

A Study of Emotional Competence and Depression in reference to Personality types

Dr. Renuka Joshi

Head and Associate Professor, Department of Psychology D.A.V. (PG) College, Dehradun, Uttarakhand, India

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ABSTRACT

The present study was an attempt to explore the effect of personality types on depression and emotional competence. A 2x2 factorial design was used. The selected sample of 80 subjects of 18-40 years of age was equally divided on the basis of personality types and further into males and females. The stratified random sampling was used for sample selection. ADSS scale developed by Pallavi Bhatnagar (2011) was administered to determine the level of depression. Type A/B Behavioural pattern scale developed by Upinder Dhar and Manisha Jain (2001) was employed to measure personality types. Emotional competencies scale by H.C. Sharma and R.L. Bhardwaj (2007) was used to measure emotional competencies of the subjects. The Means, SDs and ANOVA were utilized to examine the outcome of the study. Results revealed that subjects of Type A and Type B personality pattern were significantly different on the level of depression. Influence was also found to be significantly different among Type A/B on some dimensions of emotional competence. Gender differences were also observed on few dimensions of emotional competence.

Introduction

Depression is a common mental disorder, characterized by sadness, loss of interest or pleasure, feelings of guilt or low self-worth, disturbed sleep or appetite, feelings of tiredness, and poor concentration. It can be long-lasting or recurrent, substantially impairing an individual's ability to function at work or school or cope with daily life. At its most severe, depression can lead to suicide. A major depressive episode is marked by either depressed mood or loss of interest or pleasure in almost all activities and at least four additional symptoms from the following group: marked weight loss or gain when not dieting; constant sleeping problems; agitated and greatly slowed-down behaviour; fatigue; inability to think clearly; feelings of worthlessness; and frequent thoughts about death and suicide. These symptoms must last at least 2 weeks and represent a change from the person's usual functioning.

The personality Type A construct was first propounded by Friedman and Rosenman (1974) to describe certain kinds of individuals who, they believed tended to be overrepresented as clients in their clinical practice. The type A persons were illustrated as people with a highly competitive drive for achievement and sense of immense time urgency and impatience. Type B people may work hard and have considerable drive but they feel no conflict with people and time. Type B people are more relaxed and easy going. They accept situations and work within those situations rather than fight them competitively. Such persons are especially relaxed of time pressures and so are less prone to have problems related with stress. According to type A and type B personality theory, impatient, achievement-oriented people are classified as Type A, whereas easy-going, relaxed individuals are designated as Type B.

Effective personality typologies reveal and increase knowledge and understanding of individuals, as opposed to

diminishing knowledge and understanding as occurs in the case of stereotyping. Effective typologies also allow for increased ability to predict clinically relevant information about people and to develop effective treatment strategies. Particular personality styles can sometimes increase the likelihood of stressful life events. Dysfunctional personality characteristics can play a significant role in the development and maintenance of mood disorders, including melancholic depression and bipolar disorder.

Although we all experience emotions, we markedly differ in the way we process them. Although some of us are able to identify our emotions, express them in a socially acceptable manner, and regulate them when they are inappropriate, others have a hard time interpreting their emotions and seem most of the time overwhelmed by them (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Santrock (2001) defined emotional competence as learned capability that is grounded on emotional intelligence which results in outstanding performance of assigned tasks. Batool SS, et al., 2009, provided support to the notion that lower emotional intelligence individuals are prone to depression. A recent study by Ciarrochi et al., (2002), evaluated the relations between social and emotional competence and mental health, according to this study, it is possible that stressful events cause both emotional processing and management problems (low SEC) and low mental health.

There is strong evidence that stressful events relate to lower psychological health (Ciarrochi, et al, 2002; Kanner, et al, 1981) and some evidence that stressful events relate to lower emotional competence (Ciarrochi et al., 2002.. It is possible that any relationship observed between SEC and psychological health may be explicable in terms of stressful events.

The present study will assess the depression and emotional competence in reference to Type A and Type B personality pattern.

Hypotheses:

1. Type A and Type B subjects will show significant difference on the level of depression.
2. Type A and Type B subjects will show significant difference on the level of emotional competence and its dimensions.
3. Male and female subjects will show significant difference on the level of depression.
4. Male and female subjects will show significant difference on emotional competence and its dimensions.

Method

Sample-

The sample of the study consists of 80 individuals selected residing in Dehradun city, the age range of the subjects was 18 – 40 years. The ADSS scale (Anxiety, Depression and Stress Scale) was administered to measure the level of depression. Type A/B Behavioural pattern scale was employed to measure personality types. The emotional competencies scale was used to assess the emotional competence of subject. The subjects were matched on educational and SES level.

Tools –

- a. Anxiety, Depression and Stress scale developed by Pallavi Bhatnagar, (2011) was used to assess depression in subjects.
- b. Emotional competence scale developed by R. Bhardwaj and H. Sharma, (2007) was used to measure five emotional competencies namely adequate depth of feeling (ADF), adequate expression and control of emotions (AECE), ability to function with emotions (AFE), ability to cope with problem of emotions (ACPE), (EPE) and encouragement of positive emotions (EPE) separately as well as overall emotional competence.
- c. Type A/B Behavioural pattern scale developed by Upinder Dhar and Manisha Jain (2001) was used to measure personality types.

Procedure-

The sample was administered personality scale to classify on the basis of their personality types. The target sample was further administered ADSS scale to measure depression level and emotional competence of the subjects. After data collection on level of depression and emotional competence and personality types scoring was done based on respective manuals of the scale and data was further processed with the help of statistical techniques using Mean, SDs and ANOVAs to draw the inferences.

Result and Discussion:

The first hypothesis, which states that “Type A and Type B personality will differ significantly on depression”, to test this hypothesis, F-value was computed and shown in table no. 3. The obtained F-value of Type A and Type B subjects

appeared to be very high and statistically significant at 0.01 level. The observation of mean values shown in table no. 1 revealed that subjects with Type A personality scored higher mean value on depression than subjects with Type B. It can be said that subjects with Type A personality has higher level of depression as compare to Type B. The difference in the level of depression of Type A and Type B personality is shown graphically in figure no. 4

On the basis of obtained findings, the proposed first hypothesis is accepted and it can be confirmed that subjects with Type A personality differ significantly from Type B personality on the level of depression. The present findings stands in line with the findings of Klein, Kotov, Bufferd, (2011), which suggests that depression is linked to personality traits such as neuroticism/negative emotionality, extraversion/positive emotionality, and conscientiousness. Moreover, personality characteristics appear to contribute to the onset and course of depression through a variety of pathways. Type A pattern is not a trait but a set of behaviours and that it exists on a continuum from Type A behaviour to Type B behaviour.

DiMaria L., 2013, explained the congruency model of depression and questioned, “are certain personality types at risk of developing depression? The congruency model assumes that when a negative event occurs and is congruent with, or matches, a person’s personality type, their risk for depression will increase. Two personality types were identified that may put an individual at increased risk for depression-Social-dependent personality and achievement-dependent personality (one of the component of type A personality).

The second hypothesis, which states that “Type A and Type B personality will differ significantly on emotional competence and its dimensions”, F-value was computed and shown in table no. 3. The obtained F-value of Type A and Type B subjects on total emotional competence appeared to be statistically insignificant. Though, significant difference was found on some dimensions of emotional competence such as ability to cope with problem emotions and enhancement of positive emotions.

The observation of mean values shown in table no 1 revealed that subjects with Type A personality scored higher mean value than subjects with Type B. It can be said that subjects with Type B personality has higher mean value on emotional competence as compare to Type A. It was also observed that Type B personality scored higher mean values than Type A personality subjects on ability to cope with problem emotions and enhancement of positive emotions. It can be said that Type B personality subjects have higher emotional competence, ability to cope with problem emotions and enhancement of positive emotions than Type A personality. The difference in dimensions of emotional competence of Type A and Type B personality pattern is shown graphically in figure no. 7.

On the basis of obtained findings the proposed second hypothesis is rejected and it can be confirmed that subjects with Type A personality will not differ significantly from

Type B personality on emotional competence and some of its dimensions. Thus, it can be concluded that Type A and Type B subjects do not differ significantly on emotional competence and its dimensions. However, Type B personality subjects were found to have higher mean values than type A, this mean difference was insignificant.

The present findings are in line with the findings of Klein, Kotov, Bufferd, (2011), which suggests that depression is linked to personality traits such as neuroticism/negative emotionality, extraversion/positive emotionality, and conscientiousness. Type A personalities have emotions and behaviours characterized by ambitiousness, aggressiveness, competitiveness, impatience, sense of time urgency, goal directedness without proper planning, and polyphasic behaviour.

The third hypothesis, which states that "male and female subjects will differ significantly on depression", to test this, F-value was computed and shown in table no. 3. The obtained F-value of male and female subjects on depression was found to be significant at 0.01 level. The observation of mean values shown in table no. 2 revealed that males scored higher mean value on depression as compared to females. It can be said that male subjects had higher level of depression than female subjects. The difference in the level of depression in male and female subjects is shown graphically in figure no. 4.

On the basis of obtained findings the proposed third hypothesis is accepted and it can be confirmed that male and female subjects differ significantly on depression. Bebbington, (1996); Nolen-Hoeksema, (1987), have found clear gender differences in the prevalence of depressive disorders.

Nazroo JY., 2001, explored some of the possible explanations for gender differences in depression. The size of the gender difference in depression increased, rather than decreased, as the threshold was increased (Nazroo et al., 1997, 1998). This suggests that the gender difference was neither a consequence of using too low a threshold nor of using an average score that emphasized women's hypothesized greater reporting of milder symptom states. Another possibility

is that gender differences in depression rates may be the result of men developing alternative disorders in response to stress, such as antisocial behavior and alcohol abuse.

In particular, women may be more likely to have been socialized to express dysphoria in response to stress and men may be more likely to have been socialized to express anger or other forms of acting out. In support of this, studies have shown that expected gender differences in depressive disorders were balanced out by higher male rates of alcohol abuse and drug dependency (Kessler et al., 1994; Metzler et al., 1995).

The fourth hypothesis, states that "male and female subjects will differ significantly on emotional competence and its dimensions", to test this hypothesis, F-value was computed and shown in table no. 3. The obtained F-value of male and female subjects on emotional competence and some of its dimensions, such as adequate depth of feeling, adequate expression and control of emotions was found to be significant at 0.01 level. The observation of mean values shown in table no. 2 revealed that females scored higher mean value on adequate depth of feeling, adequate expression and control of emotions and total emotional competence as compared to males. It can be said that female subjects had higher level of emotional competence, adequate depth of feeling, adequate expression and control of emotions than male subjects.

On the basis of obtained findings the proposed fourth hypothesis is accepted and it can be confirmed that male and female subjects differ significantly on emotional competence and its dimensions. Sanchez Nunez MT et al., 2008, explained that despite the evidence indicating that women generally have a higher EI index than men; their self-perception tends to be lower than that of men. The difference in dimensions of emotional competence of male and female subjects is shown graphically in figure no. 5.

Finally it can be concluded that personality type plays significant role in the development of level of depression. Subjects with Type A personality are found to be more prone to depression as compared to Type B personality. Males were also higher on depression than females. Gender differences were also observed on overall emotional competence.

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Table no 1 shows the Means of Type A and Type B subjects on Depression and various dimensions of Emotional Competence

| Variables | Type A | | Type B | |
|------------|--------|-------|--------|-------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| Depression | 4.61 | 1.82 | 3.26 | 2-21 |
| ADF | 18.81 | 4.3 | 19.75 | 4.49 |
| AECE | 19.13 | 4.68 | 18.88 | 4.09 |
| AFE | 20.4 | 4.44 | 20.31 | 4.3 |
| ACPE | 18.35 | 3.82 | 19.96 | 4.46 |
| EPE | 18.95 | 3.94 | 20.91 | 3.53 |
| TOTAL | 96.59 | 15.11 | 99.93 | 14.36 |

Table no. 2 Means of male and female subjects on Depression, and various dimensions of Emotional Competence

| Variables | Male | | Female | |
|------------|-------|-------|--------|-------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| Depression | 4.99 | 2-07 | 3.11 | 1-67 |
| ADF | 18.25 | 4.63 | 20.31 | 4.15 |
| AECE | 17.31 | 4.54 | 20.69 | 4.22 |
| AFE | 20.98 | 4.71 | 19.74 | 4.00 |
| ACPE | 18.8 | 3.75 | 19.51 | 4.42 |
| EPE | 19.6 | 3.6 | 20.26 | 3.9 |
| TOTAL | 94.76 | 15.11 | 101.75 | 13.55 |

Table no. 3 Analysis of variance for Depression and Emotional Competence and its various dimensions

| Dimensions | Group (Type A/B) | Sex | Group/Sex |
|------------|------------------|---------|-----------|
| Depression | 6.51** | 15.40** | 16.18** |
| ADF | 1.7 | 8.22** | 1.05 |
| AECE | 0.15 | 27.52** | 6.78** |
| AFE | 0.02 | 3.44 | 0.43 |
| ACPE | 5.44** | 1.06 | 1.94 |
| EPE | 7.66** | 0.87 | 24.88** |
| Total EC | 1.81 | 7.94** | 0.85 |

** - Significant at 0.01, * - Significant at 0.05