

Original research**THE PREDICTIVE ROLE OF BIG 5 PERSONALITY TRAITS AND PSYCHOSOCIAL HEALTH IN MARITAL READINESS**Waqar Husain^{1*}, Pakeeza Majeed¹, Farrukh Ijaz¹, Muhammad Ahmad Husain¹**Author information:** ¹Department of Humanities, COMSATS University Islamabad, Pakistan.

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Abstract: Marital readiness has been regarded as a significant factor in a person's decision-making process about marriage. Researchers have analyzed several psychosocial factors that play a role in increasing or decreasing marital readiness. However, the big five personality traits and psychosocial health were not studied earlier in relation to marital readiness. The current study was the first ever that analyze the predictive role of the five big personality traits and psychosocial health in marital readiness. The study involved 1466 unmarried adult male and female participants. 'Sukoon Marital Readiness Scale,' 'Psychosocial Health Evaluator,' and Big-Five Inventory were administered along with a demographic sheet. Extraversion, agreeableness, openness, and psychosocial health were revealed as strong predictors of marital readiness. Men had significantly higher levels of marital readiness as compared to women. The current study was regarded as a novel and worthwhile contribution to the fields of personality, mental health, and marital readiness.

Keywords: Marital Readiness, Marital Aptitude, Personality, Big-Five Personality Traits, Psychosocial Health, Mental Health, Wellbeing.

INTRODUCTION Marriage is a significant decision about a person's needs for intimacy [1], forming a family [2], and complying with familial [3], social [4], and religious norms. Marital readiness, also called marital aptitude [5], is an essential skill for marriage [6], is a subjective evaluation to face the difficulties and responsibilities of married life [7], and a perception of getting married and selecting a partner [8]. The importance of marital readiness is highly established through its positive associations with future marital satisfaction [9] and its role in reducing the divorce rate [10].

Personality is a vague and complex term that is referred to a dynamic combination of a person's subjective experiences and patterns of behavior [11]; the comparatively sustainable cognitive and behavioral patterns of a person [12]; the attitudinal uniqueness of a person [13]; a set of styles and traits a person reflects [14]; and the unique ways of a person to think, act, and feel [15].

Personality cannot be constant and may change every minute [16]. The development of personality is influenced by several biological and environmental factors [17], such as the DNA, brain structure, and genes [18], physiological mechanisms [19], childhood experiences [20], family [21], social and cultural experiences [22], social roles [23] and others. Apart from the earlier models of personality [24], the Big-5 is considered a widely accepted taxonomy of personality [25]. The development and validation of Big-5 factors of personality involved several researchers over almost half a century. The model offers five broad traits of personality, i.e., openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism [26]. These five traits are interlinked with each other, and their combination is seen as helpful in measuring personality [27].

'Psychosocial health' is comparatively a new construct [28] that comprehends several interlinked and interchangeable concepts such as happiness, satisfaction with life, mental health, psychological well-being, and quality of life [29]. The construct of 'psychosocial health' is a result of the recent advancements and paradigm shift in the definitions of mental health, whereby many researchers have converted from the diagnosis-based definitions of mental health to the more person-specific, process-oriented, and

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socially influenced definitions [30]. *Psychosocial well-being* is defined as 'the sexual, emotional, socio-environmental, cognitive, religious, moral, and spiritual satisfaction of a person [28]. It is based on seven components or domains mentioned in its definition. The literature also confirms the significant contribution of these seven components to a person's mental health or psychological well-being. The sexual component [31], the emotional component [32,33], the socio-environmental component [32,34,35], the cognitive component [36,37], the religious component [38,39], the moral component [40], and the spiritual component [41,42], have all been previously established as significant ingredients for mental health and psychological well-being.

The earlier studies on marital readiness have revealed several factors that influence marital readiness, such as age, gender, puberty, education, self-esteem, sexual readiness, sexual urges, sexual exposure, emotional stability, emotional intelligence, parental bonding, religiosity, income & economic stability, race, culture, and others. [8,9,51–54,43–50]. The researchers, however, have not analyzed the role of the Big-5 personality factors and psychosocial health in marital readiness. The current study, therefore, was intended to fill this knowledge gap. It aimed to analyze the correlations between the Big-5 personality traits and the seven components of psychosocial health with marital readiness.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

Participants The study involved 1466 unmarried adult participants from Islamabad, Pakistan. They included men ($n=697$) and women ($n=769$) both. The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 34 years, with a mean age of 21 years. The educational qualifications of the participants ranged from matriculation (10 years of formal education) to master (18 years of formal education), with a mean educational qualification of a bachelor's degree (14 years of formal education).

Instruments 'Sukoon Marital Readiness Scale' [55] was used to assess the levels of marital readiness. The scale comprises 21 items in English and six factors, i.e., sexual desires, sexual functioning, emotional intelligence, social competence, morality, and relational commitment. The authors of the scale regarded it highly reliable by reporting the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the scale as 0.82, which ranged from 0.77 to 0.91 for the six sub-scales; the average item-scale correlation as 0.75 ($p<.01$); the average item-total correlation as 0.48 ($p<.01$); and the Pearson's correlation coefficient for its test-retest reliability as 0.99

($p<.01$). The convergent validity of the scale was found during the current study by correlating it with the Big-5 personality factors and the seven components of psychosocial health. 'Psychosocial Health Evaluator' [28] was used to measure the psychosocial health of the participants. The scale comprises 24 items in English and seven factors, i.e., sexual health, emotional health, socio-environmental health, cognitive health, religious health, moral health, and spiritual health. The authors of the scale regarded it highly reliable by reporting the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the scale as .83 which ranged from 0.63 to 0.95 for the seven sub-scales; the average item-scale correlation as 0.80 ($p<.01$); the average item-total correlation as 0.45 ($p<.01$); and the Pearson's correlation coefficient for its test-retest reliability as 0.99 ($p<.01$).

The authors of the scale also reported its convergent validity by revealing significant positive correlation of psychosocial health with life satisfaction ($r= 0.832$; $p< 0.01$); and the discriminant validity by revealing significant inverse correlations of psychosocial health with depression ($r= -0.892$; $p< 0.01$), anxiety ($r= -0.822$; $p< 0.01$), and stress ($r= -0.690$; $p< 0.01$). Big-5 Inventory [56] was used to measure personality traits. The inventory comprises 44 items (short phrases). It measures the five personality traits, i.e., extraversion vs. introversion, agreeableness vs. antagonism, conscientiousness vs. lack of direction, neuroticism vs. emotional stability, and openness vs. closedness to experience. The inventory has been validated in many studies and has demonstrated adequate reliability and convergent / discriminant validity [57].

Procedure The Departmental Ethics Review Committee granted the ethical approval of the study. The participants were approached while visiting different universities in Islamabad, Pakistan. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and their consent to participate was appropriately taken. They were assured of the confidentiality of the data and were thanked for their participation. All the procedures performed in this study followed the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

Data Analysis The data gathered was recorded in the Statistical Package for Social Sciences. It was cleaned by analyzing missing values, unengaged responses, outliers, linearity, homoscedasticity, multicollinearity, skewness, and kurtosis. Descriptive statistics, t-test, and Pearson correlation coefficient were used to gather results.

RESULTS

Four of the five personality traits are Extraversion (Table 1; $r=0.176$; $p<0.01$), Agreeableness (Table 1; $r=0.203$; $p<0.01$), Conscientiousness (Table 1; $r=0.165$; $p<0.01$), and Openness (Table 1; $r=0.248$; $p<0.01$) had significant positive correlations with marital readiness. The correlation between neuroticism and marital readiness was insignificant and inversely inclined (Table 1; $r= -0.005$; $p>0.05$). Further analysis revealed Extraversion (Table 2; $\beta=0.131$; $p=0.004$), Agreeableness (table 2; $\beta=.118$; $p=0.013$), and Openness (Table 2; $\beta=0.184$; $p=0.000$) as strong predictors for marital readiness.

Psychosocial health (Table 1; $r=0.387$; $p<0.01$) and all of its seven components presented: sexual health (Table 1; $r=0.169$; $p<0.01$), emotional health (Table 1; $r=0.153$; $p<0.01$), socio-environmental health (Table 1; $r=0.229$; $p<0.01$), cognitive health (Table 1; $r=0.167$; $p<0.01$), religious health (Table 1; $r=0.309$; $p<0.01$), moral health (Table 1; $r=0.264$; $p<0.01$), and spiritual health (Table 1; $r=0.228$; $p<0.01$) had significant positive correlations with marital readiness. Further analysis revealed psychosocial health as a strong predictor for marital readiness (Table 2; $\beta=0.387$; $p=0.000$). Four out of the seven sub-factors of psychosocial health included socio-environmental health (Table 2; $\beta=0.127$; $p=0.005$), religious health (Table 2; $\beta=0.211$; $p=0.000$), cognitive health (Table 2; $\beta=0.110$; $p=0.012$), and moral health (Table 2; $\beta=0.180$; $p=0.000$) were also revealed as strong predictors for marital readiness. Emotional health, sexual health, and spiritual health were not found to be strong predictors of marital readiness (Table 2). The significant positive correlation of marital readiness with psychosocial health, the sub-factors of psychosocial health, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness also determined the convergent validity of 'Sukoon Marital Readiness Scale' [55].

The gender-based analysis of the personality traits revealed that the levels of Agreeableness ($M=32.981$, $SD=4.414$ vs. $M=31.721$, $SD=4.663$; $p=0.003$; Cohen's $d=0.277$), neuroticism ($M=26.294$, $SD=4.575$ vs. $M=23.766$, $SD=4.77$; $p=0.000$; Cohen's $d=0.541$), and Openness ($M=35.454$, $SD=3.806$ vs. $M=34.294$, $SD=4.406$; $p=0.003$; Cohen's $d=0.282$) were significantly higher in women as compared to men. Conversely, men had significantly higher levels of Conscientiousness ($M=29.756$, $SD=4.447$ vs. $M=28.688$, $SD=4.466$; $p=0.011$; Cohen's $d=0.239$) compared to women. The gender-based analysis of the

psychosocial health did not reveal any significant differences between men and women except in cognitive health, which was found statistically higher in men as compared to women ($M=10.741$, $SD=1.884$ vs. $M=10.19$, $SD=2.055$; $p=0.003$; Cohen's $d=0.278$). The gender-based analysis of marital readiness revealed that men were significantly more ready for marriage as compared to women ($M=87.721$, $SD=7.806$ vs. $M=85.941$, $SD=8.245$; $p=0.019$; Cohen's $d=0.221$).

DISCUSSION

Marital readiness has been regarded as extremely important in the decision about marriage. Earlier studies on marital readiness did not analyze the role of big-5 personality factors and psychosocial health in marital readiness. The current study intended to fill this knowledge gap. Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Openness were revealed as strong predictors of marital readiness. The rationale of the current study is related to literature, which is silent in this regard. Studies, however, have tried to establish the positive role of Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Openness in forming and maintaining new relationships, including intimate and romantic relationships [58]. The gender-based analysis of the personality traits revealed that the levels of Agreeableness, Neuroticism, and Openness were significantly higher in women as compared to men. These findings align with the earlier trends in literature [59]. According to the current study, men had significantly higher levels of Conscientiousness than women. Earlier studies have revealed mixed results, as personality traits may vary due to cultural factors [60].

The current study's findings also revealed that psychosocial health and all of its seven components, i.e., sexual health, emotional health, socio-environmental health, cognitive health, religious health, moral health, and spiritual health had significant positive correlations with marital readiness. The findings also revealed psychosocial health as a strong predictor for marital readiness. The earlier literature does not profess knowledge of the role of psychosocial health, mental health, or psychological well-being in marital readiness. The studies have analyzed this relationship the other way around and have established that marrying improves mental health [61–63]. The findings of the current study are quite novel in this regard too.

According to the current study's findings, men were significantly more ready for marriage than women. Earlier studies provided mixed results in this regard [64]. Some

	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Neuroticism	Openness	Psychosocial Health	Socio-Environmental Health	Religious Health	Emotional Health	Cognitive Health	Moral Health	Spiritual Health	Sexual Health	Marital Readiness	Sexual Desires	Sexual Functioning	Emotional Intelligence	Social Compliance	Morality	Relational Commitment	Age	Education
Extraversion	.067	.202**	-.163**	.113*	.268**	.136**	.129**	.140**	.170**	.083	.050	.287**	.176**	.124**	.137**	.108*	.133**	.036	.133**	-.017	.017
Agreeableness		.249**	-.008	.301**	.179**	.052	.187**	.054	.034	.350**	.166**	-.065	.203**	.035	.005	.221**	.172**	.339**	.156**	.087	.075
Conscientiousness			-.227**	.144**	.265**	.073	.168**	.211**	.148**	.066	.140**	.245**	.165**	.016	.055	.128**	.165**	.120**	.184**	.168**	.152**
Neuroticism				.175**	-.106*	.137**	-.098*	-.204**	-.059	-.077	-.013	-.191**	-.005	.016	-.047	.027	.007	.096*	-.060	-.121**	-.166**
Openness					.198**	.139**	.051	-.037	.230**	.129**	.262**	-.007	.248**	.182**	.067	.229**	.151**	.282**	.158**	-.030	-.017
Psychosocial Health						.632**	.521**	.549**	.386**	.459**	.558**	.673**	.387**	.147**	.180**	.211**	.408**	.289**	.322**	.087	.072
Health																					
Socio-Environmental Health							.265**	.172**	.016	.097*	.217**	.273**	.229**	.101*	.074	.123**	.262**	.211**	.172**	-.040	-.101*
Religious Health								.275**	.032	.160**	.238**	.254**	.309**	.105*	.163**	.240**	.261**	.248**	.247**	-.041	.000
Emotional Health									.036	.090	.174**	.439**	.153**	.061	.056	.098*	.173**	.088	.135**	.180**	.151**
Cognitive Health										.160**	.199**	.121**	.167**	.088	.147**	.056	.165**	.045	.124**	.049	.068
Moral Health											.194**	.129**	.264**	.127**	.088	.182**	.207**	.272**	.227**	.126**	.115*
Spiritual Health												.252*	.228**	.063	.055	.108*	.276**	.217**	.216**	-.032	-.004
Sexual Health													.169**	.025	.129**	.050	.224**	.055	.151**	.100*	.104*
Marital Readiness														.699**	.689**	.703**	.538**	.601**	.753**	.097*	.020
Sexual Desires															.558**	.407**	.143**	.226**	.375**	.092*	.044
Sexual Functioning																.321**	.146**	.164**	.359**	.071	-.023
Emotional Intelligence																	.265**	.524**	.477**	.073	.054
Social Compliance																		.327**	.291**	.042	-.005
Morality																			.446**	.061	.053
Relational Commitment																				.054	-.007
Age																					.591**

Table 1. Correlation matrix.
 **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
 *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Predictors	B	SE B	β	t	p
Extraversion	0.227	0.079	0.131	2.877	0.004
Agreeableness	0.210	0.084	0.118	2.497	0.013
Conscientiousness	0.151	0.086	0.083	1.750	0.081
Neuroticism	0.008	0.079	0.005	0.098	0.922
Openness	0.364	0.094	0.184	3.863	0.0001
Psychosocial Health	0.384	0.042	0.387	9.052	0.0001
Socio-Environmental Health	0.327	0.116	0.127	2.813	0.005
Religious Health	1.175	0.257	0.211	4.575	0.0001
Emotional Health	0.150	0.205	0.035	0.730	0.466
Cognitive Health	0.446	0.176	0.110	2.530	0.012
Moral Health	0.707	0.172	0.180	4.109	0.0001
Spiritual Health	0.391	0.209	0.086	1.867	0.062
Sexual Health	0.025	0.160	0.008	0.156	0.876

Table 2. Predictive roles of the personality traits and psychosocial health in marital readiness

Variables	Men		Women		t	p	Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			
Extraversion	24.858	4.355	24.283	4.898	1.312	0.190	-
Agreeableness	31.721	4.663	32.981	4.414	2.974	0.003	0.008
Conscientiousness	29.756	4.447	28.688	4.466	2.556	0.011	0.001
Neuroticism	23.766	4.770	26.294	4.575	5.785	0.000	0.007
Openness	34.294	4.406	35.454	3.806	3.037	0.003	0.018
Psychosocial Health	89.457	8.344	88.743	8.037	0.931	0.352	-
Socio-Environmental Health	21.716	3.390	22.275	2.955	1.896	0.059	-
Religious Health	13.274	1.500	13.223	1.420	0.374	0.708	-
Emotional Health	10.970	1.846	10.770	1.914	1.131	0.259	-
Cognitive Health	10.741	1.884	10.190	2.055	2.964	0.003	0.017
Moral Health	11.675	1.976	11.383	2.114	1.515	0.130	-
Spiritual Health	11.574	1.868	11.822	1.694	1.494	0.136	-
Sexual Health	9.508	2.555	9.082	2.422	1.832	0.068	-
Marital Readiness	87.721	7.806	85.941	8.245	2.355	0.019	0.006
Sexual Desires	12.254	1.994	11.792	2.155	2.359	0.019	0.014
Sexual Functioning	16.218	2.242	14.606	2.457	7.258	0.0001	0.015
Emotional Intelligence	13.442	1.611	13.565	1.588	0.824	0.411	-
Social Compliance	15.655	2.273	16.219	1.968	2.864	0.004	0.019
Morality	13.401	1.438	13.721	1.310	2.500	0.013	0.010
Relational Commitment	16.751	2.304	16.037	2.469	3.172	0.002	0.011

Table 3. Gender based differences.

studies revealed that women got ready for marriage earlier than men, and some revealed the other way around [65,66]. Culture has a significant role in this regard. The sample of the current study belonged to a collectivistic culture where men are more dominant, more expressive, and freer in decision-making as compared to women [50,67]. Women, on the other hand, face several cultural barriers in expressing their desires [68,69].

CONCLUSION

The current study has analyzed two undiscovered areas related to marital readiness. The study has evaluated the predictive role of Big-5 personality traits and psychosocial health in marital readiness, which is a novel contribution to the fields of personality, mental health, and marital readiness.

Ethical Statement: The ethical approval was granted by the Departmental Ethic Review Committee of Humanities Department, COMSATS University Islamabad, Pakistan. All the procedures performed in this study were in accordance with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. Informed consent from the participants was taken verbally.

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Data Availability Statement: Data associated with this paper can be presented on demand.

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