

# A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON PERSONALITY TRAITS AND SUBJECTIVE WEL-BEING BETWEEN HIV INFECTED AND NON INFECTED INDIVIDUALS

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## Abstracts

The aim of the present study was to find out the relationship between personality traits and subjective well-being on HIV infected and non-infected individuals. **Objectives:** 1) To study the relationship between personality traits of HIV infected and non-infected individual and 2) To study the relationship between subjective well-being of HIV infected and non-infected individuals. **Results:** There was no significant difference in the personality traits between HIV infected and non-infected individual except on the traits of neuroticism (p-value = 0.028). On the three dimensions of personality, psychoticism (p-value = 0.006) was found to have significant difference between infected males (mean score = 3.68) and females (1.96). Neuroticism (p-value = 0.035) between the genders was also significantly different. Likewise, on lie-scale (p-value = 0.000), a very highly significant difference emerged between the two genders with the females getting higher mean (7.12) as against the males (5.16). Regarding overall subjective well-being, the mean score (90.74) of HIV non-infected was higher than that of the mean score (83.04) of HIV-infected group and the mean variation showed significant difference as manifest by p-value = 0.000. However, no significant relationship was found in the subjective well-being (p-value = 0.211) between HIV-infected males (mean score = 5.56) and females (mean score = 6.00).

**Index term:** Personality traits, HIV-infected, subjective wellbeing

## INTRODUCTION

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is one of the most widely spread epidemics in the world. In India, the HIV/AIDS epidemic represents the most serious public health problems. The prevalence of the infection in all parts of the country highlights the spread from urban to rural areas and from high risk to the general population.

Personality is one of the most theorised and most researched aspects of psychology. According to Gordon W Allport (1937), "Personality is the dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his unique adjustments to his environment."

Most personality theories depict individuals along dimensions of extraversion-introversion and stability-instability (Eysenck HJ, 1992; Lucas RE et al, 2000). Of the four types, Hutton HE and Treisman GJ (2001) pointed out that unstable extroverts are most prone to engage in behaviour that places them at high risk for HIV infection. This have been supported by other imperial investigations which found high extraversion to be associated with sexual promiscuity, desire for sexual novelty, multiple sex partners (Eysenck HJ, 1976; Trobst KK et al, 2000) and substance use (Sher KJ et al, 2000). Emotional instability is related to unsafe sex practices (Mc Cown W, 1993) as well as to substance abuse (Mc Cormick RA et al, 1998).

Since HIV/AIDS is such a life threatening condition, the will to get on with life and a positive mental attitude is one of the most important factors. Without it a person's mental and physical health can deteriorate quickly. Lubeck DP and Fries JP (1994), in their study of quality of life and HIV/AIDS, pointed out that HIV infection has a great impact on the QOL of symptomatic.

## OBJECTIVES

- 1) To study the relationship between personality traits of HIV infected and non-infected individual
- 2) To study the relationship between subjective well-being of HIV infected and non-infected individuals

## METHODOLOGY

The present study dealt with the comparative analysis on personality traits and subjective well-being of HIV infected and non-infected individuals. Descriptive research method was adopted and information was gathered through administering Eysenck's personality questionnaire and subjective wellbeing inventory.

### Sampling method

A sample of 50 individuals who were diagnosed as HIV positive were selected from the department of Microbiology, psychiatry, RIMS, Imphal and from two Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) such as Social awareness services organization and Kripa Foundation as the sample of present study. Another 50 non infected HIV individual were also selected from the Imphal municipal area as control group.

### Inclusion Criteria

- Patients diagnosed as HIV positive
- HIV positive patients within the age group of 20-50 years
- HIV positive patient who were able to give patient

### Exclusion criteria

- Patient with other severe medical condition
- HIV patient with serious psychotic illness

### Procedure for Data Collection

Each subject was approached by the investigator and they were explained the purpose of the study that the study was mainly taken to explore the personality traits and subjective wellbeing of HIV infected patients. They were informed that their name will not be disclosed at any part of the study. Confidentiality will be maintained at any cost. Full consent was obtained from each of the subject. Then semi structure proforma were administered for collecting socio-demographic variables, Eysenck personality questionnaire for assessing personality traits and subjective wellbeing inventory for assessing quality of life.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table No. 1**  
Showing differences of mean and S.D of personality traits between the groups

Traits	HIV-infected Mean $\pm$ S.D	HIV non-infected Mean $\pm$ S.D	t-value	p-value	Remark
Psychoticism	2.82 $\pm$ 2.28	3.68 $\pm$ 3.05	1.595	0.114	Insignificant
Neuroticism	11.48 $\pm$ 4.58	9.46 $\pm$ 4.48	2.227	0.028	Significant
Extraversion	13.08 $\pm$ 4.02	13.76 $\pm$ 3.54	0.896	0.372	Insignificant
Lie	6.16 $\pm$ 1.45	5.98 $\pm$ 1.22	0.595	0.553	Insignificant

**Table No. 1:** There was no significant difference in the personality traits between HIV infected and non-infected individual except on the traits of neuroticism as evident by p-value = 0.028. Mean score of neuroticism for HIV – infected (11.48) is higher than that of HIV non-infected group (9.46) indicating that HIV infected patient were emotionally over-responsive, unstable, more anxious, and more liable to neurotic breakdown under stress. The present finding was supported by a study conducted by Trobst KK et al, (2000), reported that high neuroticism was associated with HIV risk behaviour. The neurotic trait in infected patient might be related to the stress of being positive in status, which was usually accompanied by feelings of uncertainty and worriedness about life and emotional vulnerability.

**Table No. 2**  
Showing differences of mean and S.D of personality traits between HIV infected male and female

Traits	Male Mean $\pm$ S.D	Female Mean $\pm$ S.D	t-value	p-value	Remark
Psychoticism	3.68 $\pm$ 2.49	1.96 $\pm$ 1.69	2.851	0.006	Significant
Neuroticism	10.12 $\pm$ 3.51	12.85 $\pm$ 5.16	2.175	0.035	Significant
Extraversion	13.44 $\pm$ 3.67	12.72 $\pm$ 4.40	0.280	0.533	Insignificant
Lie	5.16 $\pm$ 1.28	7.12 $\pm$ 0.83	6.416	0.000	Significant

**Table No. 2:** On the three dimensions of personality, psychoticism was found to have significant difference between infected males (mean score = 3.68) and females (1.96). Neuroticism between the genders was also significantly different. Likewise on lie-scale, a very highly significant difference emerged between the two genders with the females getting higher mean (7.12) as against the males (5.16). This was in line with the study by Hartshorne H and May MA (1928) who found that females had higher lie-scores than males. This may be due to the greater conformity and more law abiding nature of females which make them to answer questions in the socially desirable directions. Extraversion was the only dimension which was not found to be significant.

**Table No. 3**  
**Showing differences of mean and S.D of overall wellbeing between the groups**

Subjective wellbeing	HIV-infected Mean ± S.D	HIV non-infected Mean ± S.D	t-value	p-value	Remark
Overall + wellbeing	39.22 ± 5.92	43.32 ± 4.79	3.804	0.000	Significant
Overall – wellbeing	43.82 ± 7.93	47.42 ± 6.70	2.452	0.016	Significant
Combined (+ve & -ve)	83.04 ± 11.78	90.74 ± 9.44	3.605	0.000	Significant

**Table No. 3:** It was perceived from the table that the mean score of HIV-infected (39.22) and HIV non-infected (43.32) in the overall positive wellbeing were found to have highly significant relationship as evident by p-value = 0.000 suggesting that HIV non-infected group were having more positive well-being when compared to HIV-infected group. Regarding overall subjective wellbeing, the mean score (90.74) of HIV non-infected was higher than that of the mean score (83.04) of HIV-infected group. The mean variation showed significant difference as manifest by p-value = 0.000. The present finding was supported by an earlier study on HIV patient (Lubeck DP & Fries JP. 1992) reported that HIV has a striking impact on quality of life of infected patients.

**Table No. 4**  
**Showing differences of mean and S.D of overall wellbeing of HIV infected male and female**

Subjective wellbeing	Male Mean ± S.D	Female Mean ± S.D	t-value	p-value	Remark
Overall wellbeing	5.56 ± 1.00	6.00 ± 1.41	1.269	0.211	Insignificant

**Table No. 4:** It was observed from this table that no significant relationship was found in the subjective well-being between HIV-infected males (mean score = 5.56) and females (mean score = 6.00) as manifest by p-value = 0.211. The present finding was in contrast with earlier studies on HIV patients which reported women having lower quality of life than men (Trobst KK et al, 2002; Hughes A, 2004). This may be attributed to smaller sample size in the present study while in the above mentioned earlier studies larger sample had been used.

## CONCLUSION

The present study revealed that there were not much association in personality traits between HIV-infected and non-infected groups except on dimension of neuroticism. HIV-infected individuals were more elevated on neuroticism than the non-infected groups. HIV-infected males were having more psychotic features than their female counterpart and HIV-infected female were having more neurotic features than their male counterparts. Regarding subjective wellbeing, HIV-infected individuals were found to have poor feelings of wellbeing as a whole as compared to that of non-infected groups, whereas no association was found between the infected males and females.

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