



Research report

Associations of personality profiles with various aspects of well-being: A population-based study

Kim Josefsson^{a,b}, C. Robert Cloninger^c, Mirka Hintsanen^a, Markus Jokela^a,
Laura Pulkki-Råback^{a,b}, Liisa Keltikangas-Järvinen^{a,*}

^a IBS, Unit of Personality, Work, and Health Psychology, University of Helsinki, Finland

^b Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, Finland

^c Dept. of Psychiatry, Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis, MO, USA

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 24 November 2010

Received in revised form 7 March 2011

Accepted 9 March 2011

Available online 3 April 2011

Keywords:

Personality
Character
Health
Wellness
Happiness
Well-being

ABSTRACT

Background: Well-being consists of affective and non-affective components. Personality traits measure individual differences in adaptive functioning and mental health. In a previous Israeli study personality was strongly associated with well-being. However, it is not well known which aspects of this association are culture-specific, and which are common to most cultures. **Methods:** 1940 volunteer participants of the Cardiovascular Risk in Young Finns (CRYF) study completed the Temperament and Character Inventory (TCI), and the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (PSS). Questions about positive and negative affect, satisfaction with life, and subjective health were also included. Multidimensional personality profiles were used to evaluate the linear and non-linear effects of interactions among dimensions on different aspects of well-being.

Results: Self-directedness was strongly associated with all aspects of well-being regardless of interactions with other dimensions. Cooperativeness was also associated with several aspects of well-being but especially strongly with perceived social support. Self-transcendence was associated with both positive and negative affect when the influence of the other character dimensions was taken into account. Personality explained half the variance in non-affective well-being and two thirds of the variance in affective well-being.

Limitations: The same assessment instruments were not used in the two countries we compared. Our data were cross-sectional.

Conclusions: Self-directedness and Cooperativeness are positively associated with well-being regardless of culture. The effect of Self-transcendence, however, seems to be culture-specific. Self-transcendence increases positive affect but, based on culture, it can also increase negative affect.

© 2011 Elsevier B.V. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

Well-being is a multidimensional concept that includes various aspects of mental and physical health, supporting social relationships, and ability to cope with stressful situations

* Corresponding author at: Siltavuorenpenger 1 A, P.O.Box 9, 00014 University of Helsinki, Finland. Tel.: +358 9 1912 9500; fax: +358 9 1912 9251.

E-mail address: liisa.keltikangas-jarvinen@helsinki.fi (L. Keltikangas-Järvinen).

(McDowell, 2010; Stokes, et al., 1982). Extensive evidence demonstrates the importance of well-being in people's lives; current well-being appears to be relatively accurate indicator of one's future health condition (Chida and Steptoe, 2008). In addition, subjective well-being and subjective health are more highly correlated with each other than subjective health and objective physician assessed health; subjective health in turn has been found to be a better predictor of mortality than objective health measures (DeNeve and Cooper, 1998; Knauper and Turner, 2003).

The concepts of hedonic and eudaimonic well-being are often used to define well-being. Hedonic well-being refers to how and why people experience their lives in positive ways, and consists of a combination of negative and positive emotions and life satisfaction (Diener, 1984). Eudaimonic well-being encompasses the wider domains of personal growth, purposeful engagement and self development (Ryff, et al., 2004). The concepts of hedonic and eudaimonic well-being are distinct but related components of psychological functioning, and both are needed to fully understand the nature of well-being (Keyes, et al., 2002).

A high level of well-being is not equal to an easy problem-free life or life with only positive events. People have the ability to adapt to challenging events and setbacks and to evaluate their life from the view point of the changed life situation (Diener, et al., 1999; McDowell, 2010). When people adjust their expectations in response to, say, declining physical health, they can still feel well and content in the constraints of their new life situation. This emphasizes the difficulty of an objective observer in evaluating people's well-being, and highlights the importance of person-centered subjective experience.

In addition to individual experiences, perceptions of well-being are affected by culture and factors such as social norms and how important individual well-being is considered to be (Diener, et al., 2003). Differences in point of reference may also affect self-evaluations; people in different cultures may compare themselves against different standards (Heine, et al., 2002), so that two individuals with identical circumstances may evaluate themselves differently based on their cultural environment. While this poses a challenge to cross-cultural comparisons, it is important to consider such variability in assessing the universal relationship of personality with well-being.

In an Israeli population-based study, Cloninger and Zohar (2011) used a person-centered approach with multidimensional personality profiles in investigating how individual differences in personality profiles influence physical, emotional, and social aspects of well-being. They focused on character traits measured by the Temperament and Character Inventory (TCI) (Cloninger, et al., 1993). The three character dimensions of the TCI reflect three different aspects of self-concept: to what extent a person identifies the self as an autonomous individual (Self-directedness); an integral part of humanity and society (Cooperativeness); and an integral part of the unity of all things (Self-transcendence) (Cloninger, et al., 1993). Character dimensions aim at depicting maturity and integration of personality.

Cloninger and Zohar (2011) found that Self-directedness was strongly associated with both affective and non-affective well-being, including life satisfaction, social support, subjective health, positive affect, and negative affect. Cooperativeness was associated especially with perceived social support, and Self-transcendence predicted positive emotions when the influence of the other character dimensions was taken into account. The study showed that character traits have strong effects on the perception of well-being.

Given that subjective well-being may be evaluated with different criteria in different cultures, we examined whether personality (measured by the TCI) is associated with well-being in a population-based Finnish sample in a similar fashion as in

the previous Israeli study (Cloninger and Zohar, 2011). It is reasonable to presume that there are cultural differences, especially in spirituality and religiousness, between Jewish Israel and mostly Evangelical Lutheran and relatively secular Finland. The countries also differ in other sociopolitical issues, such as the quality of relationships with neighboring countries. We were interested in testing whether these cross-cultural differences influence the relationship between personality and well-being.

According to a study by the Guttman Center (Levy, et al., 2002), 65% of Israeli Jews believe wholeheartedly that there is a God. In addition, 15% pray in a synagogue every day and 25% pray every Shabbat at a synagogue. Religious values of Finns were mapped in World Values Survey (WVSA, 2009) and European Commission's Eurobarometer (European Commission, 2005), according to which 41% of Finns believe there is a God and an additional 41% believe in some sort of spiritual entity or life force but not in God. Only 1.9% attend religious services more than once a week and 4.5% once a week. Americans have been the main population for empirical assessment in developing the theory of Temperament and Character Inventory (Cloninger, 1987; Cloninger, et al., 1993), so it is worth comparing the foregoing percentages to those observed in the United States. We used the results of World Values Survey (WVSA, 2009) and American Religious Identification Survey (Kosmin and Keysar, 2009), which indicated that 70% of Americans believe that there definitely is a personal God, while an additional 12% believe that there is a higher power but no personal God. Approximately 12% attend religious services more than once a week and 24% once a week.

In the light of these figures, Finland might be considered a rather secular country in the traditional religious sense of the word. About 82% of people in both Finland and the United States believe in either a personal God or some sort of higher spirit. But belief in personal God and attending religious services is rarer in Finland than in the United States or Israel. In an international comparison, Finns were ranked among the least active attending public religious service (Kääriäinen, et al., 2009). Finns prefer to take care of their relationship with God privately without a church and many think that the activities of the parish are simply not interesting and feel no interest in religious life (Kääriäinen, et al., 2009).

A person-centered approach to personality is a key element in our study. An approach conceptualizing personality as a combination of several components rather than single dimensions examined separately makes it possible to understand processes within individuals and not just differences between individuals facing the biopsychosocial reality (Bergman and Magnusson, 1997). We evaluate the interactions of specific combinations of character traits with affective and non-affective aspects of well-being in a population based Finnish sample. We assess well-being with multiple measures. Affective well-being is assessed with measures of positive and negative affect. Non-affective well-being is assessed with measures of life-satisfaction, social support and subjective health. In addition, we include a measure of depressive symptoms to set the findings of various alternative measures in a broader perspective of well-being and ill-health. Both linear and non-linear methods are used to take into account the complexity of developmental processes.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/6235283>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/6235283>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)