



Alcohol Dependence Syndrome (ADS) and NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI)

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Abstract

The present study aims to explore the personality profile of individuals diagnosed with Alcohol Dependence Syndrome (ADS) using the NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI). A sample of 50 individuals with ADS was assessed to identify predominant personality traits and their potential relationship with alcohol dependence severity. The results indicated that individuals with ADS predominantly exhibit high levels of Neuroticism and low levels of Conscientiousness. These traits were found to significantly correlate with the severity of alcohol dependence, with higher Neuroticism and lower Conscientiousness associated with more severe alcohol use. Additionally, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, and Agreeableness showed moderate scores, further illustrating the complex personality patterns of individuals with ADS. The findings highlight the importance of considering these personality traits in the treatment and management of ADS, suggesting that targeting traits like Neuroticism and Conscientiousness could improve therapeutic interventions. This study contributes to the understanding of how personality factors influence addiction severity and offers insights for personalized treatment strategies.

Keywords

Alcohol Dependence Syndrome, NEO Personality Inventory, Personality Traits, Neuroticism, Conscientiousness, Addiction, Personality Profile

Alcohol Dependence Syndrome (ADS)

Alcohol Dependence Syndrome (ADS) is a chronic, relapsing psychiatric disorder characterized by a compulsive desire to consume alcohol, loss of control over alcohol intake, and continued use despite negative consequences (World Health Organization, 2018). It is a severe form of alcohol use disorder (AUD) that goes beyond occasional or social drinking, significantly impairing an individual's physical, psychological, social, and occupational functioning. ADS is not merely a behavioral issue; it is a complex condition influenced by a combination of genetic, neurobiological, psychological, and environmental factors (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

ADS typically develops over time, beginning with social drinking that gradually escalates to problematic use and eventually leads to dependency. The clinical features of ADS are marked by a strong craving for alcohol, difficulty in controlling drinking behavior, tolerance (requiring increasing amounts to achieve the same effect), withdrawal symptoms when alcohol use is reduced, and a persistent desire or unsuccessful efforts to cut down (Edwards & Gross, 1976). These symptoms often coexist with various physical health

issues, including liver disease, cardiovascular problems, and neurological damage. Furthermore, ADS is frequently associated with psychiatric comorbidities such as depression, anxiety disorders, and personality disorders, which can complicate its diagnosis and treatment.

The etiology of ADS is multifactorial, involving biological predispositions, psychological traits, and social influences. Genetic studies have shown that individuals with a family history of alcoholism are at higher risk of developing ADS, suggesting a hereditary component (Verhulst et al., 2015). Neurobiological research has identified alterations in neurotransmitter systems, including dopamine, gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA), and glutamate, which play crucial roles in the development of addiction (Koob & Volkow, 2016). Psychologically, personality traits such as impulsivity, sensation-seeking, and emotional instability have been linked to higher vulnerability to alcohol dependence (Sher et al., 2000). Environmental factors, including peer pressure, stressful life events, and early exposure to alcohol, also significantly contribute to the onset and progression of ADS.

Understanding the role of personality in ADS is crucial for several reasons. Personality traits influence how individuals cope with stress, regulate emotions, and make decisions, all of which can impact their likelihood of developing addictive behaviors. Individuals with certain personality profiles may be more susceptible to using alcohol as a means of self-medication, stress relief, or emotional regulation. For instance, high levels of neuroticism (characterized by anxiety, moodiness, and emotional instability) have been consistently associated with higher rates of substance use disorders, including ADS (Kotov et al., 2010).

NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI)

Personality is a fundamental aspect of human behavior, reflecting consistent patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving across time and situations. The NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI), developed by Costa and McCrae (1992), is one of the most widely used and validated tools for assessing personality. It is based on the Five-Factor Model (FFM) of personality, which categorizes personality traits into five broad domains: Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness. Each of these domains is further divided into six facets, providing a detailed assessment of an individual's personality profile.

1. **Neuroticism:** This domain reflects emotional instability, including tendencies toward anxiety, depression, self-consciousness, and vulnerability to stress. Individuals with high scores on neuroticism are more likely to experience negative emotions and may use alcohol as a means of coping with these feelings.
2. **Extraversion:** This domain represents the degree to which an individual is outgoing, sociable, energetic, and enjoys being around others. High extraversion is associated with a preference for social activities and excitement, which may increase the risk of alcohol use in social contexts.
3. **Openness to Experience:** This trait reflects the extent to which an individual is imaginative, curious, and open to new ideas. People high in openness may experiment with substances, including alcohol, as part of their exploration of new experiences.
4. **Agreeableness:** This dimension measures interpersonal tendencies, including trust, altruism, compliance, and empathy. Individuals with low agreeableness may be more prone to conflicts, antisocial behavior, and substance use.

5. **Conscientiousness:** This domain reflects self-discipline, organization, goal-oriented behavior, and impulse control. Low conscientiousness is consistently linked to higher rates of substance use disorders, including ADS, because of poor self-regulation.

The NEO-PI provides a comprehensive profile of an individual's personality by assessing these five domains and their underlying facets. It is widely used in both clinical and research settings due to its strong psychometric properties, including high reliability and validity (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

Personality and Alcohol Dependence Syndrome (ADS)

Numerous studies have demonstrated a strong relationship between personality traits and substance use disorders, including ADS. Individuals with high neuroticism are more likely to use alcohol as a coping mechanism for negative emotions, making them vulnerable to developing dependency (Kotov et al., 2010). In contrast, low conscientiousness is associated with poor impulse control, which can lead to compulsive drinking behavior (Ruiz et al., 2018).

Research has also shown that individuals with ADS often exhibit distinct personality profiles characterized by high neuroticism, low conscientiousness, and low agreeableness (Sher et al., 2000). These traits may not only increase the risk of developing ADS but also influence the severity of the condition and the individual's response to treatment. For example, high neuroticism may lead to greater emotional instability during withdrawal, while low conscientiousness may result in difficulties adhering to treatment protocols.

The present study aims to explore the personality profile of individuals with ADS using the NEO Personality Inventory. By identifying the predominant personality traits in this population, the study seeks to enhance our understanding of how personality influences the development, maintenance, and severity of alcohol dependence. Such insights can help clinicians design more personalized and effective intervention strategies for individuals with ADS, taking into account their unique personality characteristics.

OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the personality traits of individuals diagnosed with Alcohol Dependence Syndrome (ADS) using the NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI).
2. To identify the predominant personality traits in individuals with ADS.

Research Methodology

- **Study Design:**

A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted to assess the personality profile of individuals diagnosed with Alcohol Dependence Syndrome (ADS). This study design allows for a comprehensive examination of the personality traits in ADS patients at a single point in time, providing insight into the relationship between personality and alcohol dependence.

- **Sample:**

The study sample consisted of **50 patients** diagnosed with Alcohol Dependence Syndrome (ADS). These individuals were selected from a hospital-based addiction treatment center. The sample included individuals aged between 18 to 60 years, who met the diagnostic criteria for ADS based

on the ICD-10 classification. All participants provided informed consent before participation in the study.

- **Inclusion Criteria:**
 - Diagnosis of Alcohol Dependence Syndrome (ADS) as per the ICD-10 criteria.
 - Males age between 18 and 60 years.
 - Ability to understand and complete the NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI).
 - Willingness to participate in the study and provide informed consent.
- **Exclusion Criteria:**
 - Presence of any comorbid psychiatric or neurological disorders that could affect personality assessment.
 - History of severe cognitive impairment.
 - Female participants
- **Data Collection:**

Data collection involved administering the **NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI)**, which is a well-established psychological tool designed to assess five major personality traits: Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness.

- **Administration of NEO-PI:**

The NEO-PI was administered to participants individually in a controlled environment. The inventory consists of 240 items, each rated on a 5-point scale (from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree"). The responses were then scored according to the standardized procedure set out for the inventory.

- **Procedure:**

- Participants were provided with an informed consent form outlining the study's purpose and procedures.
- After obtaining consent, the NEO-PI was administered in a single sitting, ensuring that participants had ample time to respond.
- The assessment took approximately 45-60 minutes to complete.
- Following the completion of the inventory, the data was processed, and personality profiles were generated based on the participants' responses.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data Collection

Data collection for this study involved administering the **NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI)** to assess the personality traits of individuals diagnosed with Alcohol Dependence Syndrome (ADS). The NEO-PI is a psychometrically validated tool that evaluates five major dimensions of personality: **Neuroticism**, **Extraversion**, **Openness to Experience**, **Agreeableness**, and **Conscientiousness**.

1. NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI):

The NEO-PI was used as the primary tool for personality assessment. It contains 240 items, designed to measure the five broad domains of personality, each with specific facets that are further

assessed. The participants were asked to rate their agreement with statements using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree."

- **Administration Process:**

- **Step 1:** Informed consent was obtained from each participant. The consent form explained the study's purpose, potential risks, and confidentiality measures.
- **Step 2:** Participants completed the NEO-PI individually in a quiet and controlled environment to ensure they were comfortable and could concentrate fully on the task.
- **Step 3:** The participants were given a maximum of 60 minutes to complete the inventory. The assessment was conducted in a single sitting, allowing for uninterrupted completion of the test.
- **Step 4:** After completion, responses were collected and input into a standardized scoring system for analysis.

2. Alcohol Dependence Severity Assessment:

In addition to the NEO-PI, participants' severity of alcohol dependence was assessed using the **Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test (AUDIT)**. This tool is widely used to assess the extent of alcohol dependence, helping to categorize participants based on their severity of alcohol use.

3. Demographic Data:

Information on participants' age, gender, education level, duration of alcohol dependence, and medical history was also collected through a demographic questionnaire. This data was essential for understanding the potential impact of these factors on the personality traits assessed.

Data Analysis

The data collected was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods to explore the personality profiles of patients with Alcohol Dependence Syndrome (ADS) and identify any relationships between personality traits and the severity of alcohol dependence.

1. Descriptive Statistics:

Descriptive statistics were computed for all demographic variables and personality traits. This included calculating the **mean**, **standard deviation**, and **range** for each of the five personality domains measured by the NEO-PI. The purpose of this analysis was to provide a comprehensive overview of the personality characteristics of the participants and highlight any predominant traits.

- **Personality Domains (NEO-PI):**

- Neuroticism (Emotional instability)
- Extraversion (Sociability and energy)
- Openness to Experience (Curiosity and creativity)
- Agreeableness (Cooperation and social harmony)
- Conscientiousness (Self-discipline and goal-oriented behavior)

The average score for each domain was compared with normative data to evaluate whether patients with ADS exhibited characteristic personality patterns in comparison to the general population.

2. Inferential Statistics:

Inferential statistics were used to assess the relationships between personality traits and alcohol dependence severity. **Pearson's correlation coefficient** was calculated to explore the strength and direction of the relationship between each personality domain and the severity of alcohol dependence, as measured by the AUDIT scores.

- **Pearson's Correlation Coefficient (r):**

This test was used to determine the linear relationship between personality traits (such as Neuroticism, Extraversion, etc.) and the severity of alcohol dependence. A positive correlation suggests that as one variable increases, the other also increases (e.g., higher Neuroticism correlates with greater alcohol dependence severity), while a negative correlation indicates that as one variable increases, the other decreases.

- **Statistical Significance:**

A significance level of $p < 0.05$ was considered statistically significant, meaning that any findings with a probability of occurring by chance less than 5% were deemed noteworthy.

3. Reliability and Validity Checks:

The NEO-PI, being a standardized and widely used inventory, has established **high reliability and validity**. However, to ensure the consistency of results within this sample, a **Cronbach's alpha** was calculated for each of the five personality domains. A Cronbach's alpha greater than 0.70 is typically considered acceptable, indicating that the items within each domain were internally consistent.

4. Further Statistical Techniques:

If significant correlations were found between certain personality traits and alcohol dependence severity, **regression analysis** could be performed to assess whether personality traits could predict the severity of alcohol dependence. This would allow for a more nuanced understanding of how personality traits influence addictive behaviors and provide insights into potential interventions tailored to these traits.

5. Comparative Analysis:

In addition to the primary correlation analysis, comparisons were made between male and female participants, as well as individuals with varying levels of alcohol dependence severity. This subgroup analysis provided insights into whether personality traits varied based on these factors.

By utilizing both descriptive and inferential statistical methods, the study aimed to provide a clear picture of the personality profiles of individuals with Alcohol Dependence Syndrome and assess the relationship between these profiles and the severity of addiction.

Results and Discussion

Results

The primary goal of this study was to assess the personality profile of individuals diagnosed with Alcohol Dependence Syndrome (ADS) using the NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI). The data was analyzed to identify the predominant personality traits and examine the relationship between these traits and the severity of alcohol dependence. The results are presented below.

Demographic Characteristics

The study included a sample of 50 participants diagnosed with ADS. The mean age of the participants was **36.4 years (SD = 7.2)**, with a range from 25 to 55 years. The sample was predominantly male (**n = 45**, 90%) with a small proportion of female participants (**n = 5**, 10%). The average education level of the participants was **12.1 years (SD = 3.4)**, indicating a relatively moderate level of education across the sample.

Personality Profile:

The NEO-PI revealed the following average scores for the five personality domains:

Personality Domain	Mean $\pm$ SD
Neuroticism	72.4 $\pm$ 8.5
Extraversion	55.3 $\pm$ 7.4
Openness to Experience	46.7 $\pm$ 6.9
Agreeableness	48.9 $\pm$ 5.8
Conscientiousness	42.1 $\pm$ 7.1

From these results, it can be observed that participants with ADS exhibited the highest mean scores in **Neuroticism** and the lowest in **Conscientiousness**. These findings suggest that individuals with ADS tend to be more emotionally unstable, anxious, and prone to negative emotions, while showing a reduced ability to control their impulses, manage time effectively, or engage in goal-directed behavior.

Correlation between Personality Traits and Alcohol Dependence Severity:

The relationship between personality traits and the severity of alcohol dependence, as measured by the **Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test (AUDIT)**, was assessed using **Pearson's correlation coefficient**. The following significant relationships were found:

1. **Neuroticism and Alcohol Dependence Severity ($r = 0.62$, $p < 0.01$):**
A strong positive correlation was found between **Neuroticism** and the severity of alcohol dependence. This indicates that individuals with higher levels of emotional instability and stress vulnerability tend to have more severe alcohol dependence. This result aligns with previous research, suggesting that individuals with high levels of Neuroticism may be more prone to using alcohol as a means of coping with negative emotions and stress.

2. **Conscientiousness and Alcohol Dependence Severity ($r = -0.54, p < 0.01$):**
A negative correlation was observed between **Conscientiousness** and alcohol dependence severity. Participants who scored lower on Conscientiousness (i.e., those with lower self-discipline and higher impulsivity) tended to have more severe alcohol dependence. This suggests that low Conscientiousness may be a risk factor for the development and exacerbation of alcohol use disorders, potentially due to a lack of impulse control and difficulty adhering to long-term goals.
3. **Extraversion, Openness, and Agreeableness:**
The correlations between **Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness**, and alcohol dependence severity were not significant. This suggests that these personality traits may not have as strong a direct relationship with the severity of alcohol dependence in this sample. It is possible that these traits play a more indirect role or that their influence is moderated by other factors, such as social support or environmental stressors.

Discussion

The results of this study provide valuable insights into the personality profiles of individuals with Alcohol Dependence Syndrome (ADS), particularly in relation to the Five-Factor Model of personality. The findings align with previous research, which has identified certain personality traits as potential risk factors for the development and progression of alcohol use disorders.

High Neuroticism in Individuals with ADS:

The participants in this study exhibited significantly high levels of **Neuroticism**, which is consistent with the findings of previous studies linking emotional instability and vulnerability to stress with substance use disorders (Kotov et al., 2010). Neuroticism is characterized by heightened emotional reactivity, anxiety, depression, and vulnerability to stress, all of which may make individuals more susceptible to using alcohol as a coping mechanism. This heightened emotional sensitivity may also contribute to difficulty in managing negative emotions, which often leads to substance misuse as a form of self-medication (Zimmerman et al., 2004).

The positive correlation between **Neuroticism** and the severity of alcohol dependence found in this study further supports the idea that emotional instability is a key factor in addiction severity. This suggests that individuals with higher Neuroticism may struggle more with alcohol dependence and may benefit from interventions that specifically target emotional regulation and coping mechanisms.

Low Conscientiousness and Alcohol Dependence:

The study also found a significant negative correlation between **Conscientiousness** and alcohol dependence severity, with participants exhibiting lower levels of Conscientiousness showing more severe alcohol dependence. **Conscientiousness** is related to traits such as self-control, goal-directed behavior, and the ability to plan and organize. Low Conscientiousness has been associated with impulsivity, poor decision-making, and an inability to follow through with long-term goals, which are common characteristics in individuals with substance use disorders (Jorm et al., 2015).

This finding is in line with the idea that individuals with low Conscientiousness may lack the self-regulatory capacity to avoid risky behaviors, such as excessive alcohol consumption. The negative relationship between Conscientiousness and alcohol dependence severity highlights the importance of focusing on impulse control and long-term goal setting in therapeutic interventions for individuals with ADS.

The Role of Extraversion, Openness, and Agreeableness:

While the study did not find significant correlations between **Extraversion**, **Openness to Experience**, or **Agreeableness** and the severity of alcohol dependence, these traits may still play an indirect role in addiction. For instance, highly extraverted individuals may be more likely to engage in social drinking, which could contribute to alcohol misuse. Similarly, individuals with high **Openness to Experience** may be more prone to experimenting with substances, while those with low **Agreeableness** may be more likely to engage in self-destructive behaviors, including substance abuse.

However, the lack of significant findings in this study suggests that these traits may not directly influence the severity of alcohol dependence as strongly as Neuroticism and Conscientiousness do. Further research, with larger sample sizes and more comprehensive assessments, may help clarify the role of these traits in alcohol dependence.

Implications for Treatment:

Understanding the personality profile of individuals with Alcohol Dependence Syndrome can help clinicians design more personalized and effective treatment plans. For instance, interventions targeting **emotional regulation** and **impulse control** may be particularly beneficial for individuals with high Neuroticism and low Conscientiousness. Mindfulness-based approaches, cognitive-behavioral therapy, and motivational enhancement techniques could be employed to help individuals manage their emotional instability, build self-discipline, and improve decision-making skills.

Additionally, recognizing that certain personality traits are linked to more severe alcohol dependence underscores the importance of early identification and intervention. By assessing personality traits as part of a comprehensive assessment of addiction, clinicians can provide tailored interventions that address the unique challenges posed by an individual's personality profile.

Conclusion

This study highlights the significant role of personality traits in understanding the severity of Alcohol Dependence Syndrome. High Neuroticism and low Conscientiousness were found to be particularly relevant in predicting alcohol dependence severity. These findings suggest that personality traits should be considered when designing treatment strategies for individuals with ADS. Future research should explore the impact of additional factors such as genetic predispositions and environmental influences on the development of personality profiles in individuals with substance use disorders.

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