Article Review

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Harris, M. A., Brett, C. E., Johnson, W., & Deary, I. J. (2016). Personality stability from age 14 to age 77 years. *Psychology and Aging*, *31*(8), 862.

Personality psychology discusses the individual differences in the way humans think, feel and behave. Stability and change are a few of the most interesting questions when it comes to personality attributes. Personality attributes are of different kinds, such as heterotypic and homotypic stability. One of the types of homotypic stability is differential stability. The article reviewed in this paper also discusses the concept of personality stability by using the data from the Scottish Mental Survey conducted in 1947 to evaluate the stability over the years until 2016. This article is mainly based on the concept of differential stability. The sample was rated based on six personality traits by the teachers of kids when they were 14 (Harris, Brett, Johnson, & Deary, 2016). These participants were traced backed in 2012 and were invited to take part in this study. At the age of 77, these participants were asked to fulfill a questionnaire which involved rating themselves and asking others to rate themselves on the same six characteristics. In this way, differential stability was studied through this study. This paper seeks to highlight the type of this article, its key findings, and the ways it is related to developmental psychology and the ways in which it differs from other non-scholarly articles.

# Type of Article

A journal article can be of many types including an Original Research, Rapid Communications, Case Studies, and Review Articles. Some of the journal articles communicate the findings that they believe will be appealing to the audience, known as a rapid communication. Review articles provide a detailed summary of the research on a given topic and a perspective on the study where it is heading. Case studies make other researchers aware of many possibilities while the original research is the most common type of research. It is also known as a Journal Article, or simply an article. The research article under considerations is also original research. The typical format of an original article is an introduction, methodology, results, and discussion and conclusion sections.

Other ways by which an original research article can be assessed is evaluating that if it is the report of the research done by the researchers who conducted by the study. This research is considered as an original research article because it is originally written by the researchers themselves. In addition, the study has its own hypothesis, research question and purpose (Harris et al., 2016). Besides the authors have explained the research methods they have used in the study and the results are clearly reported. One more indication of this article to be the original research is that the researchers have interpreted their results and have discussed possible implications.

Research is a logical and systematic way of finding useful information on a given topic or an issue. There are many types of researches adopted by the researchers depending on the field and type of study. The type of research done in this original article can be declared as the Longitudinal Research since it evaluated the longitudinal stability of personality. Longitudinal research generally collects data at multiple points of time and it often takes form of cohort study, trend study and panel study. The sample was selected from the Scottish Mental Survey of 1947 and the participants were evaluated again to examine the longitudinal stability of personality based on the same six personality characteristics that were identified when the participants were of age 14 (Harris et al., 2016). This study involved the investigation of personality characterizes in the older age of the sample that was rated on the basis of some personality traits when they were adolescents. Besides, the longitudinal and interrater correlations were applied to the sample to draw conclusions and inferences. The longitudinal associations were explored in the data to look for differential stability (Harris et al., 2016).

# Article Summary

The article is based on a longitudinal study conducted to evaluate the differential stability in the sample collected primarily in 1947. Stability among the personality characteristics has long been studied. However, lifetime stability in personality has not been measured. Different types of studies have measured the relative stability, nevertheless, this one was merely on the stability of personality differences. The data was collected from the sample of almost 6 decades ago and their childhood personality characteristics were examined and compared with the characteristics of their older ages. The authors expected to witness small to moderate stability of most of the six factors at least some extent of stability in each of the personality traits on their undelaying factor i.e. dependability (Harris et al., 2016). This research aimed at framing the comparatively less familiar personality trait dependability, within the setting of a more validated model of personality, a comparison of older-age and childhood personality traits was observed on the Big-five traits. Besides, dependability relation was also observed with cognitive ability and wellbeing of the individual. This research made the following hypothesis, older-age wellbeing would reveal considerable connections with contemporary ratings of dependability. The second hypothesis was that there will be a weak connection between childhood dependability and older age wellbeing (Harris et al., 2016).

The last hypothesis was that there will be a weak positive connection between dependability and intellect in childhood, however, this connection may be weaker in the old age and even when the interval is of more than sixty years. This study was aimed at studying the stability in the personality characteristics (Harris et al., 2016). As mentioned above, studying personality stability is the most interesting phenomenon of personality psychology. The key aim of the study was to explore the stability of few traits of personality from the adolescence to the old age of the sample collected in 1947 for the survey. Therefore, the participants were rated on the same behavioral features first at the age of 14 and then at the age of 77. The gap of 63 years made this study the longest study in terms of time span on personality stability (Harris et al., 2016).

The findings of the study revealed that the personality traits ratings that were given by the teachers at the age of 14 were very similar to the traits at the age of 77 in the ways that it could be reduced to the level of one factor i.e. dependability. The correlation of Participants’ and others’ older-age personality traits ratings was moderate with each other. The correlations revealed no significant stability over the period of 63 years of six personality characteristics or their fundamental factor .i.e. dependability. However, employing another model in the research revealed the stability of one factor i.e. Stability of Moods and minimum stability of Conscientiousness (Harris et al., 2016). The findings of this study combined with the outcomes of previous studies support the idea that personality changes over time. However, Stability of Moods and Conscientiousness indicate that it is not possible for the childhood and old age personalities to be completely unrelated. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used that revealed that the personality structure was similar across the interval of 63 years and three ratings one given by teachers, one by the external parties and one by the participants themselves. In addition, this study used the same measures that were used in adolescence (Harris et al., 2016).

Moreover, one more finding of the study was the link between personality and intelligence over 66 years. A similarity was found between the IQ ratings of teacher and cognitive skill rating in older age. The longitudinal connections found replicated the stability of intelligence. In the end, our more complex model also indicted the possible stability of Mood Constancy and Conscientiousness. Overall the results suggest that due to the high interval of 63 years between the two assessments of personality, the weaker will be the relationship between two trends (Harris et al., 2016). And this study is an indication that when the interval is very long i.e. 63 years, there is barely any connection at all. Personality keeps on changing during life but by the older age, it becomes fairly different from that of in childhood. Future studies on the topic of differential stability must reflect on a better knowledge of how personality changes throughout the course of life. Overall, the study conducted shows that the differential stability of personality for a longer period of time is generally. There is a likelihood that some of the characteristics of personality may relate to the personality in childhood (Harris et al., 2016). All these results are supported by various research models and statistical tools that have been discussed above.

# **Appropriateness of This Article into the Overall Field of Developmental Psychology**

Developmental Psychology is a scientific method which spins around explaining the change, growth, and stability over the course of human life. It aims to study how humans thinking patterns, feelings and emotions develop and change over time and throughout their life. Most of the theories in the field of developmental psychology are associated with development during childhood (“Developmental Psychology | Simply Psychology,” n.d.). This is the time of human life when most of the changes occur. In addition, his field of study also explores an extensive range of theoretical areas including the emotional, social, biological and cognitive processes. Initially Western cultures dominated this filed of psychology but later Japanese researchers started to make significant contributions in this area of study in the 1980s.

The three key objectives of developmental psychology are to deliberate, describe and to improve development. Developmental psychologists try to find answers of different developmental questions regarding Continuity vs. Discontinuity, Nature vs. Nurture, and Stability vs. Change. Stability discusses that the personality traits present during childhood sustain throughout life, till the older age and death (“Developmental Psychology | Simply Psychology,” n.d.). On the other hand, change theory suggests that the personality keeps on changing and are modified by the interaction of society, parents, educational institutes and circumstance from which a person go through. This article is linked with the last point of focus of this field of study i.e. stability vs change. In this article, the authors explored the personality stability from age 14 to 77 of a sample. The participants of the study were rated on six personality traits in the age of 14 and then again rated on the same characteristics in the age of 77 to identify the patterns of change or stability. The Results of the study specify that lifetime differential stability of personality is normally pretty low, however, few aspects of personality can be stable from childhood to older age.

# Comparison and Contrast of Article with Non-Scholarly Periodicals

Scholarly journal articles are different from the non-scholarly articles that are published in magazines and newspapers. There are many points of differences and similarities between the types of articles. For instance, the scholarly journal articles are usually filed oriented such as "Journal of Positive Psychology", "Human Biology” etc. while the examples of non-scholarly magazines include, “The New Yorker" and "New York Times". Articles written in the scholarly sources are from the experts of the fields and they go through a detailed peer-review process. Furthermore, the information shared also comes from other scholarly sources and shared in the form of footnotes and bibliography. They use minimum illustrations unless necessary. While the magazines and non-scholarly articles make use of extensive advertising and colorful features to make it popular and stand out. Some of these articles may share the sources but most of them don’t.

Same goes with the article under consideration, it is declared as a scholarly journal article because it is written by the experts of fields. Mathew A. Harris and Caroline E. Brett belong to the Centre for Cognitive Ageing & Cognitive Epidemiology and Centre for Cognitive Ageing and Cognitive Epidemiology in the University of Edinburgh. This article is published in the journal named, “Psychology and Aging" and it has also gone through an evaluation from other experts of the filed. This article cannot be found in some non-academic and non-scholarly source. The article went through a complete process of hypothesis development, data collection and application of statistical tools and techniques to conclude.

The data used also comes from the in-depth study of a wide range of academic sources and articles listed in the “References" at the end of the paper. In addition, the authors have used in-text citations to cite their source of reference against the information shared. There is no unnecessary image of illustration but statistical models and data tables to support the results. The only similarity that can be found between this article and some non-scholarly article is that both share some information, targeted at a certain audience.

# References

Developmental Psychology | Simply Psychology. (n.d.). Retrieved July 27, 2019, from https://www.simplypsychology.org/developmental-psychology.html

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