

THE COMPARISON OF PERSONALITY TRAITS AND HAPPINESS OF VEGETARIANS AND NON-VEGETARIANS

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Abstract

One of the major issues in psychology is individuals' personality traits, and happiness is one of the human basic needs and an effective factor on lifespan. Also, vegetarianism and its positive effects on body and mind has been a new study field all around the world. So, the purpose of this study was to determine the difference between vegetarians and non-vegetarians in regard to personality traits and happiness. The research method was descriptive of comparison kind. The data were collected from 150 vegetarians and 150 non-vegetarians of both sexes via cluster sampling. Vegetarians were members of Vegetarianism Association in north of Iran and non-vegetarians were the employees and students of Azad universities in four northern cities of Iran, namely, Sari, Babol, Chaloos, and Ramsar. The two groups were matched in age and education level. The tools for gathering data were NEO-FFI Questionnaire (short form) and Oxford Happiness Questionnaire. Also, data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and the independent t-test. Findings revealed that the happiness of vegetarians was significantly higher than non-vegetarians and female vegetarians had more happiness than male vegetarians ($p < 0.05$). Also, about the personality traits, Results of analysis of t-test showed that while there was no significant difference in regard to extraversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness among two groups ($p < 0.05$), openness average in vegetarians and neuroticism average in non-vegetarians were higher and indicated a significant difference between two groups ($p < 0.05$). Considering the results of study, a well-planned vegetarian diet may have public health importance and can help nutrition professionals in developing strategies to work with those who want or need to change diet habits and seek for real happiness through healthy nutrition.

Keywords: Vegetarian, Non-Vegetarian, Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Happiness.