

## CRITICAL STUDY ON THE ASIAN COUNTRIES ASSESSMENT ON CHILDREN RIGHTS

**Munir Moosa Sadrudin\***

### ABSTRACT

*The study aimed to evaluate the Implementation of Children rights in few Asian Countries, particularly, Pakistan. The study identified the important issues of children in Asian Countries besides highlighting the value and importance of children. . The data for the study is gathered through an integrative literature search of previous studies related to child rights, produced nationally and internationally and compared with the level of the implementation of Children Rights in Asia. The study conclude that although the issues of children were highlighted by most of the Asian countries but the practical Implementation of the Children Rights in Asia, particularly Pakistan, were over shadowed during the last few years. Very few laws were imposed in favor of children rights without practical imposition to resolve the issues of children in Asia.*

Human Rights are the fundamental rights to which a person is inherently entitled regardless of caste, creed, custom, etc., and states are accountable to respect, promote, protect and fulfill legal commitments on human rights. Many Asian countries have used rights to bring about social reformations, particularly to promote the situation of women and children. Numerous Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) exist to promote specific social reforms on the improvement of the situation of particular groups (such as women, children, indigenous peoples, the disabled). The advocacy of human rights in Asia is among the strongest in the world, and provides a forum to the Asian countries to link together for effective co-ordination.

According to Twining<sup>1</sup> human rights are mostly used to critique social relationships and institutions. Goonesekere<sup>2</sup> stated that in some of the South Asian countries, the conduct of private actors is brought within the scope of constitutionally guaranteed fundamental rights on the basis of state inaction to prevent infringement.

Children rights are the most important rights to be addressed in today's world in order to secure the future generations. There are many world events that have triggered discussions, debates, images, policies and practices related to the world's children, especially those in developing countries. World conventions and movements, such as Conventions to the Rights of the Child, Education for All, United Nations Millenium Summit, have urged the governments to adopt policies and programs to protect the fundamental rights to children. Under this pressure, all South Asian governments have ratified the UN Conventions on the Rights of the Child. However, violation of children rights continues on a daily basis on South Asian countries. Amnesty International<sup>3</sup>.

In fact, Machel<sup>4</sup> argues that the conditions of children have worsened with the ongoing conflict and modern warfare, while Seabrook<sup>5</sup> argues that globalization and economic neo liberalizations are the main factors for the exploitation of children.

According to UNICEF<sup>6</sup>, a vast majority of children in South Asia are denied basic human rights and suffer from severe malnutrition with close to half of all the children under five being underweight, while Amnesty International<sup>7</sup> reported that illegal and

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\* Research Scholar, Hamdard University, Institute of Education and Social Sciences, Karachi  
E-mail: munirmoosa@yahoo.com, Date of Receipt: December 4th, 2011

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- There is a significant relationship between Openness and Speaking Skills while there is a slightly significant relationship between Openness and Writing, Reading and Listening Skills.

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high on openness to novel viewpoints could foster interest and learning. Further, students experiencing worry, and anxiety might be identified and encouraged to seek professional help or develop strategies to deal with their concerns.

Education plays a great role in a person's personality development. The education we provide in our professional educational institutions should help an individual's personality development. Many factors interfere within a classroom situation e.g. student's attitude, parents' attitude, peer group, classroom environment, teachers' attitude, gender differences and students' individual personality factors. All these factors have their role in language learning process. Hence, a student who is self-disciplined, curious, helpful, socially skilled, and driven to succeed is most likely to acquire better language skills.

The present study was aimed at finding out the relationship between the Big Five Personality Factors and Language Acquisition Skills. It included a sample of 105 Engineering Students of a public sector Engineering University in Karachi. The participants were third year students taking Business Communication & Ethics course. Four tests, Writing, Reading, Listening and Speaking were administered to them to test their proficiency in different language skills. Big Five Personality Inventory was given to them to know about their personality types. To get the knowledge of their family and socioeconomic background a demographic questionnaire was administered.

In conclusion, this study extends an understanding of the important role of personality traits in predicting language learning accuracy. Future research could extend these findings by including other individual difference variables such as learning or thinking styles, self-efficacy, or need for cognition in explaining students' language proficiency. This research takes the crucial step of documenting relationships between personality and language skills. It provides a good foundation for additional research on these issues, by taking students' personality influences into account. It can be concluded that this research can be an important base for the future researchers in Pakistan who want to see the effects of personality on language acquisition skills of students. This study is presented with the assumption that a knowledge and awareness of personality type on the part of students will allow the development of natural strengths and predispositions, and will provide information about their strong language skills. For teachers, such awareness will also have beneficial effects, will help in selection of methodological choices, also aid in the recognition of individual differences and improve teacher-student understanding.

#### **FINDINGS:**

- Results obtained indicate that there is a slight significant relationship between Extraversion and, Reading, Listening and Speaking Skills whereas there is no significant relationship between Extraversion and Writing Skills. Extraversion and Listening Skills are negatively correlated.
- There is a correlation between Agreeableness and, Reading, Speaking and Listening Skills whereas Agreeableness and Writing Skills have a weak correlation.
- There is a slight significant relationship between Conscientiousness and Reading, Skills. It has negative correlation with Speaking Skills whereas it has weak correlation with Writing and Listening Skills.
- There is an expected negative correlation between Neuroticism and Writing, Reading, Listening and Speaking Skills.

acquisition researcher John Schumann explores the concept of “language shock,” a fear of appearing comical or making a fool of oneself when attempting to communicate in a second language. The fear of criticism may function to decrease his or her motivation to learn English as a second language and to master course content expressed in English.

Fifth personality factor Openness, turned out to be positively correlated with all four language skills. Openness involves active imagination, aesthetic sensitivity, attentiveness to inner feelings, preference for variety, and intellectual curiosity. In the interviews with the students, teachers and parents it is observed that majority believed that those individuals who are open to experience are also open to learning different languages with mastery. Openness to Experience has been associated with vocabulary and general knowledge (Ashton et al., 2000; Goff & Ackerman, 1992). People who are highly open to experience tend to be politically liberal and tolerant of diversity. As a consequence, they are generally more open to different cultures and lifestyles. With regard to Openness, it has been proposed that individuals who are high in Openness have a higher motivation to engage in intellectual activities, which leads them to expand their intelligence (Brand, 1994). Another suggestion, which further explains the relationship between Openness and intelligence, is that individuals with lower intelligence may become less curious and have narrower interests, due to their lower ability to handle novel experiences, which discourages Openness. Also, individuals with higher intelligence may have sought to stimulate and challenge themselves, by exposing themselves to novel experiences, and thus becoming more curious and with wider interests, and therefore, in turn, more Open (Moutafi et al., 2003). Students with diversified interests have generally a receptive mind-set. They are open to every new idea and are eager to learn new things. Language learning is also part of it. They willingly learn languages as they want to explore variety of things.

For development of a child's personality family background plays a vital role. Students from well educated and broad-minded families tend to have better developed personalities. They are more confident, satisfied and independent. Once children get all these facilities and are successful in their lives, they like to explore new things. They take interest in learning languages as well. It depends greatly on how parents raise their children. As the first five years of a child's life are the most crucial ones, personality generally develops during these years. Family is the first institution where children get their training and learn a lot. Whatever they learn there remains with them throughout their life. It affects their learning in later periods as well.

### CONCLUSION:

In the professional universities of Pakistan, it becomes a need for the teachers to understand the individual differences. If they get an idea of the reasons of some students being better than the others in acquiring one skill while the others being better in acquiring another skill more efficiently, they can clear this confusion and plan their strategy accordingly. Students here come from different educational and socioeconomic backgrounds and families. They have totally different personalities too. . Nowadays, there are many issues that teachers need to consider when they teach second language learners. They should not only be concerned about the curriculum content but also about learners' personality. Teachers aware of personality differences could possibly construct learning environments that take advantage of students' individual strengths. Srivatsava, John, Gosling, and Potter (2003) suggest that personality traits can change during young and middle adulthood through specific life experiences. Similarly, exposing students



appreciative of the feelings of others, how to establish and maintain satisfying relationships characterized by emotional closeness and mutual affection, and how to be a cooperative and responsible member of one's social group. And to be a good writer requires one to acquire stress management and adaptability competencies well. The interviews supported the finding that agreeable students are better readers, speakers and listeners. They accept social norms and are sensitive, whereas writing skills do not require this tendency, so we don't find and relationship there.

Third Big five factor is Conscientiousness. Conscientiousness is related to successful academic performance in students. In this study Reading Skills and Conscientiousness have a positive correlation. Goldberg, 1992 described Conscientiousness that 'it covers the drive to accomplish something, and it contains the characteristics necessary in such a pursuit: being organized, systematic, efficient, practical, and steady'. With Speaking Skills it has a negative correlation. It is argued that low intellectual capacity would tend to lead to high Conscientiousness, and vice versa. The rationale underlying the negative relationship between Conscientiousness and measures of intelligence is that less able individuals in a competitive educational or work environment may become more conscientious over time as a way of compensating for their relatively low intellectual ability (Mouta *et al.*, 2002, 2003). These students are organized and generally do their work with full concentration but in this study it was found that it is not necessarily an important factor in language learning. It had no relationship with Writing and Listening Skills. As during the interviews some language teachers felt that they had observed that not all the students who were not very organized were bad language learners. Language and this aspect of personality did not matter a lot to them. Farsides and Woodfield (2003) also found Conscientiousness to significantly predict tutor's reports of their student's progress, but not student's final grades.

Fourth personality factor was Neuroticism. Individuals who score high on neuroticism are more likely than the average to experience such feelings as anxiety, anger, guilt, and depression. It is assumed through previous studies that particularly at a university level, highly neurotic students are probably handicapped as compared to low neurotics. The results of this study proved the assumption. Neuroticism and all four language skills are negatively correlated. Students who scored high on this scale, scored low on all language tests. It is observed that students who are highly anxious perform worse than the students who are calm and emotionally stable in doing almost all the tasks. It can be seen through their performance in exams those students who cannot cope with exams' stress perform badly at it, whereas those students who are good at handling examination stress usually perform better. In the interviews with students they admitted that if they are anxious they do badly in their exams, though they are fully prepared for that. In Krashen's *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning (1981)*, several studies have shown a relationship between low anxiety and language acquisition. Stephen Krashen developed the construct of an affective filter, consisting of the variables of anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence. According to Krashen, these psychological variables may strongly enhance or inhibit second language acquisition by playing a critical mediating role between the linguistic input available in the educational setting and the student's ability to learn. In order for students to fully engage their innate capacity to acquire language within an input-rich environment, they should ideally be relaxed, motivated, and self-confident. Unfortunately, however, this ideal picture is far from typical in the case of the second language learner of English, who may often feel anxious, discouraged, and embarrassed within the classroom setting. Second language

Speaking and Listening Skills, Agreeableness and Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening Skills, Conscientiousness and Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening Skills, Neuroticism and Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening Skills and Openness and Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening Skills.

Many researchers tried to find out positive relationship between Extraversion and language learning. Robinson, Gabriel & Katchan 1994 in a study found strong correlation between language learning ability and extraversion scores of their subjects. In this current study it was expected that extroverts would show better language skills than introverts. The results supported this assumption. Extraversion and Reading, Writing and Speaking skills had a positive correlation. Extraverts like to interact with people; they also tend to have more exposure through social gatherings and active schedules, so they are more expressive than the introverts who avoid such exposure. Media's role is crucial too. Students are getting ample opportunities for this interaction. So the students learn to express themselves through words, both written and spoken. Extroverts, as a rule, tend to seek out people to interact with. They bring that same characteristic in their language learning, purposely seeking out individuals to practice their newfound language abilities with. As such, they tend to find wider, more varied interactions with people that can help them speak the target language. The influence of extraversion – introversion personality types and their relevance in communication in a foreign/second language and language learning strategies has been the subject of considerable examination (Wakamoto 2000; Huang and Van Naerssen 1987; Ehrman and Oxford 1990; Hassan, 2001; Verhoeven & Vermeer 2002; Dewaele & Furnham 1999, 2000). The results again showed an expected negative correlation between Extraversion and Listening skills. Extroverts are generally good at speaking and writing but they find it difficult to concentrate with full attention. Their attention generally remains divided so they tend to be unable to concentrate on others' speech as being social they are usually involved in extracurricular activities. Sometimes this factor plays a great role in classes where introverts perform better because of their understanding of grammar rules and vocabulary items. (Skehan 1989)

The interviews with students, teachers and parents also support the findings of the study. Majority of the students who are extraverts are poor listeners because they focus on socializing and generally have problems in concentration. They are good readers and speakers.

The second factor of Big Five was Agreeableness. The results showed slightly positive relationship with Reading, Speaking and Listening Skills. Agreeableness enables individuals to cope with problems associated with everyday living. The students scored high on this scale tend to have good interpersonal relationships. This indicates that they are better speakers, good listeners and readers but it shows a weak relationship with writing skills. Students who are 'agreeable' are not good writers. So this factor does not have much to do with writing skills. The students who scored high tend to be social and outgoing as they have good interaction with others. They willingly listen to others and are good speakers too. Alexander Guiora, whose research focuses on personality factors in second language acquisition, holds that "...second language learning in all of its aspects demands that the individual, to a certain extent, take on a new identity". Since an individual's identity is developed within a context of communication and interaction for example, with family members and peers and since language plays a salient role in interpersonal relations, language becomes central to the sense of self. Besides developing intrapersonal and general mood abilities, one must learn how to be aware and

Table 18

**Correlations**

		Openness	Speaking Skill
Openness	Pearson Correlation	1	.453**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	105	105
Speaking Skill	Pearson Correlation	.453**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	105	105

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Significance level  $\alpha = .05$

Table 19

**Correlations**

		Openness	Writing Skill
Openness	Pearson Correlation	1	.139
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.156
	N	105	105
Writing Skill	Pearson Correlation	.139	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.156	
	N	105	105

Significance level  $\alpha = .05$

Table 20

**Correlations**

		Openness	Listening Skill
Openness	Pearson Correlation	1	.136
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.167
	N	105	105
Listening Skill	Pearson Correlation	.136	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.167	
	N	105	105

Significance level  $\alpha = .05$

**DISCUSSION:**

The study described attempted to investigate the relationship between personality types and acquisition of language skills. It tried to discover preferences of different personality types for different skills. It correlated all four skills and the personality traits

In investigating this it was also attempted to observe whether there are any associations between personality factors and language skills, Extraversion and Reading, Writing,



Table 15

**Correlations**

		Neuroticism	Writing Skill
Neuroticism	Pearson Correlation	1	-.107
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.278
	N	105	105
Writing Skill	Pearson Correlation	-.107	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.278	
	N	105	105

Significance level  $\alpha = .05$ 

Table 16

**Correlations**

		Neuroticism	Listening Skill
Neuroticism	Pearson Correlation	1	-.126
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.200
	N	105	105
Listening Skill	Pearson Correlation	-.126	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.200	
	N	105	105

Significance level  $\alpha = .05$ 

Analysis: There is a correlation between Openness and Reading Skills i.e.147, with Speaking Skills .453, which is significant, with Writing Skills .139 and with Listening Skills it is .136. Hence it is concluded that Null Hypothesis is rejected. There is a correlation between Openness and all four language skills.

Table 17

**Correlations**

		Openness	Reading Skill
Openness	Pearson Correlation	1	.147
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.135
	N	105	105
Reading Skill	Pearson Correlation	.147	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.135	
	N	105	105

Significance level  $\alpha = .05$

Table 12

**Correlations**

		Conscientiousness	Listening Skill
Conscientiousness	Pearson Correlation	1	.014
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.888
	N	105	105
Listening Skill	Pearson Correlation	.014	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.888	
	N	105	105

Significance level  $\alpha = .05$ 

Analysis: There is an expected negative correlation between the score of Neuroticism and Reading Skills i.e.  $-.180$ , with Writing Skills  $-.107$ , with Listening Skills  $-.126$  and with Speaking Skills  $-.001$ . It is concluded that there is a slightly significant negative relationship between Neuroticism and Reading, Writing and Listening Skills.

Table 13

**Correlations**

		Neuroticism	Reading Skill
Neuroticism	Pearson Correlation	1	$-.180$
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.066
	N	105	105
Reading Skill	Pearson Correlation	$-.180$	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.066	
	N	105	105

Significance level  $\alpha = .05$ 

Table 14

**Correlations**

		Neuroticism	Speaking Skill
Neuroticism	Pearson Correlation	1	$-.001$
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.995
	N	105	105
Speaking Skill	Pearson Correlation	$-.001$	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.995	
	N	105	105

Significance level  $\alpha = .05$

Table 9

**Correlations**

		Conscientiousness	Reading Skill
Conscientiousness	Pearson Correlation	1	.080
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.417
	N	105	105
Reading Skill	Pearson Correlation	.080	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.417	
	N	105	105

Significance level  $\alpha = .05$ 

Table 10

**Correlations**

		Conscientiousness	Writing Skill
Conscientiousness	Pearson Correlation	1	.022
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.825
	N	105	105
Writing Skill	Pearson Correlation	.022	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.825	
	N	105	105

Significance level  $\alpha = .05$ 

Table 11

**Correlations**

		Conscientiousness	Speaking Skill
Conscientiousness	Pearson Correlation	1	-.082
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.408
	N	105	105
Speaking Skill	Pearson Correlation	-.082	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.408	
	N	105	105

Significance level  $\alpha = .05$

Table 6

**Correlations**

		Agreeableness	Speaking Skill
Agreeableness	Pearson Correlation	1	.159
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.105
	N	105	105
Speaking Skill	Pearson Correlation	.159	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.105	
	N	105	105

Significance level  $\alpha = .05$ 

Table 7

**Correlations**

		Agreeableness	Writing Skill
Agreeableness	Pearson Correlation	1	.027
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.783
	N	105	105
Writing Skill	Pearson Correlation	.027	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.783	
	N	105	105

Significance level  $\alpha = .05$ 

Table 8

**Correlations**

		Agreeableness	Listening Skill
Agreeableness	Pearson Correlation	1	.143
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.146
	N	105	105
Listening Skill	Pearson Correlation	.143	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.146	
	N	105	105

Significance level  $\alpha = .05$ 

Analysis: There is a correlation between Conscientiousness and Reading Skills i.e. .080, Conscientiousness and Speaking Skills have a negative correlation of -.082. It has no relationship with Writing Skills i.e.022 and with Listening Skills i.e.014. Hence Null Hypothesis is partially accepted that Conscientiousness and Writing and Listening Skills do not have significant relationship, where as Conscientiousness and Reading and Speaking Skills are slightly correlated. The results are given below in the table form:

Table 3

**Correlations**

		Extraversion	Writing Skill
Extraversion	Pearson Correlation	1	-.003
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.977
	N	105	105
Writing Skill	Pearson Correlation	-.003	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.977	
	N	105	105

Significance level  $\alpha = .05$ 

Table 4

**Correlations**

		Extraversion	Listening Skill
Extraversion	Pearson Correlation	1	-.111
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.258
	N	105	105
Listening Skill	Pearson Correlation	-.111	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.258	
	N	105	105

Significance level  $\alpha = .05$ 

Analysis: Agreeableness and Reading Skills have a correlation of .069 which is slightly significant here, Agreeableness and Speaking Skills again have a slightly significant correlation of .159, Agreeable and Listening Skills again have a slightly significant relationship here i.e. .143 while Agreeableness and Writing Skills have a weak correlation of .027. Overall Null Hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that Agreeableness and Reading, Speaking and Listening Skills have a slightly significant relationship. The results are given below in the table form:

Table 5

**Correlations**

		Agreeableness	Reading Skill
Agreeableness	Pearson Correlation	1	.069
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.485
	N	105	105
Reading Skill	Pearson Correlation	.069	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.485	
	N	105	105

Significance level  $\alpha = .05$



As part of the next step in the research, Oliver John's Big Five Personality Inventory (with 44 items) was selected with answer key to get information about the students' personality. This inventory was given to the same sample.

Next step was of the formation of a questionnaire with demographic information including thirteen items. This was then administered to the sample.

SPSS was then selected as the tool for data analysis Data was collected using cluster sampling Analysis of data was done using SPSS. Pearson's product moment coefficient of correlation, one of the best known measures of association, was used.

Focussed group interviews were conducted later for the qualitative analysis of teachers'/students'/parents' perceptions about the relationship between personality of the students and their language skills.

### RESULTS OF THE STUDY:

Analysis: Extraversion and Reading skills have a correlation of .049 which is slightly significant, while Extraversion and Speaking Skills again have a correlation of .111, which again is slightly significant. Extraversion and Listening Skills have an expected negative correlation of -.111. Extraversion and writing Skills have no correlation as it is -.003. The results are given below in the table form:

Table 1

**Correlations**

		Extraversion	Reading Skill
Extraversion	Pearson Correlation	1	.049
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.619
	N	105	105
Reading Skill	Pearson Correlation	.049	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.619	
	N	105	105

Significance level  $\alpha = .05$

Table 2

**Correlations**

		Extraversion	Speaking Skill
Extraversion	Pearson Correlation	1	.111
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.259
	N	105	105
Speaking Skill	Pearson Correlation	.111	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.259	
	N	105	105

Significance level  $\alpha = .05$