 1986).

Cobb (1976) defined social support "as information leading the subject to believe that he is cared for and loved, esteemed and valued, and belongs to a network of communication and mutual obligation."

Caplan (1974) addresses the 5 concepts of the support system as "an enduring pattern of continuous or intermittent ties that play a significant part in maintaining the psychological and physical integrity of the individual over time."

According to Lin et al. (1979), social support refers to "support accessible to an individual through social ties to other individuals, groups and the larger community."

Pearlin et al. (1981) state that “social support is the access to and use of individuals, groups, organizations in dealing with life’s vicissitudes.”

According to House et al. (1988) “the emotionally or instrumentally sustaining quality of social relationships, refers to social support.”

According to Cohen et al. (2000) “any process through which social relationships might promote health and well-being.”

Social support can be defined as “the cumulative support provided by family members, friends, professionals, and members of the same social network, has positive effect of life satisfaction, happiness, as well as physical well-being” (Fernandes et al., 2014; Tam & Lim, 2009; Eom et al., 2013; Helgeson, 2003).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The importance of social support in health maintenance and disease etiology has grown (Caplan, 1974; Cobb, 1976; Dean & Lin, 1977; Gottlieb, 1983; Kaplan & Gore, 1977; Sarason & Sarason, 1985). Numerous studies show that persons who have supportive spouses, friends, and family members have better health than those who have fewer supportive social interactions (Mitchel et al., 1982). Although the various correlation results do not alone allow for casual interpretation, these data in combination with findings from animal research, socio-psychological analogue tests, and prospective survey imply that social support is a chance contributor to well-being (House, 1981; Kessler & McLeod, 1985). According to some research, men and women may exhibit different behaviors when it comes to exchanging social support with their peers. When it comes to providing and receiving emotional assistance, women outnumber males. Mostly men rely on female family members because they are less likely to obtain emotional support from male friends and are less likely to have many female friends (Wellman & Wortly, 1989). The focal points of male and female interactions with non-kin also vary. Women’s relationship depends on emotional intimacy, whereas male relationships are more concerned with shared activities, according to Bell (1991) and Outlet al., (1988). This shows that women

may be more likely than men to exchange emotional support. On the other hand, it suggests that men may be more likely than women to exchange instrumental support. According to some research, females are much more likely than males to offer social support in general (House et al., 1988) and women are more likely to seek social support (Thoits, 1995). According to Gallagher's (1994) research, women assist more family members and friends than men do. According to Barbee et al. (1993), women are more likely than men to engage in emotional support exchanges outside of the nuclear family. There has been a lot of interest in determining the part that social support and environment play in maintaining health and understanding the causes of disease over the past 30 years (Cohen, 2004; Uchino, 2004). According to the prospective community studies, people who have more sorts of relationships, such as marriage, close relatives and friends, and neighbors, as well as who are members of social, political, and religious groups, live longer.

According to Southwick et al. (2005), two significant dimensions are specified by theoretical models of social support; (a) A structural dimension, which considers the size of the network and the frequency of social contact, and (b) A functional dimension with emotional components (like receiving affection and empathy) and instrumental components (like practical assistance), although both are significant. According to Stice et al. (2004), it is important to keep in mind that the best social assistance may vary depending on the developmental stage of the recipient. For instance, it appears that parental assistance is more beneficial in early adolescence than it is in late adolescence. Lynch et al. (1999) stated that, it has been demonstrated that social support is related to the degree of social participation in the elderly and with instrumental support in younger adults to stress. There was a mixture of self-esteem support in a sample of survivors of childhood sexual abuse. Additionally, the type of social support appears to matter in promoting resilience (the person perceives that he or she is valued by other people), and appraisal support (the individual perceives that he or she can seek advice when dealing with difficulties) was most helpful in preventing the development of PTSD (Hyman et al., 2003). The provision of empathy, concern, love, trust, acceptance, closeness, encouragement, or care is

referred to as emotional support (Bowsher et al., 1997; Slevin et al., 1996). Giving the person emotional support might help them feel valued. According to Morgan et al. (2000), it is also known as “appraisal support” or “esteem support”. Southwick et al. (1999) concluded that, the concrete, direct ways people help others are included in this category of social support, which is also known as instrumental support. The kind of support that offers one a social integration is companionship support, also called belonging (Charney, 2004). This could be viewed as the presence of companions to engage in shared social activities (Morgan et al., 2004). Researchers frequently distinguish between support that is received and that is perceived (Morgan et al., 2006). The term “perceived support” relates to a recipient’s subjective assessment that providers will provide (or have provided) adequate assistance when necessary. Received support, sometimes referred to as enacted support, describes supporting activities (such as counsel or reassurance) provided by providers during times of need (Lin et al., 1979).

Personality

According to Allport (1961) “personality is the dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his characteristics, behavior and thought.”

According to Weinberg and Gould (1999), “the characteristics or blend of characteristics that make a person unique.”

According to Cattell (1950), “personality is that which permits a prediction of what a person will do in a given situation.”

Watson (1930) defined personality is “the sum of activities that can be discovered by actual observations over a long enough period of time to give reliable information.”

Personality refers to a general style of interacting with the world, especially with other people whether one is withdrawn or outgoing, excitable or placid, conscientious or careless, kind or stern. A basic assumption of the personality concept is that people do

differ from one another in their style of behavior, in ways that are at least relatively consistent across time and place (Ferguson, 2000).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Eysenck's Theory of Personality

Based on research and component analysis, Eysenck (1947, 1960, 1963 and 1967) proposed a dimensional system of personality that posits three main independent dimensions: extraversion/introversion (E/I), neuroticism/stability (N), and psychoticism (P). The model is hierarchical, conceptualizing that each of the three broad dimensions is further differentiated into more specialized features at a lower level. Extraversion, according to Eysenck and Eysenck (1985), is the term used to describe a person's extroverted, unrestrained, impulsive, and social tendencies.

Extravert: The typical extravert is gregarious, enjoys social gatherings, has plenty of friends, needs interaction with others, and dislikes reading or studying alone. The individual seeks for adventure, takes chances, frequently puts himself in danger, acts quickly, and is generally impulsive. They enjoy playing practical jokes, is usually prepared with an answer, and is typically amusing and joyous. In general, the feelings are not kept under tight control, tends to be aggressive, and loses their anger easily. The typical introvert is a quiet, retiring type of person who prefers solitude, introspection, and books over people. They are reserved and distant from others, save for close friends, and tends to plan and think things through before acting whereas a typical introvert dislikes excitement, takes daily affairs seriously, and appreciates a well-ordered way of life. They rarely exhibit violent behavior and maintains tight emotional control. They do not get angry quickly, are dependable, somewhat cynical, and highly values morality (Eysenck, 1967).

Neuroticism: A general emotional over reactivity, emotional vulnerability, and vulnerability to neurotic breakdown under stress are all terms used to describe neuroticism. When compared to emotional stability, neuroticism is quite comparable to anxiety. Neuroticism is intimately related to the genetic level of autonomic nerve

system liability (Eysenck, 1967). An individual with a high neuroticism score is likely to be uptight, illogical, bashful, moody, overly responsive, nervous, worrisome, guilty, and depressed. They have a tendency to respond to stimuli too strongly and struggles to regain composure after emotionally charged events. Their erratic behavior is a result of their intense emotional reactions, which prevent him from adjusting appropriately (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975). These people usually express vague somatic complaints of a minor nature, including headaches, digestive issues, insomnia, backaches, etc., as well as a great deal of fears, anxieties, and other unpleasant emotional sentiments. These people should not be confused with sufferers of true neurotic breakdown. Despite performing well in the areas of job, sex, family, and social interaction, a person can have high neuroticism ratings.

Psychoticism: The term psychoticism refers to an underlying personality feature that, if it is present to a notable degree, predisposes a person to the emergence of mental abnormalities. Psychoticism is a trait that is present in variable degrees in all people. Psychoticism has several sub-traits, including being aggressive, chilly, eccentric, impersonal, impulsive, antisocial, unempathetic, innovative, and tough-minded.

The Lie (Social Desirability) Scale, which was first included in the Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI) to assure a predisposition on the side of respondents to fabricate “good” responses, is also included in the Revised Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ-R). Now it assesses a stable independent component that may indicate a degree of social naivete (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975).

A personality trait is not a single, distinct behavior but rather a series of linked, carried-over behaviors that demonstrate the continuation of these patterns from situation to situation (Funder, 1991). These behaviors could be one or many behaviors, causes, cognitions, needs, or a combination of all of them. It takes a lot of intricacy and dynamic to understand someone’s personality. Every person possesses something unique about themselves, and it offers wonderful insight into people and their life. This can be seen in the interactions between people and their environment as well as their relationships to their social group because of a confluence of inborn dispositions and

inclinations, influences, and experiences in the environment. Personality is most obviously expressed in interpersonal relationships when it follows emotions, feelings, and values. In essence, personality is what distinguishes everyone by combining their actions, feelings, motivations, and thought patterns to establish who they are as a person. This forces people to think, feel, and act consistently in certain ways. A person's unique character is made up of a variety of traits and characteristics. One can also refer to a person's personality as the distinctive sets of behaviors, thoughts, and emotional patterns that result from biological and environmental causes (Corr et al., 2009). Personality is defined differently by various psychologists. One widely accepted complete idea is described by Allport (1937) as follows, "personality is the dynamic arrangement inside the individual of those psychological systems that define his particular adaption to his environment." The identification of personality concepts in the lexical language marked the beginning of early personality research, which concentrated mostly on description and interpretation. Later, attention turned to topics that were more practically applicable, like personality assessment and behavior prediction. Psychologists who study personality concur that it should be feasible to quantify individual differences in behavior or specific emotional or mental patterns (which are traits indicators). The most common method of determining personality is through assessing how people self-report their attributes; researchers have discovered hundreds of features in this way (University of Minnesota, 2015). Extraversion, introversion, and psychoticism are a few of these traits. The Big Five traits (openness to experience, agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion, and neuroticism) have also been recognized as trait models, as well as the HEXACO model of personality. Ashton et al. (2000) conducted a study to reevaluate the degree of complexity of the English personality lexicon. Their research comprised lexical assessments of the many language-based personality structures. The results of their research led to the creation of a personality model that was subsequently labelled as the HEXACO model (Ashton et al., 2000; Ashton & Lee, 2007). The six-dimensional HEXACO human personality model contains agreeableness (A), conscientiousness (C), extraversion (X), emotionality (E), honesty-humility (H), and openness to experience (O). Each

component has a set of characteristics, with high and low levels of each characteristic represented by a feature.

Recent research by Abbasi et al. (2020) emphasized that HEXACO-PI-R was more accurate at anticipating individual personality differences than other personality models. Extraversion, consciousness, and openness to experience are the three characteristics that HEXACO-PI-R model shares with the Big Five model (Ashton & Lee, 2007). Nevertheless, the HEXACO-PI-R model, one of the most widely used models today, adds a new component, namely honesty-humility. Every person has a unique identity with unique thoughts, traits, emotions, and behavior. In fact, it has been discovered by a lot of people that each person exhibits a variety of characteristics, including shyness, anxiety, passion, caution, politeness or impoliteness and quietness. This case shows that in social interactions, personality is the most important factor. Therefore, character traits and attitudes that are reflected in behavior and action are personality characteristics. Rehman (2013) asserts that personality affects how people engage with others and a range of significant characteristics. The combination of several characteristics makes up human personality. Being sociable is essential for humans, for example, in terms of how they act and communicate in social situations. Contrarily, McCrae & Costa claimed that personality traits are frequently described as enduring dimensions of individual differences in tendencies to exhibit dependable patterns of thoughts, emotions, and actions. As opposed to states or moods, which are more fleeting, traits represent relatively enduring dispositions (Costa & Widiger, 2002)

Furthermore, according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) of the American Psychiatric Association personality traits are important aspects of personality that are displayed in a variety of significant social and private situations. In other words, people have traits that contribute to how they behave; these traits are tendencies in behavior or attitude that are typically prevalent in any circumstance. All individuals have a few universal characteristics or default modes of behavior, which are known as personality traits. People can be social or reclusive, passive, or

aggressive and optimistic or pessimistic. It implies that one's daily habits of behavior, characteristic, thought and feeling can be interpreted as personality traits.

In the 1980s, the Big Five Trait theory was accepted by all trait researchers as the best way to characterize an individual's traits. In the beginning, Goldberg first proposed it in 1981. Furthermore, Allport (1937) and Cattell (1945) are core intellectuals. Additionally, Costa and McCrae (2008) are spearhead of the theory. The Five Factor Model (FFM), which is a thorough taxonomy of personality traits based on McCrae's notion from 2002, is a tendency to demonstrate regular patterns of thoughts, feelings and behaviors. In a wide range of cultures, this model seems to adequately represent personality structure. The "Big Five" personality traits, commonly referred to as a "five factor model" (FFM), are a group of five major trait dimensions or domains that are used to define a person's personality features. They are Neuroticism, Agreeability, Extraversion, Conscientiousness, and Openness to Experience. Costa and McCrae's five variables, sometimes known as the Big Five personality traits, are frequently referred as using the acronym OCEAN. This theory is set up to define the personality qualities that an individual manifests in his or her daily life, rather than to categorize people into one type.

The ongoing chapter has tried to look at study variables in light of their theoretical framework. This helps the investigator to focus on relevant research conducted in this area.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The present chapter will attempt to look at relevant research carried out on Belongingness, Social support and Personality in order to highlight the research gaps and frame objective of the present study.

Belongingness

DeWall et al. (2011) found that for relationship to be successful and lasting, people need them fundamentally. The emergence of features that help people become accepted and prevent rejection can be traced back to this drive to belong, which has deep evolutionary roots. Social exclusion should have an impact on variety of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral outcomes as well as personality expression because belongingness is a crucial element of human functioning. The latest evidence that social exclusion results in a variety of outcomes many of which depend on the excluded person's ability to find acceptance or avert potential distress is summarized here. It features normal cross-over in physical and social torment frameworks and how an actual pain reliever can lessen the aggravation of social prohibition. At long last, it shows how social rejection directs the impacts of characteristics on insight, feeling and conduct. To see the value in character processes in friendly settings, researchers ought to consider how individuals answer social prohibition and what the need to have a place means for character articulation.

Swee (2020) did an investigation that inability to belong is a known indicator of suicidal ideation. An emerging notion contends that the influence of risk variables such as poor emotion regulation on suicidal ideation may be significantly mediated by a sense of belonging. This investigation looked at whether the relationship between young people's (16-25 years) suicidal ideation and emotion control was mediated by feelings of belonging. Measures of these categories, including the internal-functional, internal-dysfunctional, external-functional, and external-dysfunctional emotion

regulation domains, were completed by participants. Among three emotion regulation domains, belongingness mediated almost half of the association with suicidal ideation. According to the results, low belongingness is a significant precursor to suicidal ideation in young people, and emotional regulation methods and belongingness are related. These findings are consistent with existing theories about the causes of suicidality.

Renström et al. (2021) did an investigation on participation in protests has becoming more widespread as institutionalized means of political engagement continue to decrease. Younger people exhibit these trends the strongest. According to prior research, social factors can help to explain political protest involvement, and younger citizens engagement in protests is more influenced by social relationships than that of older citizens. Although the desire for social connectedness is a basic human need, there are variances between individuals in this need. The current study's objective is to determine whether differences at the individual-level in belongingness requirements can help to explain some of the higher level of protest participation among younger individuals. The study especially examines whether younger people's participation, as opposed to that of older people, is influenced by a desire to belong (NTB). According to the hypothesis, findings from a survey study of a representative sample of the Swedish population show that only younger people's participation is predicted by individual-level belongingness needs; higher the NTB among young people, the higher the tendency to protest, while this effect is absent among older people. For our understanding of protest activity participation and young mobilization, these findings have significant ramifications.

Arsilan (2021) did a study which aims to investigate whether college belonging and social support influence the relationship between childhood psychological abuse and young adults spiritual well-being. The age range of the 493 college-age young adults in the current study's sample was 18 to 39 years, with 33% of the male. The findings demonstrated that psychological abuse had an indirect impact on spiritual wellness through social support and college belonging in addition to a direct impact on spiritual

wellbeing. In-depth knowledge of the relationship between psychological abuse and spiritual wellness among Turkish college students is provided by these findings, which have significant implications for both research and practice.

In a study, a hypothesized model predicting the links between career decision-making challenges and perceived belongingness-more especially, peer and family belongingness was examined. Measures of belongingness, psychological discomfort, academic motivation, and trouble making career decisions were completed by 436 undergraduate participants. According to the researchers' hypotheses, academic motivation and psychological discomfort would act as a mediating factor between belongingness to one's family and peers and difficulty in making profession decisions. The hypothesized model was mostly supported by fit indices, however differing results were found for peer and family belongingness. While peer belonging was not significantly correlated with any variable in the proposed model, family belongingness was significantly related to problems in making career decisions (Slaten & Baskin, 2014)

Rashid et al. (2016) investigated the associations between loneliness, perceived social support, a sense of not belonging, and burdensomeness and suicide among Iranian university students. 315 Iranian university students who were enrolled in 2015-2016 academic year were included in the study's participant pool. Cross-sectional and correlational research methods were used. Interpersonal Needs Questionnaire (INQ), Suicidal Behavior Questionnaire-Revised (SBQ-R), Revised UCLA Loneliness Scale (UCLA), and Perceived Social Support Questionnaire (PSSQ) were used to collect data. Pearson's correlation and stepwise regression were used to analyze the data. The results showed that while the males scored higher on the burdensomeness and thwarted belongingness criteria, the girls had higher levels of loneliness and perceived social support than their male counterparts. Additionally, even though there was no statistically significant link between marital status and suicide, single people demonstrated greater hardship, whereas married people experienced greater levels of loneliness and perceived social support.

In a study by Ploskonka and Servaty-Seib (2015) investigated the associations between suicidal ideation and three distinct domains of belongingness (i.e., family, peers and academic institution). During the Spring 2013 semester, a sample of undergraduate students was chosen from a sizable university in the Midwest. To determine if the three distinct domains of belongingness - family, peers and academic institution – significantly contributed to explaining variation in suicidal thoughts, multiple regression analysis was used. The three categories of belongingness were shown to be responsible for 9.4% of the variance in suicidal thoughts. The only area of belongingness that significantly, singularly, and adversely contributed to suicidal ideation was family belongingness. The degree to which students identify with their families appears to be significantly correlated with the expression of suicidal ideation.

Social Support

The current cross-sectional study aimed to investigate the moderating effects of social support and belongingness in this correlation among college students as well as the mediating function of psychological distress in the relationship between childhood psychological abuse and substance use. There were 382 emerging adults in the sample for this cross-sectional study. The participants ages ranged from 20 to 29 years, with 56.8% of the participants being female and 43.2% male. The study's findings initially revealed that psychological abuse was a major predictor of social support, belongingness, psychological distress, and substance use. Later findings showed that psychological distress acted as a mediator in the relationship between psychological abuse and drug use among college students. Additionally, social support and a sense of belongingness had a calming effect on this association. According to the research, psychological abuse is a substantial risk factor for the emergence of substance use behaviors, while social support systems and a sense of belonging might operate as protective factors. Based on these findings, prevention and intervention programmes aimed at enhancing social support and a sense of belonging may help psychologically abused emerging adults take drugs less frequently (Arslan, 2022)

Stewart (1989) did an investigation in attribution, coping, equity, loneliness and social comparison theories have not been acknowledged for their valuable predictions and interpretations of social support. The use of attribution theory can help explain why people give money, the ways in which people seek and aid, and the unfavorable outcomes of such efforts. Coping theory adds a cognitive dimension to support, takes support costs into account, and shows how social support and coping interact during the stress process. The reciprocal nature of social assistance and responses to support from the perspectives of the giver and receiver are explained by equity theory. The importance of social connections is attested by loneliness theory, which also highlights the emotive component of support. When the donor is a peer, the social comparison theory is useful in assessing the beneficial and detrimental impacts of support. Through their unique interpretations of the concepts of “appraisal” and “helping”, these five theories also advance theoretical understanding of social support. It is possible to identify relevance to the evaluation and practice of health professionals.

Bovier et al. (2004) did a study in determining quality of life and mental health. Although population-level psychiatric morbidity has been the subject of substantial research, little is known about how perceived stress, social support and internal resources affect health. 2000 university students were randomly chosen for the survey. The Duke-UNC Functional Support Questionnaire was used to assess social support, the Brief Encounter Psychosocial Instrument was used to assess perceived stress, and a condensed version of the Pearlin Coping Questionnaire was used to assess internal resources (mastery and self-esteem). Based on the results of the SF-12 health survey, linear regression models were employed to investigate the associations between these characteristics and mental health. In a bivariate analysis, mental health was found to be positively correlated with internal resources and social support, but negatively correlated with stress. Internal resources were found to have a positive correlation with mental health in multiple regression analysis and to be a protective factor against the damaging effects of stress. Stress and internal resources had mediating roles in the beneficial effects of social support on mental health. The

findings indicate that mastery and self-esteem are significant protective variables for young people mental health and that perceived stress is an important risk factor for poor mental health.

Winefield et al. (1992) investigated by using the Multi-Dimensional Support Scale, a sizable sample of community-dwelling people provided their opinions on the frequency and appropriateness of emotional, practical and informational support received over the course of the previous month from three sources: confidants, peers and supervisors. The five scales that were produced after factor analysis, which was used to separate meaningful regularities in item responses, have a high level of internal reliability. According to the General Health Questionnaire, scores substantially linked with indicators of psychological disturbance, depressed affect, and self-esteem. Hierarchical regression analyses were conducted with stressors entered first and support scores entered second to see what impact support measures would have on the prediction of psychological well-being. Although the amount of life stress of respondents and their psychological well-being were connected, as was expected, the addition of social support measures increased the explained variation in psychological well-being measures by a factor of two. The frequency of supportive actions taken by close family and friends towards the responder was the support factor that had the strongest correlation with well-being.

Adamczyk (2016) studied that in the areas of emotional (romantic and family) and social loneliness as well as perceived social support from family, friends and significant others, this study investigated potential differences between single people and people in nonmarital romantic partnerships. Based on a sample of 315 Polish University students aged 19-25, it was shown that being single was associated with larger levels of romantic and familial loneliness as well as lower perceptions of social support from close friends and family. Compared to men, women reported a lower level of social isolation and a higher level of perceived social support. Gender and relationship status interacted to determine how much support from friends and loved ones was perceived. Finally, it was discovered that the length of time a person has

been alone, and the support of important people are predictors of the romantic loneliness of single young adults. The association between the length of being single and romantic loneliness was also shown to be moderated by perceived social support from family and close friends. Particularly, substantial family support and somewhat high support from close friends and family members lessened the detrimental effects of long-term romantic loneliness.

Chou (1999) studied among Hong Kong Chinese young adults between the ages of 16 to 19 years old, the relationships between social support and three indicators of subjective well-being, depressive symptomatology, negative affect and positive affect were examined. Positive affect was found to have significant bivariate associations with all aspects of social support, except for social network composition, including social network size, social contact frequency, contentment with social support, instrumental support and assisting others. Relationship satisfaction and helping other characteristics were inversely connected to depression symptoms and negative affect. The results of several regression analyses showed that positive affect was positively correlated with the number of close friends one felt close to and that satisfaction with connections with family and friends was consistently associated with all measures of subjective well-being.

Personality

Karl et al. (2021) conducted a study to understand the relationship of personality, reinforcement sensitivity (including behavioral inhibition system and behavioral approach system) and mindfulness. A sample of 227 undergraduate students was collected and they were studied for 8 months using random-intercept cross-lagged panel. The results showed that mindfulness showed stronger longitudinal effects on personality moreover, negative relationship was observed between reinforced sensitivity and mindfulness facts. The study also showed a positive relationship among non-judging mindfulness facets and in conscientiousness. Similarly, higher levels of describing mindfulness led to rise in neuroticism.

Isik and Uzbe (2015) did an investigation on 335 adults (190 females and 145 males) to examine the impact of positive and negative effects and personality on meaning in life. Various standardized tools were used such as, Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ), Positive and Negative Schedule (PANAS), and Adjective-Based Personality Scale (ABPT). The research used various statistical analysis tools like one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), Pearson product moment correlation and hierarchical multiple regression analysis. Finding revealed that search for meaning in life was higher in young adults as compared to the middle-aged adults and older adults. Further, openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and positive affect were significantly correlated to presence and search for meaning in life. However, a negative correlation was observed between presence of meaning and negative affect and neuroticism. In addition, results of multiple regression analysis suggested that search for meaning in life was predicted by extraversion and negative affect whereas, presence of meaning in life was significantly predicted by positive affect, openness to experiences and neuroticism.

Ni et al. (2021) did a study to better understand how young adults' life happiness is influenced by their personality and home environment. The Family Environment Scale Chinese Version (FES-CV-SV), the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ), and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) were all completed by 1749 Chinese young adults in the study. According to the survey's findings, family harmony and conflict have a positive and negative impact on life satisfaction. Through the two personality traits of extraversion and neuroticism, family cohesion and conflict significantly influenced life happiness in an indirect manner. To increase young people's life satisfaction and happiness, it is therefore possible to improve the family structure and the dynamics among family members.

Steptoe et al. (1994) using data from the European Health and Behavior Survey, which included 809 men and 996 women aged 18 to 30 from England, Belgium, Finland, and Norway, it was possible to examine the association between a healthy lifestyle and personality and attitudinal factors. The performance of sixteen behaviors,

such as smoking, drinking, exercising, getting enough sleep, and a variety of nutritional and preventive practices, was used to create a health practices index than men did, although the index was normally distributed for both sexes. Positive correlations between consistently healthy behaviors and extraversion, optimism, and neuroticism and negative correlations between consistently healthy behaviors and psychoticism, neuroticism, and belief in chance locus of control. Even after accounting for social desirability, these effects persisted, although they collectively only contributed a small percentage of the variance in the health practices index. The findings are presented in relation to the traits of good and unhealthy lifestyles.

Neyer and Asendorpf (2001) conducted a study of a sample of 489 German young adults drawn from the general community, personality and social interactions were evaluated twice over a period of four years. There were found to be two distinct personality-relationship transactions. First, although the transition to partnership modulated the mean-level change in personality towards maturity (e.g., increasing conscientiousness and decreasing neuroticism), it was independent of other developmental changes. Second, individual differences in personality traits were a significantly stronger predictor of social interactions than the other way around. After controlling for the initial correlations, Extraversion, Shyness, Neuroticism, self-esteem, and Agreeableness predicted changes in a variety of relationship characteristics (especially with friends and coworkers), whereas only the quality of relationships with preschool children predicted later Extraversion and Neuroticism. In young adulthood, implications for the transactional view of personality are examined.

The ongoing chapter has tried to look at study variables in light of their relevant review of literature. This helps the investigator to focus on several studies conducted in this area, during past years.

CHAPTER 3

OVERVIEW, AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES

Overview

- Humans have an instinctive need to belong. A sense of belonging is very important, it gives us a sense of purpose and meaning in life. This may include daily basis routine i.e., need to belong to a peer group at school, to be accepted by co-workers, to be part of an athletic team, or to be part of a religious group. It's helpful for good physical and mental state. Many research from time to time have shown that loss of belonging has been associated with stress, depression and many more psychological struggles.
- The most critical factor in preserving psychological well-being is social support. Individuals supported by close relationships, friends, family, and fellow members are mentally strong, sorted and can stay away from premature death consequences. Well-being and social support go hand in hand. Social support provides you the strength to be more resilient. Functional support considers the precise functions that members of this social circle may offer, such as the emotional, instrumental, informational and companionship support.
- Different theories explain the structure and evolution of personality in different ways, but all agree that personality influences behaviour. It can change with age but most probably an individual stops developing by adulthood. It includes behavioural characteristics, both inherent and acquired. Culture is one of many aspects that play a major role in personality development. Differences between people in their psychological characteristics. The consistent psychological patterns in an individual that affect the way they interact with others, and they deal with situations all are part of personality.
- The importance of social support in health maintenance and disease etiology has grown (Caplan, 1974; Cobb, 1976; Dean & Lin, 1977; Gottlieb, 1983; Kaplan &

Gore, 1977; Sarason & Sarason, 1985). The focal points of male and female interactions with non-kin also vary. Social assistance may vary depending on the developmental stage of the recipient, women are more likely than men to engage in emotional support exchanges outside of the nuclear family.

- Additionally, the type of social support appears to matter in promoting resilience (the person perceives that he or she is valued by other people), and appraisal support (the individual perceives that he or she is able to seek advice when dealing with difficulties) was most helpful in preventing the development of PTSD. Giving the person emotional support might help them feel valued.
- A personality trait is not a single, distinct behaviour but rather a series of linked, carried-over behaviours that demonstrate the continuation of these patterns from situation to situation (Funder, 1991). Every person has a unique identity with unique thoughts, traits, emotions and behavior.
- The Big Five traits (openness to experience, agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion, and neuroticism) have also been recognized as trait models, as well as the HEXACO model of personality. The Five Factor Model (FFM), which is a thorough taxonomy of personality traits based on McCrae's notion from 2002, is a tendency to demonstrate regular patterns of thoughts, feelings and behaviour's. This theory is set up to define the personality qualities that an individual manifests in his or her daily life, rather than to categorize people into one type.
- To see the value in character processes in friendly settings, researchers ought to consider how individuals answer social prohibition and what the need to have a place means for character articulation. An emerging notion contends that the influence of risk variables such poor emotion regulation on suicidal ideation may be significantly mediated by a sense of belonging. For our understanding of protest activity participation and young mobilization, these findings have significant ramifications. In order to determine if the three distinct domains of belongingness -

family, peers and academic institution – significantly contributed to explaining variation in suicidal thoughts, multiple regression analysis was used.

- The study's findings initially revealed that psychological abuse was a major predictor of social support, belongingness, psychological distress and substance use. According to the research, psychological abuse is a substantial risk factor for the emergence of substance use behaviours, while social support systems and a sense of belonging might operate as protective factors. Although the amount of life stress of respondents and their psychological well-being were connected, as was expected, the addition of social support measures increased the explained variation in psychological well-being measures by a factor of two.
- Adamczyk (2016) studied that in the areas of emotional (romantic and family) and social loneliness as well as perceived social support from family, friends and significant others, this study looked into potential differences between single people and people in nonmarital romantic partnerships.
- Karl et al. (2021) conducted a study to understand the relationship of personality, reinforcement sensitivity (including behavioural inhibition system and behavioral approach system) and mindfulness. The results showed that mindfulness showed stronger longitudinal effects on personality moreover, negative relationship was observed between reinforced sensitivity and mindfulness facts. Isik and Uzbe (2015) did an investigation on 335 adults (190 females and 145 males) to examine the impact of positive and negative effects and personality on meaning in life.
- To increase young people's life satisfaction and happiness, it is therefore possible to improve the family structure and the dynamics among family members. According to research, personality traits like high levels of neuroticism, perfectionism, and impulsivity as well as self-esteem have a role in mediating how easily culturally impossible goals are internalized.

Research Gaps

Research gaps in this area were highlighted by review of literature. Belongingness as compared to Social Support and Personality is less researched. Belongingness among young adults has the subject of very few studies. Very few studies have been done to study gender differences on study variables. The investigation is also fascinated with the powerful impact of belongingness and social support on every aspect of young adults. Keeping the above in mind, the primary goal of the investigation is to study belongingness, social support, and personality among young adults. Through this investigation, we will try to bridge this gap.

Aim

The present investigation aims to study belongingness, social support and personality among male and female young adults.

Need of study

Young adulthood is a critical period of life when one has burden of many other responsibilities. It is the time when one concentrates on finding the best pathways for future. Young adulthood bridges the gap between adolescence and independent adulthood. It is also a time of social and cultural transitions.

It is also essential to examine the reason for studying belongingness because belongingness significantly impacts students' well-being, achievement behavior, and mental health. Also, to improve clarity for practice, belonging researchers must reach greater consensus on vocabulary, metrics and definitions. Most of the past conclusions regarding belongingness remain the same. People require a feeling of identity. Belongingness is also important to be studied as protective element that aids in controlling stress and other behavioral problems. Humans require a sense of belonging to participate in and feel accepted by a group of people. This feeling, which suggests that a person's desire to die because of failure reflects a hunger for belongingness, is explained by the sense of belonging theory. Being able to have a

sense of belonging helps people deal with a variety of concerns, including physical and mental health problems.

In conversations on relationships, the term “social support” frequently emerges. To provide one a wider focus and a good self-image, social support refers to having friends and other people – including family – to turn to, in times of need or disaster. Social assistance improves quality of life and acts as a safeguard against unfavorable life circumstances.

Social support, whether it comes from a reputable organization or a close friend, has been shown to minimize the negative psychological and physical impacts of stress and may even boost immune function. Whether they are institutional (like a church or social club) or informal (like hanging out with friends), social networks offer a sense of community, security, and belonging.

It is now well acknowledged that social support can genuinely save lives. People who have close relationships with friends, family, coworkers, and other supports are less likely to get sick or die before time. People with leukemia or heart disease have improved survival rates if they have supportive social networks. Indicators of well-being and social support are tightly linked. People who have close relationships are better able to cope with difficulties such as illness, job loss, rape, and grieving.

However, now we examine the reason to study personality. One of the most widely theorized and studied areas of psychology is personality. Personality theories aim to understand both factors that make up one’s personalities as well as how they change over time and affect one’s lives. A difference in a person’s personality can be seen as a first symptom of many mental illness as if someone is suffering from stress related symptom can become very quiet. Personality helps the people to light up the person’s psychological qualities. Also, it can specify the individuality of a person. It includes values, self-concept, abilities, and emotional patterns. Through Personality, one acknowledges the person’s distinctive patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving.

There are not as many combined studies on these three variables i.e., Belongingness, Social support and Personality in the world of research. So, to bridge the research gap, need to study three of them is important. One has to understand the relationship between belongingness, social support and personality and also how they correlate with each other. Researches on social support and personality come across many times, but there were very few that one can found on belongingness with social support and belongingness with personality. So, through the present study, these three variables and their inter-correlations are being studied.

Research Questions

- Is there a relationship between belongingness and perceived social support?
- Is there a relationship between belongingness and personality?
- Is there a relationship between perceived social support and personality?
- Are there any gender differences on belongingness, perceived social support and personality?

Research Objective

- This research aims to assess the relationship between belongingness and personality.
- This research aims to assess the relationship between belongingness and perceived social support.
- This research aims to assess the relationship between perceived social support and personality.
- This study seeks to examine the gender differences on belongingness, perceived social support and personality.

Hypotheses

1. Belonginess is expected to be correlated with perceived Social Support.
 - 1.1 Acceptance belongingness is expected to be positively related to social support.
 - 1.2 Rejection belongingness is expected to be negatively related to social support.
2. Belongingness (Acceptance belongingness & Rejection belongingness) is expected to be related to personality dimensions (OCEAN).
3. Perceived social support is expected to be related to Personality (OCEAN).
4. No gender differences are expected on Belongingness (acceptance belongingness & rejection belongingness), perceived social support and personality dimensions (OCEAN).

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

This chapter clarifies the research methodology to answer the hypotheses to acquire systematic information. The aim of the present investigation was to study belongingness, social support, and personality. The study also explored gender differences among young adults. For this purpose, 50 males and 50 females in the age of 18-25 years were selected for the study.

Research Design

For the present study, a quantitative approach was used. Researchers use the quantitative research method when the purpose of the research is to obtain primary data, that is, data gathered and assembled particularly for the study, in contrast to secondary data. The present study follows the quantitative research design intended to examine the correlation among the variables used in the study.

Sample

Data was collected from a total sample of 100 young adults (50 females & 50 males) in the age of 18-25 years. The data was collected from the Tricity (Chandigarh, Mohali & Panchkula).

Inclusion Criteria

- The age of the respondents was 18 – 25years.
- Only respondents who gave consent were considered.
- Both males and females were included.
- Only respondents from urban area were included.

Exclusion Criteria:

- Those suffering from any psychopathology or undergoing treatment for psychological problems were excluded from the sample.
- Those suffering from any other chronic illness were excluded.
- Those exhibiting any physical deformity were excluded.
- Those residing in rural areas were not selected.
- Illiterate or those having studied less than 10th standard were not included in the sample.

Ethical Considerations

The following ethical guidelines were put into place for the research period.

- Confidentiality of the responses and identity was assured.
- Participants were briefed about the purpose of the study.
- Informed consent was obtained.
- The dignity and well-being of the respondent was protected all the time.

Tests and Tools

The following standardized test and tools were used:

- The General Belongingness Scale (GBS) (Malone et al., 2012)
- Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) (Zimet et al., 1998)
- A Brief Version of the Big Five Personality Inventory (BFI-10) (Rammstedt & John, 2007)

All the tests used were standardized and had established reliability and validity. The scales administered were available in English. A semi-structured interview schedule was also administered to the participants to seek detailed information about their critical social and demographic aspects such as name, age, gender, city, educational qualification, contact details.

Brief Description of the Tests and Tools Used

The following standardized tests and tools were used:

The General Belongingness Scale (GBS): The scale was developed by Malone et al. (2012). It has 12 items and 2 subdimensions i.e. Acceptance and Rejection. The responses are given on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 - Strongly disagree to 7 - Strongly agree. It includes questions such as (I feel accepted by others, I have a sense of belonging, I feel like an outsider). From total 12 item scale items 1, 2, 5, 8, 10, 11 are included in acceptance/inclusion belongingness and add directly scored according to 7-point Likert scale. On the other hand, items 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 12 are included in rejection/exclusion belongingness, so they are reverse scored and then add them according to 7-point Likert scale.

The published scale is the first to document that achieved belongingness is distinct from the need to belong, and to show strong associations between belongingness and the Big Five personality traits of Neuroticism ($r = -.51$) and Extraversion ($r = .46$).

Following instructions were given for The General Belongingness Scale (GBS):

“There is no right or wrong answer, as we want to know your opinion. Your results will be kept confidential. Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.”

Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS): The scale was developed by Zimet et al. (1988), and it has 12 items. The responses are given on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (very strongly disagree) to 7 (very strongly agree). It

includes questions such as (There is a special person in my life who cares about my feelings, who is around when I'm in need, with whom I can share joys and sorrows). In scoring first sum of all 12 items according to 7-point Likert scale and then divided by 12.

Cronbach's coefficient alpha, a measure of internal reliability, was obtained for the scale as well as for each subscale. For the Significant Others, Family and Friends subscales, the values were .91, .87 and .85, respectively. The reliability of the total scale was .88. These values indicate good internal consistency for the scale as a whole and for the three subscales. Sixty-nine of the 275 subjects were retested 2 to 3 months after initially completing the questionnaire. The test-retest reliability for the Significant Other, Family and Friends subscales were .72, .85 and .75, respectively. For the whole scale, the value obtained was .85. In effect, the MSPSS demonstrated good internal reliability and adequate stability over the period indicated.

One of the hypotheses underlying the development of this instrument was that perceived social support would be negatively related to reported anxiety and depression symptoms. Support for this prediction was demonstrated by correlations between the MSPSS subscales and the Depression and Anxiety subscales of the HSCL. Perceived support from Family was significantly inversely related to both depressions, ($r = -.24, p < .01$), and anxiety, ($r = -.18, p < .01$). Perceived support from Friends was related to depression symptoms, ($r = -.24, p < .01$), but not to anxiety. The Significant Other subscale was minimally but significantly negatively related to depression, $r = -.13, p < .05$, as was the scale, ($r = -.25, p < .01$).

Following instructions were given for Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS):

"We are interested in how you feel about the following statements. Read each statement carefully. Indicate how you feel about each statement. There is no right or wrong answer, as we want to know your opinion. Below is a list of statements dealing

with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.”

A Brief Version of the Big Five Personality Inventory (BFI-10): The Questionnaire was developed by Rammstedt and John (2007). The scale has 10 items and 5 subdimensions i.e., Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, Openness to Experience. The responses are given on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Disagree strongly) to 5 (Agree strongly). The scoring for some items were reversed. It includes questions such as (I see myself as someone who is reserved, is generally trusting, gets nervous easily). In scoring out of 10 items, 1 & 6 are under extraversion and 1 is reverse-scored; moving ahead, 2 & 7 are under agreeableness and 7 is reverse-scored, next 3 & 8 are under conscientiousness and 3 is reverse-scored, then 4 & 9 are under neuroticism and 4 is reverse-scored, and the last one is 5 & 10 are under openness to experience and 5 is reverse-scored. And then add them respectively.

Several studies demonstrate acceptable reliability estimates for BFI-10. In a sample of American students, Rammstedt and John (2007) demonstrated test-retest correlations between Openness ($r = .65$) and Extraversion ($r = .79$) over a period of 6 to 8 weeks. Comparable results were found for the German BFI-10 items in several studies. For example, Rammstedt et al. (2014) reported retest correlations between Neuroticism ($r = .49$) and Openness ($r = .62$) over a period of 6 weeks. The item's internal consistencies are considerably smaller than the test-retest correlations. However, the internal consistency underestimates the reliability for heterogeneous scales such as the BFI-10 where the items aim to measure distinct aspects of the construct.

There are several findings that support the factorial validity, the construct validity, and the criterion validity of the BFI-10.

The correlations among the Big Five scales are low, ranging from ($r = .08$) to ($r = .13$) in all US and German samples (Rammstedt & John, 2007). Furthermore, factor analyses reveal a simple structure of the items with substantial loadings on the

convergent factor (averaged .64) and negligible secondary loadings on the four other factors (averaged .08) (Rammstedt & John, 2007; Rammstedt et al., 2013; Rammstedt et al., 2014).

Correlations with the NEO-PI-R domain and facets scales show substantial convergent and discriminant validity. The pattern of correlations for the BFI-10 is generally like that for the BFI-44 (Rammstedt & John, 2007). Rammstedt & John (2007) report averaged correlation between self-reports and peer reports of $r = .44$. Further studies reveal associations with sociodemographic variables, subjective well-being, deviance, social network, effort-reward-imbalance, or political participation (Rammstedt et al., 2013; Rammstedt et al., 2014).

Following instructions were given for A Brief Version of the Big Five Personality Inventory (BFI-10):

“There is no right or wrong answer, as we want to know your opinion. Your results will be kept confidential. How well do the following statements describe your personality? Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.”

Procedure

Keeping in view the objectives and ethical considerations, following procedures was executed by the researcher:

To investigate relationship between belongingness, social support and personality among young adults, the research was initiated. The tools for data collection were gathered. Sample of young adults i.e., age group from 18-25 were approached for data collection. Both males and females participated, and participation was voluntary. Informed consent was obtained from the subjects before they were enrolled in the study. All the interested subjects were administered self-reports measures. The participants were requested to respond honestly. They were assured that the results and the personal information would be kept strictly confidential and used for research

purposes only. Proper instructions were given to the subjects as specified in the manuals. Once the respondents completed the questionnaires, they were thanked for their active participation in the study. As per the scoring instructions given in the manual, scoring for all the given tests was done. The raw scores were tabulated and subjected to various statistical analyses by using the Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS) package. The elements that formed part of the data collection were:

a.) Demographic information

b.) Informed consent

c.) Scales used:

- A Brief Version of the Big Five Personality Inventory (BFI-10)
- Multidimensional Scale of Perceived social support (MSPSS)
- The General Belongingness Scale (GBS).

Participants were required to read instructions carefully and give their consent before they move toward the questionnaire. The informed consent described the study including the purpose of the research, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and the right of participants that they can leave the study whenever they want. The Demographic information contained Name, Age, Gender, Educational Qualification, City and Contact details. The remaining elements are the questions asked. Participants were thanked for their valuable time after getting the desired response. The scores were compiled in excel sheets for every single variable and participant. Prior to the scoring and calculation, data was checked for entry errors using frequency analysis and ensured all discrepancies were removed. Once the results were tabulated, the interpretation and analysis of the results was done. The Mean, SD, Pearson correlation, t-ratios were also calculated using SPSS. Further, the limitations of the study, implications of the study and recommendations for future research in the field were written.

Scoring and Statistical Analysis

Scoring for all the given tests was done as per the scoring instructions given in the manuals. The raw scores were tabulated and subjected to various statistical analysis by using the Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) package. Keeping in view the objectives of the study, statistical analysis was conducted. Means, Standard Deviations, Correlation Analysis, t-ratios were computed. Correlation analysis was carried out to test the relationship between the two variables. t-ratios were taken out to see the significant difference between the groups. The responses that emerged through the semi-structured interview schedule, were analyzed qualitatively and the results are presented in the form of tables.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

Table 1*N, Mean and Standard Deviation of 100 males and females*

	Gender	Acceptance belongingness	Rejection belongingness	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Neuroticism	Openness to experience	Perceived social suppose
N	Female	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
	Male	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Mean	Female	31.9	28.2	6.78	7.88	6.64	5.90	6.48	5.27
	Male	31.4	27.2	6.40	7.38	5.86	5.62	6.32	5.10
Standard deviation	Female	6.00	6.89	2.30	1.49	1.68	2.30	1.31	1.10
	Male	5.57	6.43	1.59	1.51	1.73	2.01	1.32	1.27

Table 2*t-ratio for males and females*

Variable	FEMALES (N = 50)		MALES (N = 50)		t-ratio
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Acceptance belongingness	31.86	6.00	31.44	5.57	0.363
Rejection belongingness	28.22	6.89	27.20	6.43	0.765
Extraversion	6.78	2.30	6.40	1.59	0.962
Agreeableness	7.88	1.49	7.38	1.51	1.665
Conscientiousness	6.64	1.68	5.86	1.73	2.293
Neuroticism	5.90	2.30	5.62	2.01	0.649
Openness to experience	6.48	1.31	6.32	1.32	0.609
Perceived social support	5.27	1.10	5.10	1.27	0.706

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 3*Intercorrelation Matrix for females (N = 50)*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Acceptance belongingness	—							
2. Rejection belongingness	0.484***	—						
3. Extraversion	0.161	0.427**	—					
4. Agreeableness	0.183	-0.061	-0.085	—				
5. Conscientiousness	0.204	0.240	0.138	0.088	—			
6. Neuroticism	-0.225	-0.466***	-0.155	0.080	-0.126	—		
7. Openness to experience	0.131	-0.005	-0.384**	0.144	0.052	-0.072	—	
8. Perceived social support	0.646***	0.487***	0.022	0.150	0.239	-0.107	0.132	—

Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001
 ***Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level
 **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level
 *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 4*Intercorrelation Matrix for males (N = 50)*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Acceptance belongingness	—							
2. Rejection belongingness	0.073	—						
3. Extraversion	0.017	0.148	—					
4. Agreeableness	0.246	0.238	-0.039	—				
5. Conscientiousness	0.117	0.043	0.051	0.044	—			
6. Neuroticism	-0.264	-0.073	-0.207	-0.496***	-0.098	—		
7. Openness to experience	0.189	0.342*	-0.004	0.153	0.011	-0.200	—	
8. Perceived social support	0.596***	0.376**	0.077	0.131	0.169	0.003	0.137	—

Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001
 ***Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level
 **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level
 *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 5*Intercorrelation Matrix for total sample (N = 100)*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Acceptance belongingness	—							
2. Rejection belongingness	0.295**	—						
3. Extraversion	0.106	0.319**	—					
4. Agreeableness	0.216*	0.095	-0.048	—				
5. Conscientiousness	0.165	0.157	0.118	0.101	—			
6. Neuroticism	-0.239*	-0.282**	-0.166	-0.176	-0.095	—		
7. Openness to experience	0.160	0.166	-0.217*	0.157	0.044	-0.127	—	
8. Perceived social support	0.617***	0.430***	0.051	0.149	0.211*	-0.046	0.138	—

Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001
 ***Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level
 **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level
 *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION, SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

The aim of the present study is to compare male and female young adults on the basis of three variables viz. belongingness, perceived social support and personality. For this purpose, sample of 100 young adults were collected from tricity, in which 50 male and 50 female young adults within the age range of 18-25 years were included.

In Table 1, Descriptive statistics are shown i.e. N, Mean and Standard Deviation of 100 young adults with variables acceptance belongingness, rejection belongingness, dimensions of personality (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience) and perceived social support.

In Table 2, t-ratio for males and females on the basis of three variables viz. belongingness (acceptance belongingness & rejection belongingness), dimensions of personality (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience) and perceived social support are shown.

In Table 3, Intercorrelation matrix of females (N = 50) on the basis of three variables viz. belongingness (acceptance belongingness & rejection belongingness), dimensions of personality (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience) and perceived social support are shown.

In Table 4, Intercorrelation matrix of males (N = 50) on the basis of three variables viz. belongingness (acceptance belongingness & rejection belongingness), dimensions of personality (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience) and perceived social support are shown.

In Table 5, Intercorrelation matrix of total sample (N = 100) on the basis of three variables viz. belongingness (acceptance belongingness & rejection belongingness), dimensions of personality (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience) and perceived social support are shown.

The results revealed that both the dimensions of belongingness (acceptance and rejection) correlated with each other ($r=0.295$, $p<0.01$). Positive correlation was found between acceptance belongingness and perceived social support ($r= 0.617$, $p<0.001$). Hypothesis 1.1 is substantiated and hypothesis 1.2 is not supported.

Positive correlation was found between acceptance belongingness and agreeableness ($r= 0.216$, $p<0.05$), but a negative correlation with neuroticism ($r= -0.239$, $p<0.05$). Though positive correlation was found between rejection belongingness and extraversion ($r=0.319$, $p<0.01$); and between extraversion and perceived social support ($r=0.430$, $p<0.001$). However, a negative relationship was seen between rejection belongingness and neuroticism ($r= -0.282$, $p<0.01$).). And here, hypothesis 2 got partially accepted and also partially rejected.

With respect to correlation among the personality traits, a negative relationship was observed among extraversion and openness to experience ($r= -0.217$, $p<0.05$). Hypothesis 3 got partially rejected. Moreover, conscientiousness is positively associated with social support ($r= 0.211$, $p<0.05$). So here, hypothesis 3 got partially accepted.

Another statistical analysis used in the study was the gender differences among all the variables. The results revealed that there were gender differences on Conscientiousness. Females were higher on conscientiousness than males ($t = 0.024$). In case of conscientiousness, gender difference is found out , which partially rejects the hypothesis.

Since no gender differences were found on Belongingness, Perceived Social support and Personality dimensions (OCEAN), hypothesis 4 is partially accepted. These results are supported by different researches that are mentioned here in discussion.

Malone et al. (2012) investigated that, in the past two decades, belongingness has become a crucial theoretical concept; nonetheless, little effort has been made to create a succinct, reliable psychometric measure of universal belongingness. A 12-item questionnaire with three studies worth of data was created to gauge a sense of overall

belonging. To take part in computer-assisted online surveys, students were enlisted. Strong patterns of validity estimations were established with high reliability. The results of EFA and CFA point to a 2-factor structure (lack of Rejection / Exclusion and Acceptance / Inclusion), with a high level of inter-factor correlation. The current study is the first to establish strong relationships between belongingness and the Big Five personality traits of neuroticism and extraversion and to distinguish between attained belongingness and the need to belong.

Tong et al. (2004) investigated in which police officers from Singapore's three largest ethnic groups; Chinese, Indians, and Malays and analyzed in terms of their personalities and perceived social support. The Social Support Questionnaire Short Form (SSQ: Sarason et al., 1987) was used to measure perceived social support, and the NEO PI-R was used to examine personality. Chinese participants reported the most social support out of the three ethnic groups, but they were the least satisfied with it. While Agreeability, Extraversion, and Openness each individually contributed to the number of social supports (SSN). Regression analysis showed that none of the NEO PI-R dimensions stood out as independent predictors of satisfaction with social support (SSS). Number of Social Supports from Family (SSN-fm) and Number of Social Support from others (SSN-o). Agreeability and Conscientiousness were independently predictive of SSN-fm, while conscientiousness, extraversion, and openness were independently predictive of SSN-o, according to regression analyses. Additionally, it was discovered that the correlations described the three ethnic groups equally.

Swickert and Owens (2010), in a study, investigated the extent to which neuroticism and gender interact to affect the perception of social support availability. Measures evaluating perceived social support and personality were completed by 360 participants. Both hierarchical regression and correlation studies demonstrated how these two characteristics interacted to forecast perceived support. That is, compared to men, women reported higher overall support and evaluation support at low neuroticism levels. To the point where there were no gender differences in overall

perceived social support or assessment support at the highest levels of neuroticism, measures of perceived social support for males and females converged as neuroticism levels rose. These results might help resolve some of the discrepancies that have been noted in the literature on the connection between neuroticism and perceived social support availability.

Udayar et al. (2020) conducted a study in which The Big Five personality qualities are significantly connected with perceived social support, and these correlations are favorably associated with agreeableness, extraversion, and emotional stability. This has been demonstrated in previous studies. It is not yet known, however, if these correlations persist over time or how these characteristics might predict one another over the course of time. A cross-lagged path model was applied to a sample of adults who were assessed twice, four years apart, to investigate the relationship between personality traits and perceived social support. The findings showed that while emotional stability predicted perceptions of social support four years later, perceptions of social support also predicted emotional stability, extraversion, agreeableness, openness, and conscientiousness. The research suggested that in middle adulthood, perceived social support may be a resource that influences the growth of personality traits known to be linked to social skills as well as the nature and frequency of social contacts.

Xia et al. (2012) conducted a study by using The Self-Supporting Personality Scale for Adolescent Students (SSPS-AS), the Social Support Rating Scale (SSRS), and the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) are used in this study to analyze the relationship between self-supporting personality, enacted social support, and perceived social support in a sample of 482 Chinese high school students. According to the results of the cross-sectional structural equation analyses, in contrast to interpersonal responsibility, interpersonal flexibility, and personal initiative, which directly predicted perceived social support, interpersonal initiative, interpersonal openness, and personal openness also directly predicted perceived social support through the mediating role of enacted social support. As a result, both actual

and perceived social support for the proposed relational model of personality were found to be valid. The relationship between a self-supporting personality, social support that is given, and social support that is perceived may be primarily supported by a positive relational schema. The relationship could also be influenced by culture.

These are few studies that support the results reported by the present study. As we said earlier that there are very few studies on Belongingness, but studies on social support and personality are ample. Here by studying three variables together, the present investigation has attempted to add to the previous research little more.

SUMMARY

A sense of belonging is a desire for humans to identify with another group of people and be accepted by them. The ability to feel welcomed inside a social group is defined as belonging. When a person perceives inclusion and identity as a specific group member, he or she feels supported. Social support is the perception and reality that one feels cared for, that one may get help from others and above all, that one feels part of a supportive or helpful social circle. Personality referred to a person's permanent features and behaviours that composed his or her different adjustments to life, major traits included, interests, desires, beliefs, self-concept, skills, and patterns of emotions. Our personalities are believed to be long-lasting, stable, and difficult to change. The research aimed to study the relationship of personality, belongingness and perceived social support among males and female young adults. Standardized tools were used to measure personality, belongingness, and perceived social support among young adults. A total sample of young adults in the age of 18-25 years from which a total 100 responses i.e., 50 male and 50 female responses were collected. The results revealed that both the dimensions of belongingness (acceptance and rejection) correlated with each other. Positive correlation was found between acceptance belongingness and agreeableness and social support, but a negative correlation with neuroticism. Though positive correlation was found in rejecting belonging with extraversion and perceived social support. However, a negative relationship was seen in rejecting belongingness and neuroticism. In addition, a negative relationship was observed among extraversion and openness to experience. Moreover, conscientiousness is positively associated with social support. The results revealed that there were gender differences on Conscientiousness. Females were higher in conscientiousness than males. Moreover, no gender differences were found on other variables.

Implications and Suggestions

Belongingness is essential for emotional and physical wellbeing. Belongingness and social support can act as buffers in the wake of adversity. A sense of belongingness

and perception of availability of social support can interact with an individual's personality to lead to the positive or negative outcomes for people.

Obviously, perceived social support matters. During a depressive episode, staying in touch with friends and family can be difficult, but it may help. Calls, messages, and invitations show care.

If one pays attention to their life and feelings, their friends and family will be more willing to aid them.

Personality change takes more than desire or random behavior modification. It needs people to intentionally change their ideas, goals, and behaviors often enough for the new ways of thinking and acting to become a habit that affects other areas of their lives. For extraverts, disciplining oneself to positively evaluate numerous social circumstances can help. One can become the best version of themselves. Meeting new individuals can open one's mind to other cultures, ideas, and viewpoints. One can work on enhancing one's interpersonal abilities. It is crucial for both professional and personal lives. A person's personality can be described as a regular pattern of actions and thoughts. With exceptional effort, one can definitely change their thought patterns and routines.

One grows up in a family and develops secure or insecure attachment styles as a function of socialization that one is exposed to since one's childhood. Parents and families play a critical role in determining a person's temperament and eventually one's personality traits.

The findings from the present study have found similar trends. Hence, it can be proposed that extensive parental training programs should be formulated so that parents and would be parents can be sensitized about their socialization practices and the quantity of social support provided to children, so that they grow up to be secure adults, with a profound sense of belongingness. This can pave way for effective and happy adults.

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