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High-risk sexual behaviour – the relation with personality traits

Una Vitasović, Biljana Trifunović, Jelena Barna, Jelena Vesić
Faculty of philosophy, Novi Sad

Abstract

High-risk sexual behaviour, broadly defined, stands for any vaginal, oral or anal intercourse that is unprotected. It also refers to a promiscuous behaviour or to encountering a sexual intercourse with high-risk sexual partners who are under certain psychoactive substances. There is a great number of studies that are researching relations between different types of risky behaviour and their prediction when certain personal, family or other factors are included. Numerous studies, which were based on predicting high-risk sexual behaviour using personality traits as predictors, have shown significant results which were low on Agreeableness and Conscientiousness and high on Extraversion and Openness to Experience, thus, relation towards Neuroticism have not turned unambiguous. In this study, our goal was to inspect the link between personality traits and high-risk behaviour. More precisely, we wanted to inspect whether risky sexual behaviour could be predicted on the basis of personality traits or not. Our sample was composed of 241 people (57.7% female), aged 16.5 years in average (range 15-18 years old). High-risk sexual behaviour was measured using Risk-behaviours Assessment Questionnaire (Belesić, 2008) and Big Five plus Two was used for assessing the personality traits (Smederevac, Mitrović i Čolović, 2014). The multiple regression analysis suggested a significant relationship between high-risk sexual behaviour and the Big Five plus Two dimensions ($R=.43$ $p<.001$). The results promoted Neuroticism ($\beta=.33$ $p<.01$) and Conscientiousness ($\beta=-.20$ $p<.05$) as significant predictors of high-risk sexual behaviour. When the aforementioned personality structure is taken into consideration one comes to a conclusion that this kind of a person is impulsive, insecure and liable to experience negative emotions as well. Furthermore, a person with this particular structure has low level of self-control and therefore gets easily involved in risky behaviours in order to acquire satisfaction, which, by all means, decreases anxiety and negative affection. Further implications are discussed.

Keywords: personality traits, high-risk sexual behaviour, Big Five plus Two