



## Big Five Personality Traits and Multicultural Personality Traits: A Current Review

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### Abstract

Personality is one of the basic concepts of psychology. When the concept of personality is examined in the literature, it is very difficult to find a common definition for this concept. When research on personality development and definitions is examined, the definition made by Goldon W. Allport is generally used. According to Allport, personality is a dynamic organization of psycho-physical systems that constitute the structures of emotions, thoughts, and behaviors specific to an individual. To explain personality, there are many theories in the literature, each theory prefers a different starting point and produces different concepts. When the literature is examined, it is seen that there are many theories of personality. The Big Five Personality Theory is one of these theories. The purpose of this study is to discuss the similarities and differences between the Big Five personality traits and multicultural personality traits. In the study, both five-factor personality traits and multicultural personality traits were discussed, and similar and different aspects were tried to be put forward. According to the results of the study, it was concluded that the extroversion and social initiative, open-mindedness and openness to experience, neuroticism and emotional stability, conscientiousness and flexibility, agreeableness, and cultural empathy sub-dimensions have similar structures.

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## Introduction

Personality is one of the basic concepts of psychology. When we look at the origin of the concept of personality, it comes from the Latin word Latin mask (persona). It was used to represent the roles of Roman artists. Nowadays, it makes sense beyond this meaning (Feist & Feist, 2008). When the field of the concept of personality is examined in the literature, it is very difficult to find a common definition for this concept (Gündüz, 2021). Considering this, each personality theory begins with its own paradigm and focuses on different aspects of personality. For example, some personality theories highlight unconscious processes and motives, some of them highlight environmental stimuli and conditioning processes, and some of them highlight the impact of environmental factors on the personality structure (Ellis, Abrams & Abrams, 2008). In fact, one side of personality is the attitude of a man in the relationships with other people; the behavior he shows, in other words, is the mask he wears. A person who is in a constant relationship with his environment often tries to express different forms of their emotions, thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors (Köknel, 2005). According to Allport, personality is a dynamic organization of psycho-physical systems that constitute the structures of emotions, thoughts, and behaviors specific to an individual (Allport, 1961). When the definition of Allport is closely viewed, it is seen that personality represents a human structure rather than individual parts, that there is a dynamic process, and that this dynamic structure expresses itself in emotions, thoughts, and behaviors (Gündüz, 2021). Personality is considered the set of physical, mental, and spiritual characteristics that distinguish a person from others. In other words, "personality" can be defined as all the features of emotions, thoughts, attitudes, and behavior that make a person different from others in both their objective and subjective aspects (Köknel, 2005).

Personality includes the adaptation characteristics of the individual that is unique and for distinguishing from others. These features include the patterns of thought, behavior and feeling developed to adapt to the inner and external world arising from the cognitive processes of the individual. These patterns include stereotypes to cope and defense in the face of conflicts, and the ability to give certain emotional reactions in certain cases (Öztürk & Ulusahin, 2004).

According to another definition, it is possible to define personality as the consistent behavior patterns and in-personal processes of the individual. According to this definition, personality consists of two components. The first component is related to "consistent behavioral patterns." Consistent behavior patterns should be observed in the individual at any time and in any case. The second component is considered "in-person personality processes." In-person personality processes include cognitive, emotional, and motivational processes that develop within the individual, affecting how the individual will feel and behave. In this definition, the phrase "caused by itself" is not the typical behaviors shown by everyone against a certain situation, but to exhibit the behaviors of the individual in the face of a certain situation (Burger, 2006). The personality is defined as the "motivational, interpersonal, affective, and experience-based relationship that explains the states and movements put forward in different situations" (McCrae & Costa, 1989; McCrae & Costa, 1991). To explain personality, there are many theories in the literature; each theory prefers a different starting point and produces different concepts. Each personality theory offers a specific and different perspective on personality. This perspective can focus on a certain area of personality and provide information that cannot be obtained from another perspective on that area (Carver & Scheier, 2012). When the literature is examined, it is seen that there are many theories of personality. One of these theories is the Five Factor Model. This study is aimed at discussing similar and different aspects of five-factor personality traits and multicultural personality traits.

The Five Factors Model was developed because of McCrae and Costa's factor study on the identification of personality (Maltby, Day & Macaskill, 2017). The Five Factor Personality Model is based on the idea that the different personality traits perceived by an individual will be reflected in everyday expressions in the cultural experiences of the culture to which he belongs and will be coded in the form of different words in the language used due to personal differences (Somer, 1998). It is possible to explain the basic assumption of the Five Factors Model as follows:

- The personal differences exhibited by individuals are coded through language.
- Coded features are transferred to the spoken language with words.

- Based on these words, you can learn about the personality structure and how this structure can be classified. Based on these assumptions, researchers have turned to the vocabulary in the languages to decide which features are the most important for the personality structure.

Based on these assumptions, researchers have turned to the vocabulary in the languages to decide which features are the most important for the personality structure. If the most important words characterized by personality traits were included in all dictionaries as the same terms, these dictionaries would have existed as a store of any culture. Almost all languages have words that characterize the same type of human. This expression raises the problem of universality of personality traits defined with different words in different languages. Almost all the languages living in the modern world have many terms that characterize individual differences. These features are conceptualized with different words that have the same meaning in different languages. From this point of view, these words, which define human characteristics, can be gathered under some factors for each language and the relationships between them can be measured. The Five Factor Personality Model is an important source for identifying and classifying personality traits (Goldberg, 1993; Somer & Goldberg, 1999).

The Five Factors Personality Model is a comprehensive model that explains personality traits and is widely accepted by mental health experts. Although The Five Factors Personality Model is defined differently in different cultures, it is a structure that applies to people of different ethnic origins, races, genders, and ages. All factors in the model are based on certain tendencies in behavioral styles. All factors have some biological foundations (Costa & McCrae (1992). Five Factors Personality Model has proposed five different personality typologies because of investigations and classifications that have taken place over a long period of time and involved a large number of scientists (Freidman & Shaustack, 1999). Five Factors Personality Model Previously aimed to classify and determine personality traits only with factor analysis, and later became a personality theory because of the studies (Caprara & Cervone, 2000). According to the Five Factors Personality Theory, personality traits consist of five dimensions: neuroticism, extroversion, openness to experience, responsibility, and softness of head. In addition, these dimensions have a universal quality, and it is possible to measure these personality traits with measuring tools (McCrea & Costa, 2008). Multicultural personality is a multidimensional structure consisting of five sub-dimensions. Dimensions include multicultural personality, cultural empathy, openness, emotional balance, social assertiveness, and flexibility (Van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2000).

#### *Extraversion vs. Social Initiative*

One of the five factors of the five factors personality model, extraversion, explains how a person acts around other people and measures how social they are (Cloninger, 2004). Extraverts are people who enjoy being around other people and are willing, active, and action-oriented. Inward-oriented individuals who tend to protect themselves are less dependent on socialization and communication. Extroversion is expressed as a tendency toward confidence, dominance, activity, and seeking excitement. Extraverts with positive emotions have more frequent and intense personal interactions, the need to move at a higher level, and prefer to re-evaluate problems positively in general (McCrae & John, 1992; Goldberg, 1981). The extraversion factor defines the social aspect of the individual. Individuals with higher scores from this dimension; It is inclined to exhibit fun, social, exciting, talkative, and sociable features. This dimension, which can be defined by stable, calm, cheerful, and warm properties; It is the opposite of the dimension of neuroticism, which contains gloomy and lonely properties (McCrea & Costa, 2008). Extraversion describes people with high human-oriented aspects; they are people with an increased energy level who live more frequently with their optimism and enthusiasm. Therefore, extroversion is associated with positive emotions (Watson & Clark, 1997). Again, individuals who score higher on this dimension tend to seek intellectual interest and difficulty. These people have higher expectations to change jobs, experience different career trials, and have different experiences (McCrea & Costa, 1985).

Social initiative, which is one of the multicultural personality traits, expresses the ability of the individual to approach and include social situations effectively (Van der Zee & van Ouden, 2000, 2001, 2002). People can interact with people from different cultures and make friends with them depending on how much social initiative they have. Individuals with this ability are expected to communicate more easily with people from different cultures and make friends. People with a high level of social initiative tend to be active in social situations, responsible, and adaptable to different cultures. People with low levels of dimension prefer to remain in the background in social situations and are less prone to taking responsibility.

### *Openness to Experience vs Open-Mindedness*

The sub-dimension of openness to experience, which is one of the five factors of personality traits, refers to the level of openness to new experiences (Maltby et al. 2017). Costa and McCrae (1992) expressed personality traits related to openness as analytical, complex, liberal, non-traditional, original, with a strong imagination, strong interest, curiosity, originality, openness, and sensitivity to art. Individuals who are open to new experiences and ideas have unique, original, and non-traditional ideas. Experience Size of Operations: Unlike traditional, strict, and practical tendencies, it refers to curious, research-oriented, and creative features (McCrea & Costa, 2008). In other words, it is possible to say that life is a concept that reflects the creative side of the mind and involves more struggle with existential difficulties (Carver & Scheier, 2012).

Individuals with high openness have several characteristics: they are open to new and unusual experiences, they generally prefer non-traditional methods against the status quo and stasis, their internal sensitivity is high, and they have intellectual and creative tendencies. At the same time, these individuals have cultured, curious, and original ideas; they are broad thinkers with a strong imagination (Thoms, 1996). Individuals who score higher than this factor try to think freely and not in traditional ways, give more artistic discourse in their lives, and reduce their simple lifestyles. Individuals with openness to experiencing personality exhibit features that follow new developments, are innovative, try new things, and are open to initiative. Individuals with low scores on this factor are more conservative and resistant to new ideas (Maltby et al., 2017).

The open-mindedness of multicultural personality traits refers to the capacity of an individual to be unjust and open to individuals who are different from their culture and have different values and norms. The fact that individuals have openness skills is vital for understanding the rules, values, and norms of different cultures and for interacting with individuals from different cultures (Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, 2001, 2002). In other words, open-mindedness includes the positive attitude of individuals toward the knowledge and opinions of other individuals, recognizing that other individuals express themselves freely and find their views valuable (Tjosvold & Poon, 1998). To be open-minded, an individual must be both willing and able to reconsider his or her opinions (Hare, 1993). Individuals with a high level of open-mindedness have a clear and prejudiced attitude toward the values and norms of people from different cultures and are open to new ideas. Individuals with low open-mindedness levels have prejudices and stereotypes about people from different groups and different cultures (Van Der Zee and Van Oudenhoven, 2000, 2001, 2002).

### *Neuroticism vs Emotional Stability*

Neuroticism, one of the five factors of personality traits, refers to anxiety, anger, distress, moving without thinking, distrust, and depression (Costa and McCrae, 1992). Neuroticism also means emotional imbalance. Five factors in the personality model are also expressed as "emotional stability." Emotional imbalance at one end is emotional balance at the other (Maltby et al. 2017). According to Costa (2001), the opposite end of the emotional balance factor is a field of negative emotion, which includes sad feelings such as neuroticism, anxiety, anger, and shame. People who are neurotic are those who are surrounded by negative emotions such as anxiety and insecurity. Neuroticism is the dimension defined as being sad and scared (Cloninger, 2013; McCrea & Costa, 2008). Neuroticism generally includes stress, unpleasant emotion, and emotional imbalance. Neurotic individuals become vulnerable in the face of psychopathological disorders and burnout for the reasons specified (Watson, Clart, & Harkness, 1994). Individuals with high levels of neuroticism often tend to live their feelings of anxiety, anger, self-pity, and insecurity (Cloninger, 2013). Neuroticism includes general stress levels and subjective anxiety experiences (Carver & Scheier, 2012).

The emotions of individuals who score higher than the neuroticism factor are both changing the emotions and causing major changes in the mood. Individuals with low points on this factor are often calm and compatible, so they are not inclined to emotional conditions that will cause incompatibility (Maltby et al. 2017). The high level of neuroticism may indicate problems experienced in different areas. For example, the individual receives less satisfaction from romantic and marriage relations, and after negative experiences, he tends to keep himself away from his partners. Furthermore, there is a link between neuroticism and undesirable outcomes such as academic failure, premature death risk, and substance use (Carver & Scheier, 2012).

Emotional stability, one of the multicultural personality traits, expresses the preservation of emotional balance and calmness of individuals working in a different culture in conflicts and stressful situations that may occur due to cultural differences. It is important that individuals working in different cultures can cope with situations that adversely affect them emotionally and psychologically. Many factors, such as political systems, rituals, social order, and cultural obstacles, can make or even prevent an individual from working in a different culture. In this case, it may be inevitable that individuals who do not continue their lives as in their own culture are tense and angry, experience fear, and have economic problems. While individuals who can maintain their emotional stability under such adverse conditions tend to behave calmly, those who have difficulty regulating their emotional balance can have strong emotional reactions to stress (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000).

#### *Conscientiousness vs Flexibility*

Conscientiousness, which is one of the five factors affecting personality traits, refers to the internal motivation of individuals. Regularity, caution, meticulousness, self-control, and organizational skills were described as positive aspects of the responsibility factor by Johnson and Ostendorf (1993), while thoughtlessness, reaction, carelessness, and impulse control were described as negative aspects of this factor. Individuals with a high level of conscientiousness are planned, self-disciplined, regular, and success-oriented. Instead of reluctant and weak-willed people, it refers to people who are very hard-working, purposeful, and disciplined. This dimension is also expressed as determination and reliability (McCrea and Costa, 2008). Looking at the characteristics of conscientiousness that reflect the degree and self-discipline of the control of people, it can be said that these features are possible features related to business status. This dimension is sometimes expressed as business size or success (Maltby et al. 2017).

It can be said that this dimension, which contains characteristics such as self-discipline, regularity, planning, persistence, effort for purpose, will, and the desire to succeed, is a concept associated with the successful academic situation and career desires of the individual (Carver and Scheier, 2012). Conscientiousness is one of the main personality traits associated with making plans to comply with the rules and do the work to be done (Lounsbury and Gibson, 2006).

Individuals who score higher than the conscientiousness dimension decide, regulate, and plan. Individuals with low scores tend to be careless, and they can easily move away from their duties and objectives (Maltby et al. 2017). Individuals with a high level of conscientiousness tend to be reliable, punctual, efficient, and responsible. Compared to individuals with a lower level of conscientiousness, their academic achievements are higher. While individuals with high levels of conscientiousness tend to succeed, those with low levels are considered people who tend to postpone their jobs, do not plan, and have low self-discipline (Costa and McCrae, 1995). Finally, it is stated that individuals with a high level of responsibility live longer and are healthier (Schultz and Schultz, 2012).

Flexibility, which is one of the multicultural personality traits, expresses the ability of individuals to adapt to new and unknown situations. Flexible individuals can change and reorganize their personal strategies when they work in different cultures because their previous coping strategies may not work in a new cultural environment. Flexibility is the individual's ability to learn from new experiences. For example, the individual learns about doing the right thing and reorganizing his behavior when required adapt to new and unknown situations. Flexible individuals can change and reorganize their personal strategies when they work in different cultures because their previous coping strategies may not work in a new cultural environment. Flexibility is the individual's ability to learn from new experiences. For example, the individual learns about doing the right thing and reorganizing his behavior when required. People with a high level of flexibility can cope with new and unknown situations and adapt to unexpected situations in different cultures. People with low flexibility levels perceive new and different situations as dangerous; they may have trouble adapting to unexpected situations in other cultures (Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven, 2000, 2001, 2002).

#### *Agreeableness vs Cultural Empathy*

The last factor in the five-factor personality model is agreeableness. This dimension is associated with the social interactions of the individual (McCrea & Costa, 2008). While there are features such as aggression, selfishness, and arrogance at one pole, there are features such as honesty, generosity, and humility at the other pole (McCrea & Costa, 2008). Compliance with the internal orientation of individuals includes characteristics such as

gentleness, helpfulness, reliability, docility, and a predisposition to cooperation (Cloninger, 2013). The agreeableness that reflects anxiety in maintaining relationships means that you support and are interested in someone.

The other end of this dimension is the tendency of individuals to have hostile emotions (Carver & Scheier, 2012). Individuals with a high level of agreeableness are moderate and prone to cooperation. Therefore, these individuals refrain from conflict with other people and do not prefer to work alone (Lounsbury & Gibson, 2002). Individuals with a high level of agreeableness have a sympathetic, helpful, reliable, and soft heart. Individuals with low levels of agreeableness are people who have hostile attitudes, are unreliable, are not helpful, are confrontational, and are not prone to cooperating (Maltby et al. 2017). Social conflicts among people with low levels of agreeableness are power-oriented, and they also have more conflict than people with high levels of agreeableness (Carver & Scheier, 2012).

The last of the multicultural personality traits is cultural empathy. Ruben (1976) defined cultural empathy as the ability to correctly understand and reflect the emotions, thoughts, and experiences of individuals from different cultures. In other words, cultural empathy is the ability to understand and empathize with individuals from different cultures (Ridley & Lingle, 1996; Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhove, 2000). Ridley and Lingle (1996) defined cultural empathy as the ability to understand individuals who have different values, attitudes, beliefs, and worldviews from different cultures and stated that cultural empathy can be learned by everyone and that it is a multidimensional concept. Individuals with high levels of cultural empathy can better identify the feelings, thoughts, and behaviors of individuals who are different from their culture (Van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2000, 2001, 2002)

### **Conclusion**

Even though the definition of personality is still debated, the five-factor model of personality traits is one of the most widely used today. In addition, it is possible to say that the structure revealed by this theory is verified in many different cultures and has a universal structure. As previously discussed, the size of the multicultural personality traits is described in detail within the scope of the literature, with the five factors corresponding to the size of the personality traits. As a result, "neuroticism" is comparable to the "emotional stability" dimension of the multicultural personality traits of the five factor personality traits. It is possible to say that the sub-dimension of emotional stability is actually the emergence of a different culture. It is possible to say that the subdimensions of openness and openness to experience are similar. The form of openness to experiencing a different culture can be considered a sub-dimension of openness. It is possible to say that the sub-dimensions of extraversion and social initiative have similar structures and that the sub-dimension of social initiative is a form of extraversion in different cultures. It is possible to say that the conscientiousness and flexibility sub-dimensions have similar structures and that the sub-dimension of flexibility is the form of conscientiousness in different cultures. Finally, it is possible to say that the agreeableness sub-dimension and cultural empathy sub-dimensions have similar structures and that the sub-dimension of the cultural empathy sub-dimension is the form of the agreeableness sub-dimension in different cultures.

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