Comparison of Pilots and Technicians in Terms of Personality Traits and Life Satisfaction

Hamzeh Ganji, Simin Bashardoust, Bita Boroofeh*

Department of psychology, Roudehen Branch, Islamic Azad University, Roudehen, Iran

*Corresponding Author Email: psychology.boroofeh@yahoo.com

Abstract

The purpose of the present research is to compare the personality traits and life satisfaction of pilots and technicians. The research is causal-comparative and the participants are 61 pilots and technicians of Navid Helicopter Services Company. Personality traits were evaluated using NEO Personality Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1980) and life satisfaction was measured using the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) (Diener et al., 1985). The results showed that the distribution of scores of personality traits (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness) and life satisfaction was normal in pilots and technicians. There was a significant difference between pilots and technicians in terms of personality traits and life satisfaction. It was also revealed that pilots have significantly higher level of satisfaction with life than technicians.

Keywords: Satisfaction with life, Personality traits, Pilots, Technicians.

Introduction

Psychologists have always been preoccupied with the factors that affect a person's satisfaction with life. There are intra-organismic and extra-organismic factors that affect human beings. Intra-organismic factors include genetic characteristics, moods, and all the traits a person has since birth. Extra-organismic factors are environmental factors such as family and culture. The interaction of these factors can determine a person's life satisfaction (Beiramia & Gholizadeh, 2011). But which of these factors contributes the most to a person's satisfaction with life? By identifying these factors, they can be incorporated into macro planning, promotion of physical and mental health, and therapies and we can have a healthy society.

Subjective well-being (SWB) is an important issue in positive psychology and a branch of behavioral sciences where people's perception of life is studied. This area has recently received considerable attention, such that thousands of studies have been carried out on life satisfaction and happiness. These studies complement the traditional goals of psychology and contribute to understanding mental diseases (Diener, 2000). SWB refers to how people experience the quality of their lives and includes both emotional reactions and cognitive judgments. Satisfaction with life is a judgment process whereby an individual evaluates the quality of life based on certain criteria. It is not a consistent and objective trait; rather, it is sensitive to situational variability and is based on perceptions and subjective views (Pavot et al., 1990). Studying the personality traits of people specialized in different areas can help them become aware of their level of satisfaction and happiness; it can enhance their subjective well-being and reduce stresses, especially for those in critical professions. In the present research, pilots and technicians are compared in terms of personality traits and satisfaction with life.

Methodology

The present research is descriptive where pilots and technicians are compared in terms of personality traits and satisfaction with life. 61 pilots and technicians of Navid Helicopter Services Company were selected as sample using census. Personality traits were evaluated using NEO personality inventory with an internal consistency of 0.68 (Costa & McCrae, 1980) and life satisfaction was measured using the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) with an internal consistency of 0.82 (Diener et al., 1985). The participants were instructed on how to complete the questionnaires without being informed about what was being measured. Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used for data analysis.
Results

The results of MANOVA showed that there is a significant difference between pilots and technicians in neuroticism, extraversion, openness, and life satisfaction (Table 1).

Table 1. Between-subject effect.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Dependent variables</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>df(e)</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>\eta^2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Profession</td>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>283.026</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>283.026</td>
<td>12.177</td>
<td>0.171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>206.780</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>206.780</td>
<td>8.199</td>
<td>0.122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
<td>6.115</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>6.115</td>
<td>0.420</td>
<td>0.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>18.304</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>18.304</td>
<td>1.560</td>
<td>0.026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>118.795</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>118.795</td>
<td>4.366*</td>
<td>0.069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Satisfaction with Life</td>
<td>532.646</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>532.646</td>
<td>33.075**</td>
<td>0.359</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 presents the results of post hoc test on the difference between the scores of pilots and technicians in neuroticism, extraversion, openness, and satisfaction in life. However, the mean scores of technicians in neuroticism were higher than the mean scores of pilots.

Table 2. The results of Bonferroni test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Pilots</th>
<th>Technicians</th>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Pilots</th>
<th>Technicians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td></td>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>Extraversion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilots</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-4.309**</td>
<td>Technicians</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6.583**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technicians</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Technicians</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups</td>
<td>Pilots</td>
<td>Technicians</td>
<td>Groups</td>
<td>Pilots</td>
<td>Technicians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>Life Satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>Life Satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilots</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2.791*</td>
<td>Technicians</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5.911**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technicians</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Technicians</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Significant at the 0.01 level
* Significant at the 0.05 level

Discussion and Conclusion

Based on the findings of the present research there is a significant difference between pilots and technicians in mean scores of NEO personality inventory and satisfaction with life scale (SWLS). The results of Bonferroni post hoc test revealed that there is a significant difference between these two groups in neuroticism, extraversion, openness, and satisfaction with life. Alipour and Nourbala (2008) argued that satisfaction with life is a psychological and personality factor that is associated with one's profession. The results of the present research are consistent with their findings.

One of the findings of the research was that there is a significant difference between the scores of pilots and technicians in neuroticism, and technicians scored higher than pilots in this variable. In their meta-analysis of personality traits, Cheng and Furnham (2003) and Deneve and Cooper (1998) found that neuroticism is the strongest predictor of life satisfaction. Also the findings of Garoussi-Farshi (2006) suggest that neuroticism is negatively associated with happiness and that neuroticism and negative affect are almost indistinguishable.

The results also showed that there is a significant difference between pilots and technicians in extraversion, with pilots scoring higher than technicians. This suggests that technicians are less extraverted than pilots. Studies in psychology all support the positive relationship between extraversion and happiness (Argyle, 2002; Groussi-Farshi, 2006). The results of Costa and McCrae (1992) suggest that extraversion is the best predictor of happiness and life satisfaction and introversion is the best predictor of negative affectivity and lack of happiness. Moreover, the correlation between extraversion and happiness is so strong that some scholars do not accept any definition of happiness without reference to extraversion. Costa and McCrae (1992) argued that extraversion can predict happiness over a 17 year period.

It was also revealed that there is a significant difference between pilots and technicians in openness to experience, with pilots scoring higher than technicians. Mirzaie (2010) compared five dimensions of personality and coping strategies in students and argued that there is a significant negative correlation between neuroticism and emotion-centered strategy and between openness to experience and negative affectivity. The results also showed that there is no significant difference between pilots and technicians in agreeableness and conscientiousness.

Based on the findings of the present research there is a significant difference between the two groups in satisfaction with life. It was shown that pilots had higher scores than technicians in SWLS. Costa and McCrae (1992) found that satisfaction with life can predict happiness over a 13 year period, and that life satisfaction is closely related to job satisfaction. Nayebi (1996) examined...
satisfaction and happiness in Tehran citizens and reported that life satisfaction is positively associated with satisfaction with family life, housing, job, health, education, income, economic status, and trust and negatively associated with age.

In a research on the relationship between thinking styles and satisfaction with life, Dolatabadi (2010) found that there is a significant relationship between legislative and executive thinking and life satisfaction and there is no significant relationship between judicial thinking and life satisfaction. Moreover, he came to the conclusion that there is a relatively high correlation between perceptions/thoughts and life satisfaction/happiness.

References


