

Neuroticism, Extraversion and Conscientiousness as Predictors of the Hedonistic Lifestyle

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The present study aimed to investigate relationships of big five personality traits (openness to experiences, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism) with the hedonistic lifestyle as well as gender differences in two variables. Participants were students of the Psychology Department at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Indonesia. A total of 256 students (165 women and 91 men) were selected based on the simple random sampling. The Indonesian version of the *Big Five Personality Inventory Scale* and the *Hedonistic Lifestyle Scale* were used in the research. The results indicated that three dimensions of the big five, namely conscientiousness, extraversion, and neuroticism, were significantly correlated with the hedonistic lifestyle. Conscientiousness had a greater correlation with the hedonistic lifestyle compared to the extraversion and neuroticism. However, the other two dimensions, namely the openness to experience and agreeableness were not correlated with the hedonistic lifestyle. Meanwhile, female participants showed significantly higher levels of hedonistic lifestyle, neuroticism, and agreeableness than men; however, the conscientiousness was significantly higher in men than women.

Keywords: Neuroticism; Extraversion; Conscientiousness; Hedonistic Lifestyle

Adolescence is a crucial transitional period in physical, social, and psychological development from childhood to adulthood (Zaky, 2016; Jaworska & MacQueen, 2015). During this period, many individuals are easily affected by both positive and negative events around them. Positive events tend to increase positive characteristics such as more confidence, independence, empathy, intimacy, and humility, while the opposite occurs often when young people are exposed to negative events (Landmark & Geye, 2014). Sometimes, adolescents prefer comfortable and luxurious lives of wealth without hard working (Jaworska & MacQueen, 2015; Md Sham, Shafi'e, & Abu Zahrin, 2015). Another

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common characteristic in adolescents occurs when they live in here and now, and often neglect the past and future and focus on instant pleasure (Stolarski, Fioulaine, & van Beek, 2015). In the psychology literature, a pleasure-oriented behavior refers to a hedonistic lifestyle.

The concept of hedonism is associated with many fields of life. The concept, which is originated from the Greek Philosophy, is based on dynamics between pleasure and pain in which the maximized pleasure and minimized pain motivates behavior (Singer, 2013). It emphasizes a perspective under which main results of a good life are related to what is pleasurable (Veenhoven, 2003). Hedonistic behaviour is a part of lifestyle when individuals pursue pleasure as their central focus of life (Feldman, 2008). Crisp (2006) considered the hedonism as a viewpoint when a pleasant experience is good, but suffering is bad. A hedonic person is committed to seeking as much pleasure as possible and trying to ignore painful accidents in life.

The hedonistic behavior characteristics include an openness to pleasant experience and a tendency to fulfill own desires regardless of whether they are capable or not indicating that individuals have not been able to understand their capacity. Zimbardo and Boyd (Stolarski et al., 2015) suggested that the hedonistic behavior is related to attitudes towards time and meaning of life. Hedonistic people often do not have plans for future; and their orientation is primarily focused on the present. Pleasure seeking is a dominant motivation in most possessive lives in which the individual happiness is the main short- and long-term goal. Veenhoven (2003a) found that the hedonistic behavior aimed to seek temporary sensual pleasure such as indulging in drinking alcohol, high sexual activity, and conducting risky activities that maximize the instant happiness.

Adolescents often show hedonistic behaviour tendencies to what they wear. They often follow the latest trends and fashion development (Dhurup, 2014). Teenagers often desire to express everything they want and they behave in a way to attract attention, especially from peer group members (Yeager, Dahl, & Dweck, 2018). The need to be accepted and the frequent desire to be perceived similar to others in their peer group (Zaky, 2016) causes individuals to easily follow adolescents' trends. This need often leads the youth to follow various trending phenomena like the use of smart phones, the latest fashion trends, and shopping in famous brand shopping centers. This behaviour is usually not difficult for those from high socioeconomic class, but it is particularly difficult to maintain this image and lifestyle for those from low social economic standard backgrounds.

Hedonistic lifestyles are considered by some people as more than considering only the need for goods. Kotler and Armstrong (2017) argue

that how people want are a part of human needs and it is often influenced by personality and social culture. Some scholars explain that personality often affects the individual behavior (Robertson & Callinan, 1998) either in an organization or in people lives. Personalities can also explain individual differences when it comes to societal interactions (Najarpourian et al., 2012; Swagler & Jome, 2005). Despite being generally stable and consistent, personalities often change in different situations. More specifically, Mehrabian (1996) states that individuals' lifestyles follow their personality, and if their personality changes, it will change their lifestyles. In this study, the big five personality theory is utilized as the personality theory.

The big five personality is a psychological approach for describing the human personality through five personality dimensions through the factor analysis. There are five personality dimensions (OCEAN): Openness to experience; conscientiousness; extraversion; agreeableness; and neuroticism (McCrae & Costa, 1991). Openness to experience is the broadest dimension that covers traits like the high curiosity, intelligence, and imaginative, creative, unconventionality, and broad insight (Batey & Furnham, 2006). The open mind, as a trait related to the creativity, can indicate other individuals' thoughts that are different from other people (Carson, Higgins, & Peterson, 2003; King, Walker, & Broyles, 1996). The trait is the opposite of conservatism and close-mindedness (John & Srivastava, 1999). Moreover, people with high levels of openness are more emotional and fantasy, and respond stronger to affective stimuli. They are easily attracted by events (Conner & Silvia, 2015; Kaufman, 2013; Swami & Furnham, 2014). Therefore, it is expected that the openness to experience will have a positive effect on the hedonistic lifestyle.

Conscientiousness refers to being disciplined, efficient, responsible, well-ordered, careful, planned, competent, and high achieving personality (Goldberg, 1990) as a combination of desire to be reliable and achievement oriented (Barrick & Mount, 1995). It is a trait relating to health, positive aging, and human capital (Roberts et al., 2014) and describes individual differences in self-control, responsibility, hardworking, and law-abiding (Roberts et al., 2009; McCrae & Costa, 2008). The conscientiousness usually changes when individuals become adults (Roberts, Walton, & Viechtbauer, 2006; Srivastava et al., 2003). Self-control and responsibility play important roles in encouraging the pleasure-oriented control (Liu, Li, & Hu, 2013). Lack of both self control and responsibility encourages individuals to easily spend money for hobby. Therefore, it is assumed that conscientiousness has a negative effect on the hedonistic lifestyle.

Extraversion is a side of the polar dimension of extroversion-introversion. It refers to some categories, like being sociable, enjoyment, being talkative, energetic, assertive, cheerful, and friendly, and being able to establish good relationships with others (Abdo-Cuza et al., 2013; Costa, Terracciano, & McCrae, 2001). Conversely, introverts tend to be less communicative, more quiet, moody, and shy. Introverts are more sensitive than extroverts to pain, and are more susceptible to fatigue (Schmeck & Lockhart, 2013). Individuals with high extraversion tend to explore new things in life despite contrary with their values (Leong et al., 2017; Judge, Simon, & Hurst, 2014) because they have low self-control. Therefore, it can be concluded that the extraversion has a positive effect on the hedonistic lifestyle.

Agreeableness refers to the quality of interpersonal orientation that starts from caring to hostility in thoughts, feelings, and actions (John & Srivastava, 1999). It is socially-oriented and relates to ways people interact with each other (Bradley, Baur, Banford, & Postlethwaite, 2013). It is correlated to the social responsibility, perspective taking, and assistance behaviour (Graziano, Habashi, Sheese, & Tobin, 2007). Graziano et al. (2007) explained individuals with high levels of agreeableness as those who offered assistance to more victims than respondents who had low agreeableness. People with high scores of this trait tend to reasonably behave and prioritize thinking before action. They are not easy to follow their environmental lifestyle (Verplanken & Herabadi, 2001). Therefore, it seems that the agreeableness has a negative effect on the hedonistic lifestyle.

Finally, the neuroticism refers to negative emotions such as anger, sadness, anxiety, worry, and hostility (Costa & McCrae, 1997; Kotov et al., 2010). In general, the neuroticism is negatively related to emotion regulation strategies. Neurotic individuals find it difficult to control their emotions (Gross, 1998). Neurotic people have a higher risk of experiencing emotional disturbances (Khan et al., 2005), and they are often depressed and sad (Bienvenu et al., 2004; Durrett & Trull, 2005), and they feel less pleasant by others (Geerts & Bouhuys, 1998). Low scores in this trait show an emotional stability; hence, people will be able to face their challenges and problems strongly. Emotional stability is opposite of the neuroticism (Dunn, Mount & Barrick, 1995). Some scholars argued neuroticism increases hedonistic behaviours (Gale et al., 2013; Mowen & Spears, 1999). Therefore, it is assumed that the Neuroticism has a positive effect on the hedonistic lifestyle.

Women and men are different in personality traits. Men have a tendency to be higher in assertiveness, while women have a higher tendency to neuroticism, agreeableness and warmth (Costa et al., 2001). Previous research found that women were more empathetic than men

(Baron-Cohen and Wheelwright, 2004), and had better verbal skills (Strand et al., 2006). The differences between them can be also seen in more specific dimensions, such as interest in new products through product information, the way of selecting products, and impulsive buying. Women have a greater interest and enjoyment for shopping than men (Mburu, 2010). Other studies also indicated that women processed product information messages in a more detailed and comprehensive manner (Kempf & Palan, 2006), and tended to make impulse purchases compared to men (Coley & Burgess, 2003). Therefore, it can be concluded that the hedonistic lifestyle levels of women are higher than men.

METHOD

Participants were 256 second-semester students (165 women and 91 men) aging from 17 to 19 at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Indonesia. Students were asked to join; and researchers selected randomly those who were willing to participate in the study. It took about 20 minutes to answer the *Big Five Personality Traits* and *Hedonistic Lifestyle* Questionnaires. All participants confirmed their willingness to participate in this study by providing written documentation of informed consent, and replaced a beautiful souvenir for participation. This study was ethically approved by the Research Institute of Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta.

The *Hedonistic Lifestyle Scale* was developed by Reynold and Darden (Blackwell et al., 2001), is used to measure the tendency of pleasure-oriented lifestyles including fun activities, interests, and opinions. The hedonistic lifestyle scale consisted of 30 items (15 favourable items, and 15 unfavourable items). Responses were based on a four-point Likert scale in which 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= agree, and 4= strongly agree. The Cronbach's alpha was .874 for this scale. It means that this scale is reliable or acceptable.

The big five personality components were measured by 44 items of the *Big Five Inventory Scale* by John (1990) and it was translated into Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian language) by Ramdhani (2012). Responses were based on a four-point Likert scale in which 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= agree, and 4= strongly agree. The internal consistency of the five dimensions in the present study ranged from .73 to .79.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Personality Traits and the Hedonistic lifestyle

Results of the regression model were significant with a hedonistic lifestyle as the outcome variable (dependent variable) and personality dimensions as the independent ($F(5,250)= 89.789, p < 0.001, R^2 = 0.642$). Table 1 presents the summary of model as well as the squared correlation

values (coefficient of determination) of the outcome and predictor variables. Three predictive variables (conscientiousness, extraversion, and neuroticism) had significant impact on the hedonistic lifestyle, while the openness to experience and agreeableness had insignificant impact on the hedonistic lifestyle.

TABLE 1. Regression Analysis of Personality Traits & Hedonistic Lifestyle

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| (Constant) | 45.455 | 5.418 | | 8.389 | .000 |
| Openness to Experience | -.065 | .116 | -.023 | -.560 | .576 |
| Conscientiousness | -.697 | .083 | .389 | -8.382 | .000 |
| Extraversion | .462 | .083 | .237 | 5.583 | .000 |
| Agreeableness | .013 | .141 | .004 | .090 | .928 |
| Neuroticism | .577 | .075 | .382 | 7.747 | .000 |

H1: Openness to experience has a positive effect on the hedonistic lifestyle

According to results, there was no relationship between openness to experience and the hedonistic lifestyle based on beta coefficient of -0.023 and $p = 0.576$. The results did not confirmed the hypothesis. Luk and Bond (1993) also found no strong evidence on the relationship between openness to experience and the hedonistic lifestyle. Olver and Mooradian (2003) found that the openness to experience had a significant positive relationship with self-direction, but not with the hedonism. Openness to experience did not correlate with hedonistic lifestyle because maybe the hedonistic conception overlaps with new experiences that are pleasing to the individual. Results of this study did not confirmed previous findings under which the openness to experience had a positive relationship with the hedonic behavior (Guido, 2006; Matzler, Bidmon, & Grabner-Krauter, 2006).

H2: Conscientiousness has a positive effect on the hedonistic lifestyle

According to results, there was a significant negative relationship between conscientiousness and hedonistic lifestyle according to beta coefficients value of -0.389 and $p = 0.000$. People with this trait were disciplined, efficient, responsible, orderly, careful, planned, competent, and had high achievement motivation; hence, people with high scores in

the conscientiousness tended to be less hedonic. Results of the present study were consistent with the previous literature (Sina, 2014; Joshanloo, Rastegar, & Bakhshi, 2012; Mowen & Spears, 1999). People, who had higher conscientiousness scores, tended to have the following two characteristics: They were very careful in spending their money (Sina, 2014), and could control their emotion and postpone their demand for instant satisfaction (Joshanloo, Rastegar, & Bakhshi, 2012). Mowen & Spears (1999) argued that individuals, who had difficulty in controlling their desire to spend their money on shopping, showed a lack of careful, organized, and efficient will power in their daily activities.

H3: Extraversion has a positive effect on the hedonistic lifestyle

According to obtained results, there was a significant positive relationship between the extraversion and hedonistic lifestyle according to beta value of 0.237 and $p = 0.000$. People with this trait wanted to be sociable, energetic, and enthusiastic. They tended to spend more time on their social lives, as it was more valuable to them than participating in other activities. A hedonistic lifestyle is seen when someone is attracted to an object or event that emphasizes pleasure. The results were consistent with previous studies. Matzler, Bidmon, and Grabner-Kräuter (2006) found that the extraversion personality trait was positively correlated with a hedonistic behaviour. Guido et al. (2007) added that individuals with lower extraversion scores tended to be non-hedonistic. Blackwell, Miniard, and Engel (2005) explained that those with this trait would immediately react to objects or events even if they had to sacrifice time, energy and costs. Sholeh (2017) described students with extraversion characteristics as those who often were in cafes, walked around in malls without a clear purpose, did clubbing, and even some students said that products, which became trends, must be purchased. Some of the above activities were only done to achieve the satisfaction and pleasure.

H4: Agreeableness has a negative effect on the hedonistic lifestyle

According to our results, there was no relationship between agreeableness and the hedonistic lifestyle according to the beta coefficient of .004 and $p = .928$. The results did not confirm the hypothesis. Balabanis (2002) found that there was no strong relationship between agreeableness and hedonic behavior. Wang and Yang (2008) also did not find sufficient evidence to support this hypothesis. These personality traits involve individuals who were focused, goal oriented, and worked hard to achieve goals. Moreover, they were smart enough to avoid being impulsive. The research results did not confirm findings of research by Verplanken and Herabadi (2001), who claimed that there was

a negative relationship between agreeableness and hedonic behavior. According to them, people with high scores of agreeableness were able to make right decisions and thus they were less likely to have hedonistic lifestyles.

H5: Neuroticism has a positive effect on the hedonistic lifestyle

The results indicated a significant positive relationship between the neuroticism and hedonistic lifestyle according to the beta coefficient value of 0.382 and $p=0.000$. People with this trait could control emotions with difficulty, had emotional disturbances, were often depressed and sad, and easily felt less pleasant in communication with others. When individuals feel bad, they will try to reduce their negative emotions by engaging in activities that make them feel free and enjoying, such as eating, seeking social support, and sharing their problems with others (Taquet, Quoidbach, de Montjoye, Desseilles, & Gross, 2016). Individuals with higher neuroticism consider a negative stimulus as a threat, so that they have to reduce it in various ways they want (Muris, Meesters, & Blijlevens, 2007; Ozer & Benet-Martínez, 2006). When adolescents are nervous, tense, or afraid of something, they tend to look for an activity that will help them reduce the nature of worries, such as hanging out with their friends or just sitting on the roadside without any meaningful activity, and drink alcoholic beverages. It showed that conditions that arouse strong negative emotion generally led individuals to seek for more pleasurable activities (Johnson & Attmann, 2009).

In general, the results indicated that three personality dimensions (neuroticism, extraversion and conscientiousness) correlated with the hedonistic lifestyle in an expected direction. Therefore, the above three personality traits confirmed the hypothesis, but the other two personality traits (openness to experience and agreeableness) did not support the hypothesis.

Sex Differences in Personality Traits and the Hedonistic lifestyle

In Table 2, there is a significant difference between hedonistic lifestyles of men and women ($p= .000$). The hedonistic lifestyle of women ($M = 51.95$, $SD = 7.47$) is higher than men ($M = 47.57$, $SD = 9.49$). The results were consistent with previous studies. Dalziel & DeKlerk (2017) found that male and female students had different hedonic drives in Africa. Female students had higher scores than male students in the hedonic motivation. Tifferet and Herstein (2012) added that females' scores were higher in the hedonic consumption and impulsive buying than males. The findings were confirmed by Zaky (2016), who found that female consumers were stronger hedonic shoppers, while male

consumers tended to shop based on needs. However, Gentry et al. (2003) stated that gender differences were minimal in the hedonic behavior.

TABLE 2. Independent Sample t-test Statistics for Comparing Personality Traits & the Hedonistic Lifestyles of Men & Women

| Variable | <i>t</i> | <i>df</i> | <i>p</i> | SD | | Mean Differences |
|------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|------|-------|------------------|
| | | | | Men | Women | |
| Hedonistic lifestyle | -4.09 | 254 | 0.000 | 9.49 | 7.47 | -4.380 |
| Openness to experience | 1.75 | 254 | 0.081 | 3.15 | 2.83 | 0.674 |
| Conscientiousness | 6.27 | 254 | 0.000 | 5.50 | 3.70 | 3.615 |
| Extraversion | -1.83 | 254 | 0.068 | 4.11 | 4.46 | -1.039 |
| Agreeableness | -3.25 | 254 | 0.001 | 2.42 | 2.63 | 1.059 |
| Neuroticism | -6.88 | 254 | 0.000 | 4.50 | 5.50 | -4.639 |

Furthermore, women ($M= 22.82$, $SD= 3.70$) had lower conscientiousness scores than men ($M= 26.44$, $SD= 5.50$, $p= .000$). The results were inconsistent with previous research. Weisberg, DeYoung, and Hirsh (2011) reported no gender difference in conscientiousness. However, women with agreeableness ($M = 28.25$, $SD = 2.63$) had higher scores than men ($M= 27.19$, $SD= 2.42$, $p= 0.001$). There were sex differences for the agreeableness (Costa et al., 2001). Agreeableness levels of women were higher than men (Weisberg et al., 2011; Costa et al., 2001). The same conditions were seen in women with neuroticism ($M= 22.78$, $SD = 5.50$) and they had higher neuroticism scores than men ($M= 18.14$, $SD= 4.50$, $p= 0.000$). The findings were confirmed by some previous findings in which men and women had different levels of neuroticism (Keller et al., 2005; Rettew et al., 2006). Women also had higher levels of neuroticism than men (Weisberg, et al., 2011). In terms of the extraversion and openness to experience, sex differences were not statistically significant. In general, men and women had significant differences in the outcome variable and three predictor variables.

The present study had some limitations and it was conducted with a particular sample that was dominated by Javanese people. Participants from various cultures need to be added to find out how different cultures influence hedonistic behavior. In addition, all participants are economic and business students. The economic and business students were dominated by "high-class" (in socioeconomic class) students with a thriving consumption culture. Perhaps the findings were less relevant to other samples. The researchers are suggested considering sample diversity in their future studies, so that representative results will be obtained.

Conclusion

Based on findings of the present study, *First*, personality traits, namely the neuroticism, extraversion, and conscientiousness could potentially affect individuals' hedonistic lifestyles. Neuroticism and extraversion had a positive correlation with hedonistic lifestyles. On the contrary, the conscientiousness dimension had a negative correlation with hedonistic lifestyles; *Second*, the findings suggested that women and men generally had different levels of hedonistic lifestyles. Women had higher levels of hedonistic lifestyle than men; *Third*, sex differences were seen in the agreeableness, neuroticism, and conscientiousness traits. Women had higher scores than men in the agreeableness and neuroticism; however, men had higher scores of conscientiousness than women.

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ETHICS APPROVAL AND CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

This study was ethically approved and licensed by Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta Research Institute, and the study was conducted according to APA ethical standards.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors confirm that this article content has no conflict of interest.

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