Personality Traits Influencing the Psychological Impact of Autoimmune Diseases in College Students and Older Adults

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Personality Traits Influencing the Psychological Impact of Autoimmune Diseases in College Students and Older Adults

Natasha Lindert
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INTRODUCTION
- Personality has been linked to mental health and coping with autoimmune diseases
- Mental and physical health are connected

HYPOTHESES
1. Being neurotic → more disease related helplessness
2. Introverted → more disease related helplessness
3. Being open to experiences → less disease related stress
4. Conscientiousness → less disease related stress

METHODS

Participants: Nine participants above the age of 18 and had autoimmune diseases (mean age was 33.9; SD = 16.4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lupus</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>White/European American</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asthma</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hashimotos</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 1 Diabetes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>Another Group</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothyroidism</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>Not Listed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hepatitis</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endometriosis</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psoriasis</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Procedure:
- Recruited participants via convenience sampling
- Participants chose whether to consent
- Participants asked to filled out survey

Measures:
- Big-Five Personality Questionnaire for personality (50 questions; responses range from 1 = disagree to 5 = agree)
- Perceived Stress Scale for disease-related stress (10 questions; responses range from 0 = never to 4 = very often)
- Illness Cognition Questionnaire for disease-related helplessness (18 questions; responses range from 1 = not at all to 4 = completely)

RESULTS

Hypothesis 1: not supported
- Mean helplessness score for low neuroticism was 14.2 (SD = 4.3) and for high neuroticism it was 8.7 (SD = 2.1)
- T-test
  - t(7) = 2.06, p = 0.078

Hypothesis 2: not supported
- Mean helplessness score for low extroversion was 11.7 (SD = 7.2) and for high extroversion it was 12.7 (SD = 3.3)
- T-test
  - t(7) = -0.30, p = 0.775

Hypothesis 3: not supported
- All low conscientious individuals and most high conscientious individuals had moderate stress levels
- Chi-square test
  - X2(2) = 1.29, p = 0.526

Hypothesis 4: not supported
- All low openness to experience participants and most high openness to experience participants had moderate stress levels
- Chi-square test
  - X2(2) = 0.32, p = 0.852

CONCLUSION
- No results were significant → hypotheses not supported
- Personality did not impact helplessness and stress related to autoimmune diseases in these participants
- Findings have implications for future research in the relationship between physical and mental health

REFERENCES

References can be provided upon request.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
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