

## The Agreeableness Type of Personality and the Basic Personal Values

Fitore Bajrami Abdi, PhD. Cand

Department of Psychology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Tetova, Republic of Macedonia

### Abstract

The goal of this study is to discover the relationship between the agreeableness type of personality and the basic personal values, analyzed through non-experimental methodology and quantitative approach. The sample of this study is the Albanian high school seniors in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia which consists of 479 subjects, randomly selected from the total sample specified. The subjects' willingness to participate in the survey and their anonymity was respected by following all ethical norms. The results of correlative statistics show that there is association between the agreeableness type and all basic personal values, while the comparative statistics indicate statistically significant differences between the basic personal values related to the agreeableness type of personality and the highest mean score was reached by the value universalism. The Eta square agreeableness type of personality results showed a relatively low effect on the values stimulation as well as hedonism.

**Keywords:** personality, agreeableness type, basic personal values.

### 1. Introduction

The goal of this study is to discover the relationship between the agreeableness type of personality and the basic personal values, variables that belong to organizational psychology and the theory of personality.

Agreeableness is a personality trait that holds people to be accommodating and help (Burch and Anderson, 2008) them solve issues by creating win-win situation by their flexible attitude (Cattell and Mead, 2008). The notion value refers to beliefs on which situations or actions are desirable. Basic personal values are treated based on Salom Shwartz theory i.e. the Theory of basic values (1994, 2012). Shwartz sees values as consistent standards based on which we value everything else, including the appropriateness of norms, attitudes, traits or virtues that might be suggested to us. The values included in this study are: conformity, tradition, benevolence, universalism, self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power and security. Guth et.al (1965) stresses that: "Values are not only closely related to personality, they are part of it, and serve as a guiding system by personality when facing choices and alternatives, values form a very consistent personality trait of an individual, especially if some values are clearly dominated by the others".

It is the first time in the Republic of Macedonia that statistical data related to the abovementioned variables are presented. Therefore, these results will open one more page for the organizational psychology and researchers who will examine these variables in the Republic of Macedonia.

#### 1.1 Agreeableness type

Agreeableness is a personality trait that holds people to be accommodating and help (Burch and Anderson, 2008) them solve issues by creating win-win situation by their flexible attitude (Cattell and Mead, 2008). These people are usually very social (Mount et al., 2005) and friendly, generous in negotiations, usually balancing reports in tense situations. These people have a tendency to attain cooperation and social harmony (Goldberg, 1992). Helping the others is their incorporated attribute and therefore they believe that the others are also honest and trustworthy (Saucier and Goldberg, 1998). On the other hand, people who rank low in this trait of personality have a tendency to be selfish, unfriendly (Howard et al., Howard, 1995), and rough in social relationships (Ostendorf et al., 1992). For the reason that they are selfish, they believe that

others work against them, and therefore are suspicious (Goldberg, 1992). Furthermore, these people are not concerned for the other and it is less likely they will help others by sacrificing their own interests. In the five factor personality model, only artistic, social and entrepreneurial interests were clearly related to the personality traits. Artistic interest is positively associated to agreeableness and intellect ( $r=.26$  and  $r=.27$  respectively); social interest was moderately associated to agreeableness ( $r=.43$ ).

## 1.2 Basic personal values

The notion value refers to beliefs on which situations or actions are desirable. Basic personal values are treated based on Salom Shwartz theory i.e. the Theory of basic values (1994, 2012). Shwartz perceives values as consistent standards based on which we value everything else, including the appropriateness of norms, attitudes, traits or virtues that might be suggested to us.

The values included in this study are: conformity, tradition, benevolence, universalism, self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power and security.

- 1) *Conformity* is defined as a restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to disturb or harm others and violate social expectations or norms.
- 2) *Tradition* refers to respect, dedication, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion offer.
- 3) *Benevolence*: protection and enhancement of the people's welfare with whom the individual is in frequent personal contact
- 4) *Universalism* represents the understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature.
- 5) *Self-direction*: independent thought and action—choosing, creating, exploring.
- 6) Stimulation refers to excitement, novelty, and challenge in life
- 7) *Hedonism*: enjoyment and profound gratification for oneself.
- 8) Achievement: personal success through demonstrating aptitude according to social standards
- 9) *Power* refers to the inclination for social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources.
- 10) *Security* is defined as safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships, and of self.

Guth et.al (1965) stresses that: "Values are not only closely related to personality, they are part of it, and serve as a guiding system to personality when facing solutions and alternatives, values form a very consistent personality trait of an individual, especially if some values are clearly dominated by the others".

Agreeableness predicts values associated to the quality of social interaction such as: appreciating teamwork and unity and disapproval of competition and benefits. The agreeableness dimension branches the differences between the people-oriented and objective-oriented values (McCrae and Costa, 1996).

## 2. Research methodology

The aim of this research study is to determine the level of association between the agreeableness type of personality and basic personal values through non-experimental quantitative methodology using original measuring instruments appropriate to the main variables. The set hypotheses, based on the theoretical frame, are that:

- there is positive association between the agreeableness type of personality and basic personal values.
- the agreeableness type reaches the highest level of mean score by the value *universalism*

The population of this research consists of all senior students of Albanian high schools in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia, (High schools: "Zef Lush Marku", "Arseni Jovkov", "Cvetan Dimov", "Pançe Karagjozov", "Vlado Tasevski", "Marija Kiri", "8 Shtatori", "Zdravko Cvetkovski"), and the total number of subjects is 479. During the data analysis 50 subjects were

excluded from the final results since the validity of the data was threatened. Based on gender, 200 male and 279 female subjects were included, whereas 222 lived in rural areas and 257 in urban areas. Other descriptive data was not calculated as it was not within the scope of the study goals but were set to control any factors that might threaten the results. The descriptive data present in the measuring instruments did not indicate any threats during the variable measurements. The subjects in the survey were randomly selected and their willingness to participate as well as their anonymity was fully respected by following all ethical norms.

The survey was conducted during March-April 2017 and the study as a whole ended in 30.08.2017.

## 2.1 Measuring instruments

The measurement of the variable of agreeableness type of personality was achieved through the five factor questionnaire of personality – Big Five Inventory ((BFI; John, Donahue et al, 1991 and John et al 2008)) and only the data of the items 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, were processed since they obtained the sincere opinion of the subject on how much they trust others, how much they oppose others, how easy they adapt, how much they think of themselves, how concerned they are about the others and to what extent they pressure others to complete an activity.

The BFI reliability value for extraversion in Alpha Cronbach scale reached satisfactory value of .508. The approval of nine items with the highest possible value in the answers from 1 (never) to 5 (very often) indicates that the subject has a more expressed agreeableness personality. This questionnaire is applied for the first time in Macedonia and is translated into Albanian through back translation procedure.

In previous research where this instrument is applied (Benet-Martinez and John, 1998; John et al.,2008; Soto, John, Gosling and Potter, 2008) according to Alpha Cronbach scale, it resulted with high reliability from .81 to .88 with an average .85.

### The personal values questionnaire Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ)

(PVQ-40; Schwartz, 2003; Schwartz et al, 2001). This questionnaire is created by SVS (Shwartz Value Survey, 1992) with the idea of developing an instrument which is less abstract. It consists of 40 items which include descriptions of individuals that support certain values, including three to six items per value. The subjects answer on the scale from 1 (very much like me) to 6 (not like me at all) to describe to what extent they comply with the value descriptions. The questionnaire is constructed to measure ten basic personal values: conformity, tradition, benevolence, universalism, self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power and security. The portraying is achieved by two types of questions: the first one refers to the importance (*it is important for them to have in their life...*), and the second one refers to aspirations or desires (*he/she want, seeks, believes...*). The instrument resulted in high reliability on all value categories, with an exception (tradition) conformity =.73, benevolence =.65 tradition =.51, universalism =.85, self-direction =.89, stimulation =.78, hedonism =.81, achievement =.84, power =.69 and security =.64 according to Carson J. Sandy, Samuel D. Gosling, Shalom H. Schwartz & Tim Koelkebeck (2016).

The same questionnaire is used by Desirée Knoppen; Willem Sari (2009), Alvaro Tamayo, Juliana Barreiros Porto (2009), Constanze Beierlein, Eldad Davidov, Peter Schmidt, Shalom H. Schwartz, Beatrice Rammstedt (2012).

## 2.2 Findings

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistical analysis for the main variables of the study, the agreeableness type of personality and basic personal values according to the Kurtosis statistic. The agreeableness personality type is averaged (M = 20.42) from minimum 13 and maximum 34 and standard deviation (SD = 3.71). The value *conformity* is averaged (M = 17.53) from minimum 7 and maximum 24 and standard deviation (SD = 3.23). The value *tradition* is averaged (M=17,28) from minimum 8 and maximum 24 and standard deviation (SD=3,30), *benevolence* is averaged (M=18,32) from minimum 7 and maximum 24 and standard deviation (SD=3,73), *universalism* is averaged (M=27,08) from minimum 13 and maximum 36 and standard deviation (SD=5,04), *self-direction* is averaged (M=17,83) from minimum 7 and maximum 24 and standard deviation (SD=3,72), *stimulation* is averaged (M=13,17) from minimum 5 and maximum 18 and standard deviation (SD=3,03), *hedonism* is averaged (M=12,08) from minimum 4 and maximum 18 and standard deviation (SD=2,98), *achievement* is averaged (M=17,12) from minimum 6 and maximum 24 and standard deviation (SD=3,72), *power* is averaged (M=10,13) from minimum 3 and maximum 18 and standard deviation (SD=21,75), *security* is averaged (M=21,75) from minimum 11 and maximum 30 and standard deviation (SD=4,11). From the data it is obvious that, in contrast to other

personal values, the dominating basic personal value of the subjects is *universalism* with the highest mean score from the general data.

**Table 1.** General mean score of agreeableness personality type and the basic personal values.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
agreeable_elimination	479	13.00	34.00	23.5136	3.71800	-.135	.223
PV_security	479	11.00	30.00	21.7537	4.11877	-.665	.223
PV_conformity	479	7.00	24.00	17.5324	3.23140	-.258	.223
PV_tradition	479	8.00	24.00	17.2881	3.30216	-.273	.223
PV_benevolence	479	7.00	24.00	18.3236	3.73069	-.339	.223
PV_universalism	479	13.00	36.00	27.0877	5.04630	-.615	.223
PV_self-direction	479	7.00	24.00	17.8351	3.72147	-.408	.223
PV_stimulation	479	5.00	18.00	13.1795	3.03348	-.381	.223
PV_hedonism	479	4.00	18.00	12.0814	2.98105	-.384	.223
PV_achievement	479	6.00	24.00	17.1211	3.72737	-.409	.223
PV_power	479	3.00	18.00	10.1399	3.45794	-.590	.223
Valid N (listwise)	479						

The results presented in table 2 and 3 show the association between the agreeableness personality type and basic personal values which verify the first hypothesis stating that: *there is positive association between the agreeableness and basic personal values*. The data indicates that the agreeableness type has statistically significant and positive association to all basic personal values, and the association to values is as follows: *conformity* ( $r=.135$ ;  $p<.01$ ), *tradition* ( $r=.122$ ;  $p<.01$ ), *benevolence* ( $r=.249$ ;  $p<.01$ ), *universalism* ( $r=.255$ ;  $p<.01$ ), *self-direction* ( $r=.224$ ;  $p<.01$ ), *stimulation* ( $r=.234$ ;  $p<.01$ ), *hedonism* ( $r=.274$ ;  $p<.01$ ), *achievement* ( $r=.172$ ;  $p<.01$ ), *power* ( $r=.119$ ;  $p<.01$ ), *security* ( $r=.173$ ;  $p<.01$ ).

**Table 2.** Correlations of agreeableness type of personality and basic personal values.

		Agreeableness type	Conformity	Tradition	Benevolence	Universalism	Self-direction
Agreeableness type	Pearson Correlation	1	.135**	.122**	.249**	.255**	.224**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003	.007	.000	.000	.000
	N	479	479	479	479	479	479

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed).

**Table 3.** Correlations of agreeableness type of personality and basic personal values.

		Agreeableness type	Stimulation	Hedonism	Achievement	Power	Security
Agreeableness type	Pearson Correlation	1	.234**	.274**	.172**	.119*	.173**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.009	.000
	N	479	479	479	479	479	479

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The table 4 shows the results of one way ANOVA regarding the differences of basic personal values mean scores and the agreeableness type of personality. According to the results it is proved that: the agreeableness type achieves high level on

PV *benevolence* with M=19,2763 and SD= 3,75614, in contrast to the average type with M= 18,4892 and SD=3,39729 and the less agreeableness type with M= 17,4309 and SD=3,75599 [ F(10,910) p<.000]. For the basic personal value *universalism*, the agreeableness type achieves high level M=28,6382 and SD= 4,43279, in contrast to the average type with M= 26,7698 and SD= 4,90684 and the less agreeableness type with M= 26,0691 and SD=5,32781 [ F(11,789) p<.000]. For the basic personal value *hedonism*, the agreeableness type achieves high level M=13,2566 and SD= 2,85290, in contrast to the average type with M= 11,7698 and SD= 2,75396 and the less agreeableness type with M= 11,3617 and SD=2,97171 [ F(8,739) p<.000]. However, there were no differences between the levels of basic personal values and the agreeableness type regarding the values: conformity, tradition, self-direction, stimulation, achievement, power and security therefore their results were not indicated in the study.

Table 4. Differences of basic personal values in the agreeableness type of personality

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Minimum	Maximum	F	Sig.
Benevolence	Low	188	17,4309	3,75599	,27393	7,00	24,00	10,910	,000
	Average	139	18,4892	3,39729	,28815	8,00	24,00		
	High	152	19,2763	3,75614	,30466	7,00	24,00		
	Total	479	18,3236	3,73069	,17046	7,00	24,00		
Universalism	Low	188	26,0691	5,32781	,38857	13,00	36,00	11,789	,000
	Average	139	26,7698	4,90684	,41619	14,00	36,00		
	High	152	28,6382	4,43279	,35955	17,00	36,00		
	Total	479	27,0877	5,04630	,23057	13,00	36,00		
Hedonism	Low	188	11,3617	2,97171	,21673	4,00	18,00	19,442	,000
	Average	139	11,7698	2,75396	,23359	5,00	18,00		
	High	152	13,2566	2,85290	,23140	5,00	18,00		
	Total	479	12,0814	2,98105	,13621	4,00	18,00		

The effect of agreeableness type on basic personal values *stimulation* and *hedonism* was examined through Eta square where the findings indicate as follows: the agreeableness type has a low effect on the value *stimulation* ( $\eta^2=.112$ ) or 11.2%, as well as on the value *hedonism* ( $\eta^2=.138$ ) or 13.8%., (Table 5).

**Table 5.** The effect of agreeableness type on basic personal values according to Eta square.

	Eta	Eta Squared
Stimulation *		
Agreeableness type	.335	.112
Hedonism *		
Agreeableness type	.371	.138

### 3. Conclusion

Referring to the reliable statistical results of the study which were obtained through questionnaire measurements appropriate to the main variables of the study, it was proved the agreeableness type of personality has a positive association and statistically significant to all basic personal values. These findings are not found in any previous research in the Republic of Macedonia, yet the other research show that: "Values are not only closely related to personality, they are part of it, and serve as a guiding system by personality when facing choices and alternatives, values form a very consistent personality trait of an individual, especially if some values are clearly dominated by the others" Guth et al. (1965), just as the McCrae and Costa, 1996 study shows that agreeableness predicts the values related to quality of social interaction such as: appreciating teamwork and unity and disapproval of competition and benefits.

In the five factor personality model, only artistic, social and entrepreneurial interests were clearly related to the personality traits. Artistic interest is positively associated to agreeableness and intellect ( $r=.26$  and  $r=.27$  respectively); social interest was moderately associated to agreeableness ( $r=.43$ ).

One way ANOVA statistical data prove that there are statistically significant differences in basic personal values in the agreeableness type of personality where the value universalism achieved the highest mean score and hedonism the lowest, whereas values such as: conformity, tradition, self-direction, stimulation, achievements, power and security had no significant differences. Other studies on the same variables show that: the agreeableness dimension branches the differences between the people-oriented and objective-oriented values (McCrae and Costa, 1996).

The effect of agreeableness type on basic personal values was examined through Eta square where the findings show that there was effect on values stimulation and hedonism ( $\eta^2=.112$ ),

( $\eta^2=.138$ ). These results have not been examined in any other previous research in our country and they represent a valuable and important finding in the organizational psychology which leads to opening a new chapter for further studies and researchers on the same topic.

### References

- [1] Alvaro Tamayo, Juliana Barreiros Porto (2009). Validity of the Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ) in Brazil, *Psicologia: Teoria e Pesquisa* Jul-Set 2009, Vol. 25 n. 3, pp. 369-376
- [2] Burch G St. J, Neil A (2008). Personality as predictor of Work Related Behavior and Performance: Recent advances and directions for future. *International Review of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*. Edited by G.P. Hodgkinson & J. K. Ford. Vol. 23, John Wiley & Sons Ltd
- [3] Carson J. Sandy, Samuel D. Gosling, Shalom H. Schwartz & Tim Koelkebeck (2016): The Development and Validation of Brief and Ultrabrief Measures of Values, *Journal of Personality Assessment*, DOI: 10.1080/00223891.2016.1231115
- [4] Cattell HEP, Alan DM (2008). *The Sage Handbook of Personality Theory Assessment*, pp. 135-159.
- [5] Christopher J. Soto, Oliver P. John (2008) Ten facet scales for the Big Five Inventory: Convergence with NEO PI-R facets, self-peer agreement, and discriminant validity

- [6] Constanze Beierlein, Eldad Davidov, Peter Schmidt, Shalom H. Schwartz, Beatrice Rammstedt (2012). Testing the discriminant validity of Schëartz' Portrait Value Questionnaire items – A replication and extension of Knoppen and Saris, *Survey Research Methods* 6(1):25-36 ·January 2012 DOI: 10.5167/uzh-63005
- [7] Desirée Knoppen; Willem Saris. (2009). Evaluation of the Portrait Values Questionnaire using SEM: A New ESS Proposal, Italy, June 11-12, 2009
- [8] Goldberg, LR (1993), 'The structure of phenotypic personality traits', *American Psychologist*, vol. 48, pp. 26-34.
- [9] Guth, W. D. and R. Tagiuri. 1965. 'Personal Values and Corporate Strategy.' *Harvard Business Review* 43(5):123-32
- [10] John, O. P., Donahue, E. M., & Kentle, R. L. (1991). *The Big Five Inventory—Versions 4a and 54*. Berkeley, CA: University of California, Berkeley, Institute of Personality and Social Research.
- [11] Ostendorf F, Angleitner A (1992). on the generality and comprehensiveness of the five factor model of personality : evidence for five robust factors in questionnaire data. *Modern personality psychology*, eds. Gian-Vittorio Caprara et al., New York [u.a.]: Harvester Wheatsheaf, pp. 73-109.
- [12] Sagiv, L., & Schwartz, S. H. (1995). Value priorities and readiness for out-group social contact. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69, 437-448.
- [13] Winter, D. G., John, O. P., Stewart, A. J., Klohnen, E. C., & Duncan, L. E. (1998). Traits and motives: Toward an integration of two traditions in personality research. *Psychological Review*, 105, 230-250.