Personality Factors as Predictors of the Level of Personality Functioning in Adolescence: Examining the Influence of Birth Order, Financial Status, and Sex

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Abstract:- This study aimed at examining the correlation between personality factors measured by the HEXACO Model of Personality Structure - which defines the personality in terms of: Humility-Honesty H, Emotionality E, Extraversion X, Agreeableness A, Conscientiousness C, and Openness to experience O - and the level of personality functioning (LOPF). It also examines HEXACO's predictability of LOPF in adolescence in terms of sex (male, female), birth order (eldest child, middle child, youngest child, and the only child) and financial levels (above average, on average, below average). The sample included 1450 students from both secondary schools and universities all over Lebanon. Participants responded to the HEXACO PI-R-60 scale of personality structure, and Level of Personality Functioning LOPF 2.0 that pinpoints to the degrees of dysfunctionality in both intrapersonal and interpersonal domains; participants also answered other demographic questions. Data were analyzed through SPSS 23 by calculating Pearson correlation coefficients, running ANOVA and post Hoc Hochberg GT2 and Dunett t tests to explore variance among subgroups. Independent Ttests were also utilized to determine sex differences. Multiple linear regression was utilized to determine the predictability of LOPF by HEXACO. Results show that HEXACO factors are inversely correlated to LOPF except for Emotionality; no significant differences in LOPF exist between males and females; on the financial level, differences in LOPF are found only between middle group and below average group, and in terms of birth order, between the only child and the middle child. It is also depicted that LOPF can be predicted by HEXACO factors in different ways. Implications of the study are discussed in the light of the related theories.

Keywords:- HEXACO; Personality Functioning; Birth Order; Financial Status; Sex.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a critical period in a person's formation of identity (Erikson, 1968, 1977, 1979; Marcia 2013), and it plays a fundamental role in forming subsequent stages of life and in formulating one's personality. Patel and Patel (2022) define personality as "a dynamic and organized set of characteristics possessed by an individual that uniquely influence his or her cognitions, emotions, interpersonal and social orientation, motivations and behaviors in various aspect of situations." The intricate tapestry of personality function is thus woven very subtly.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Among the characteristics that paly a decisive role in the formation of an adolescent's personality are cultural, socioeconomic, educational, and genetic factors. However, some factors may be constructive, others destructive. Parenting styles, for example, are found to play a pivotal role in the end result of personality formation, either retaining desirable qualities or exhibiting maladaptive behaviors and performance, social and personal problems as well as personality disorders (Zheng, 2023). It was found that parents play a substantial role in the development of adolescent personality traits that endorse competency and personal wellbeing across lifespan (Schofield et al., 2013).

The American Psychiatric Association (APA) defines a personality disorder (PD) as "an enduring pattern of inner experience and behavior that deviates markedly from the expectations of the individual's culture, is pervasive and inflexible, has an onset in adolescence or early adulthood, is stable over time, and leads to distress or impairment" (APA, 2013, p. 645). However, to counteract any overlap in the diagnosis of personality disorders resulting from the categorical classification of symptoms, the APA introduced the Alternative Model of Personality Disorders (AMPD), by which PD is diagnosed according to impairments of level of personality functioning (LOPF) in two domains: selffunctioning (represented by identity and self-direction) and interpersonal-functioning (represented by empathy and

intimacy); they are considered the primary causes of personality psychopathology. AMPD allows to measure the degree of dysfunctionality of these two domains (APA, 2013, pp. 761 -762). LOPF measures 12 specific facets, including:

- Impairments in identity such as suffering from lack of individuality, instability in self-esteem, and emotional dysregulation.
- Deficits in self-direction including complications in pursuing meaningful goals, abiding by inner behavioral values and prosocial criteria, and self-reflection.
- Empathy issues such as lacking understanding and appreciation of others' experiences and viewpoints, as well as intolerance to the impact of one's own behavior on others.
- Challenges with intimacy including difficulties in developing deep, permanent connections with others and a diminished capacity for intimacy and shared regard.

LOPF also incorporates a severity dimension (from one to five) of personality pathology, which acts as a strong predictor of both current and future functioning (Weekers et al., 2018). Based on AMPD, LPFS-BF 2.0 has been created and was shown to be effective in measuring personality dysfunction among older adults; LOPF has been strongly correlated to anxiety and 61% met criteria for at least one PD, with obsessive–compulsive, schizoid, and avoidant PDs being the most prevalent. Additionally, LOPF is highly correlated with the interpersonal problems, as measured by the interpersonal circumplex, mainly to the distant/cold, socially inhibited, and self-centered factors that represent the low and cold affiliation, in which people are excessively removed from their relationships (Stone et al., 2021).

Regarding personality structure, the HEXACO model founded by Ashton and Lee in 2000 and that was developed in 2009 has demonstrated to be effective in capturing many pathological symptoms and maladaptive personalities (Ashton & Lee, 2009). Regarding differences between males and females, a multicultural study showed that females had higher levels of the Honesty - Humility and Emotionality and moderately higher levels of conscientiousness than males, while males had moderately higher levels of Openness and Agreeableness than women (Lee & Ashton, 2020). It was also found that the combination of the low level of Honesty -Humility factor - the distinctive factor of the model - with other factors in a personality can result in different maladaptive behaviors and features (Lee & Ashton, 2012, pp. 22 -32). Similarly, other studies have shown that personality traits are linked to varied impairments of personality (De Vries et al., 2009; Reinout et al., 2009; De Vries et al., 2010; Ashton et al., 2012; Lee et al., 2012; Lobrano, 2014; Amani, 2015; Knight, 2016).

Similarly, in their study in India on the relationship between personality dimensions and psychological wellbeing, Patel and Patel (2022) found that high neuroticism is negatively correlated with psychological well-being and extraversion, agreeableness are positively correlated with psychological well-being.

From another perspective, Adler was the first to highlight the effect of birth order on personality formation. He believed that the firstborn and the last born are in constant struggle for success and superiority, which leads them to suffer from neurotic features; whereas, middle children are rebellious enough to challenge these fixed rules and are more easy-going, and thus healthier (Adler, 1928, as cited in Damian and Roberts, 2015). Adler postulated that children born to the same family are not necessarily raised in the same environment; the psychological environment of the second child, for example, is not the same as that of the firstborn. This means that the psychological situation counts more than birth order, for if the first child is unintelligent, the second will assume their place. He also argued that age discrepancy between siblings diminishes competitiveness between them; thus, birth order is only a factor in personality formation, rather than an absolute factor, and that parents' reaction to the child is equally effective (Adler, 1964, pp. 96 -120).

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Corey (2013) summarizes the Adlerian view of the psychological influence of birth order on how adults interact with the world:

- The eldest child receives the whole attention of their parents and tends to be dependable and hardworking; a feeling of threat of their favoritism seeps with the coming of the second child, which makes them bossy and exhibiting strong achievement drive.
- The second of only two always finds themselves in a running position to surpass the firstborn and develop a competitive lifestyle to win the approval of others and achieve success.
- The middle child often feels pressed and may end up a problem child who feels life is unfair. However, in families with disputes, they may become the peacemaker who holds things together. The position and the role that the middle child assumes varies in terms of the number of children in the family.
- The youngest child is the pampered child who develops a helpless position, making others at his service. Yet, they may develop in a unique way that outshines others in the family.
- The only child shares the same drive of achievement as the firstborn and are as pampered as the youngest child; they become attention-seekers. They are skillful in interacting with adults and may be dependent on one of the parents. They find it difficult to share, interact and compromise with children; they have intolerance to situations that challenge their positions (pp.107 -109).

Yet, the impact of birth order on personality has been controversial, and that could be attributed to different family sizes - Sibship sizes ranged from six to sixteen siblings - and to low socio-economic level, leading to different types of family dynamics. In the USA, it was found that the youngest were the most extrovert, which gives them a protective factor against their elder siblings being more assertive, sociable, active, and lively (Dixon et al., 2008). Volume 9, Issue 6, June -2024

Along the same vein, Shulman and Mosak (1977)

present two Adlerian views of the effect of birth order and ordinal positions in forming personalities. Shulman states that all the so-called characteristics of children attributed to birth order are but assumptions and probabilities since each individual is a unique case. He interprets the child's psychological position in the light of Social Role Theory and assumes that the child is supposed to act according to his role location which is framed by certain expectations of behavior and demands for performing that role. Mosak, on the other hand, challenges the determinism of birth order which renders a child victim to this fate; he points out that this determinism contradicts with Adler's principles of individual freedom and choices of lifestyle.

In this regard, Saroglou's and Fiasse's study in Belgium (2003) found that birth order affects personality, religion and school performance moderately. However, contrary to the existing literature, the middle born was the one depicted by rebelliousness, the least on conscientiousness, school performance and religion, and the highest in impulsiveness and openness. It was also found that the last born was the most agreeable, tender, warm and altruistic. Although the firstborn and the last born were depicted as different, they shared similar scores on conscientiousness, religion, and academic achievement.

As for the only children in a family, literature shows that in the western countries only children are similar to children with siblings to a large extent, with the only children taking the lead on the academic domain. In China, where the policy of one-child family has been effective, similar results have been found, except in the rural areas, where the law is not strictly followed. Comparison between the first born and the only child shows no differences. Similarly, only children and those with siblings do not differ in terms of personality dimensions representing childhood adjustment in both the West and China (Poston & Falbo, 1990). Likewise, minimal differences in personality traits and intelligence were attributed to birth order across different cultures (Ernst & Angst, 1983).

Similarly, Mõttus et al. (2008) have proven that the stereotypical personality of the Estonian and Estonian-Russian only-children that they are emotionally unstable, cold, aggressive, indifferent, stubborn, and conceited do not coincide with the self-rated profiles of the only-children. On contrary, self- rated profiles of the only children match those of children with siblings whose self-rated profiles include traits such as honest, selfless, sociable, happy and openminded, and this provides an accurate representation of the mean normative and the socially desirable personality.

However, Kantoja rvi et al., (2008) found that being an only child significantly predicted personality disorders in adulthood, mainly cluster A disorders (paranoid, schizoid, schizotypal personality disorders), whereas in previous studies an only child personality was found to be more autocratic and less interactive in their interpersonal relationships. Low socioeconomic class was not found to be associated with personality disorders, and that result was

inconsistent with the prior longitudinal studies that show a relation between low socioeconomic status and personality disorders; the Finnish support for parenthood in these families was suggested to be an explanation for this result. In general, socioeconomic statuses and personality traits are correlated with life outcomes, mainly with success, grit, persistence and impulse control (Spengler et al., 2018).

In general, personality structure and traits has never been the result of one factor; parenting styles play their role in this regard. Studies show that different parenting styles are related to associated with different dimensions of the parents' personalities, and thus adolescents' personalities. For example, extraversion and agreeableness, which reflect interpersonal interactions are correlated with supportive parents, and emotional stability is correlated with lower parental strict control. Extraversion, agreeableness, and low level of emotional stability predict authoritative parenting styles. Conscientiousness and openness did not relate to general parenting, but might be associated with more contentspecific acts of parenting (Huver et al., 2010).

It was noted that previous studies did not tackle LOPF in terms of personality factors, sex, birth order, and financial situation. Lack of similar studies in Lebanon as well as the discrepant results of the previous studies encourage the researchers to conduct a research to answer the following questions:

> Research Questions

- Are HEXACO factors significantly correlated with LOPF?
- Are there any statistically significant differences in LOPF in terms of birth order, financial status and sex?
- Can HEXACO factors predict LOPF?
- How does HEXACO's predictability of LOPF differ in terms of birth order, financial status, and sex?

III. **METHOD**

> Participants

A convenience sample of 1450 (Aged 15 -21years) students from different secondary schools and universities across all the governorates of Lebanon (1139 females) participated in this online study. They responded to the Arabic versions of the following measures.

➤ Measures

HEXACO Personality Inventory-Revised (HEXACO – PI (-R) for Personality Structure

The Arabic version of HEXACO Personality Inventory-Revised (HEXACO - PI - R) for Personality Structure was used in the study. It is a 60 - item instrument that assesses the six major dimensions of personality: Honesty-Humility, Emotionality, eXtraversion, Agreeableness (versus Anger), Conscientiousness, Openness to Experience. Each subscale consists of ten items; all items employ a 1 to 5 response scale: 1 for 'strongly disagree' to 5 for 'strongly agree'. The first Volume 9, Issue 6, June – 2024

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version of the scale was devised by Ashton and Lee in 2000 and has been validated worldwide. Internal consistency ranged between .77 and 80 (Ashton & Lee, 2009). The researchers tested the reliability of the scale in Lebanon (N= 608); Results showed good Cronbach $\alpha = .758$; and the internal consistency coefficients ranged between .506 and .687, except for Emotionality .289.

Level of Personality Functioning Screener- Brief Form 2.0 (LOPF-BF-2.0)

LOPF-BF-2.0 assesses the level of personality functioning and it complies with the AMPD. It is a 4-point Likert self-report scale (ranging from 'very false or often false' = 0 to 'very true or often true' =3). It is composed of 12 items divided into two subscales: the first measures selffunctioning problems and is composed of two subscales that assess impairments in identity and self-direction; the second assesses interpersonal functioning impairments, and it incorporates two subscales about intimacy and empathy difficulties. This indicates that the lower the total score, the better functioning the personality is. The screener can be used in both clinical and non-clinical settings (Siefert et al., 2020). The LPFS-BF 2.0 is a psychometrically satisfactory instrument that generally captures theoretically expected self-other features of personality dysfunctioning (Bach & Hutsebaut, 2018). The internal consistency estimates for the LPFS-BF 2.0 were high, with $\alpha = 0.82$ for the total scale and $\alpha = 0.79$; 0.71 for the self-functioning and interpersonal functioning scales respectively (Weekers et al., 2018). In the Lebanese validation sample, Cronbach α was .844 for the total scale, .815 for self-functioning, and .723 for functioning. interpersonal Coefficients of internal consistency ranged between .707 and .90

IV. RESULTS

A. Research Question 1: 'Are HEXACO Factors Significantly Correlated with LOPF?'

A Pearson correlation analysis was performed to analyze the relationship between HEXACO factors and LOPF. Results are displayed in Table (1).

Table 1 Research Question 1: 'Are HEXACO Factors Significantly Correlated with LOPF?'

		Males (n = 311)		Females (n = 1139)					
LOPF	SFP	IPFP	PFP	SFP	IPFP	PFP			
Personality Structure									
Н	263**	238**	284**	221**	253**	268**			
Е	.165**	.169**	.188**	.159**	.092**	.146**			
Х	449**	345**	453**	504**	399**	519**			
А	146**	234**	210**	213**	277**	276**			
С	346**	346**	390**	410**	329**	424**			
0	076	191**	145*	115**	193**	172**			

Level of Personality Functioning=LOPF; Self- Functioning Problems=SFP; Interpersonal Functioning Problems=IPFP: Personality Functioning Problems=PFP: Humility=H; Emotionality=E; Extraversion=X; Agreeableness=A; Conscientiousness=C; Openness=O; **p=0.01(2 - tailed).

- B. Research Question 2: Are there any statistically significant differences in LOPF in terms of birth order, financial status and sex?
- To test differences in LOPF between different groups in terms of birth order, one-way ANOVA was conducted. A statistically significant difference was found in LOPF in terms of birth order, F(3, 1446) = 3.218, p = .022.

To identify the specific differences between the subgroups, Dunnett t post hoc test was carried out because it is more sensitive to subgroups that are unequal in numbers. It was found that there is only one significant difference between the only-child and the middle child subgroups; df =2.681, p = 0.05, [0.00, 5.36], and Cohen's d = 0.4. This effect size is moderate. This means being an only child or a middle child affect personality functioning moderately. • Similarly, to test differences in LOPF between sub-groups of financial status, one-way ANOVA was conducted and it demonstrated that the effect of financial status was significant, F(2, 1147) = 5.842, p = .003.

Hochberg GT2, a post Hoc test for unequal sub-sample sizes and equal variances, was performed and it revealed a statistically significant mean difference = -1.478 [-2.54, -.42], (p = 0.003) between average group and below average group. However, Cohen's d = 0.20, which means there is only a small effect of financial status on the level of personality functioning.

• To compare level of personality functioning in terms of sex, independent sample T-test (Table 2) is carried out and it revealed that MD = -1.993, t = -4.525, p-value = .000, which means there is a significant difference between males and females; however, calculated Cohen's d = .0283, which means there is only a small effect of sex on LOPF.

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	Sex	М	SD	Т	α	a df MD		95%	6 CI
								L	U
LOPF	М	26.16	6.852	-4.525	.000	1448	-1.993	-2.871	-1.115
	F	28.16	7.037	-4.520	.000	502.885	-1.993	-2.680	-1.127

C. Research Question 3: Can HEXACO factors predict LOPF?

To answer this question, a multiple linear regression analysis was run; results are shown in Table (3).

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Table 5 Waltuple Entear Regression models for predicting EOTT unough TIEAACO												
Dependent V	Predictor	Constant	β	t	α	R	\mathbf{R}^2	F	df			
LOPF	Constant	60.52		36.052	.000	.645	.416	171.362	6,1443			
Н	Humility	230	191	-8.86	.000							
Е	Emotionality	.173	.157	7.75	.000							
Х	Extraversion	460	422	-19.65	.000							
A	Agreeableness	139	106	-4/03	.000							
С	Conscientiousness	304	231	-10.15	.000							

Table 3 Multiple Linear Regression models for predicting LOPE through HEXACO

LOPF = Level of Personality Functioning; Humility = H; Emotionality = E; Extraversion = X; Agreeableness = A;

.922

.097

Conscientiousness = C; Openness = O

.002

Table (3) indicated that HEXACO factors were significant predictors of the level of personality functioning: F(6, 1443) = 171.362, p = .000, except for Openness to experience (p = .922). The regression equation is:

Openness

LOPF = 60.052 + (-.230*H) + (.173*E) + (-.460*X) + (-.139*K) + (A) + (-.304*C).

And this model explains 41.6% of the variation of LOPF.

- D. Research Question 4: How does HEXACO's predictability of LOPF differ in terms of birth order, financial status, and sex?
- > Examining HEXACO's Predictability Power of LOPF in Terms of Birth Order

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the predictive relationship between the birth order (eldest, middle, young, only-child) and the LOPF. Results are shown in Table (4).

	Dependent V	Predictor	Constant	β	t	α	R	<i>R2</i>	F	df
Eldest	LOPF	Constant	57.735		20.922	.000	.649	.421	65.686	6,542
child		Humility	164	14	-3.776	.000				
		Emotionality	.173	.159	4.839	.000				
		Extraversion	483	46	-12.84	.000				
		Agreeableness	132	11	-2.931	.004				
		Conscientiousness	338	25	-6.768	.000				
		Openness	.054	.044	1.252	.211				
Middle	LOPF	Constant	61.098		23.941	.000	.690	.476	79.259	6,524
child		Humility	263	22	-6.549	.000				
		Emotionality	.198	.177	5.582	.000				
		Extraversion	500	47	-13.46	.000				
		Agreeableness	156	12	-3.56	.000				
		Conscientiousness	265	21	-5.87	.000				
		Openness	.007	.006	.188	.851				
Youngest	LOPF	Constant	61.884		16.541	.000	.592	.350	29.554	6,329
child		Humility	257	26	450	.000				
		Emotionality	.120	.107	2.337	.020				
		Extraversion	-382	34	-7.089	.000				
		Agreeableness	-128	09	-2.055	.041				
		Conscientiousness	-338	25	-4.959	.000				
		Openness	035	- 03	627	.531				
Only	LOPF	Constant	61.757		4.420	.011	.662	.438	3.504	6,27
child		Humility	376	32	-1.675	.105				
		Emotionality	.254	.240	1.441	.161				
		Extraversion	274	27	-1.836	.077				

Table 4 Multiple Linear Regression for Predicting LOPF Across Birth Order

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	Agreeableness	-302	15	771	.447		
	Conscientiousness	.045	.030	.150	.882		
	Openness	418	30	-1.561	.130		

• LOPF in the Eldest Child

Table (4) indicated that HEXACO was a significant predictor of the level of personality functioning in the subgroup: eldest child: F(6,542) = 65.686, p = .000. This result explains 42.1% of the variance, and it has a considerable tstatistics value: T = 4.420. The regression equation that illustrates the model is:

$$LOPF = 57.735 + (-.164*H) + (.173*E) + (-.483*X) + (-.132*A) + (-.338*C)$$

• LOPF in the Middle Child

Table (4) indicated that HEXACO was a significant predictor of the level of personality functioning in the subgroup: middle child: F(6,524) = 79.259, p = .000. and it explains 47.6% of the variance, with a substantial t-statistics value: T = 29.554. The regression equation is:

$$LOPF = 61.098 + (-.263*H) + (.198*E) + (-.500*X) + (-.156*A) + (-.365*C)$$

• LOPF in the Youngest Child

Table (4) indicated that the model of personality structure was a significant predictor of the level of personality functioning in the sub-group: youngest child: F(6,329) = 29.554, p = .000. and it explains 35.0% of the variance, with a t-statistics value: T = 16.541. The regression equation that illustrates the relationship is:

• LOPF in the Only-Child

Table (4) indicated that the model of personality structure was a significant predictor of the level of personality functioning in the sub-group: youngest child: F(6,27) = 3.504, p = .011. and it explains 43.8% of the variance, with a t-statistics value: T = 4.420. However, none of the HEXACO factors could explain the result.

Therefore, a stepwise multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the best set of predictors for LOPF from the six factors of HEXACO. This approach was used to identify the most parsimonious model that maximizes the explained variance. The final model showed that only Humility and Extraversion account for the variance in LOPF: F(2,31) = 7.455, p = .002; and they are accountable for 32.5% of the variance, with a t-stat = 7.231. In the final model, Humility H is characterized by: $(B = -.535, \beta = -.457, t (32) = -3.090, p = .004$, and accounted for 22.7% of the variance. The addition of Extraversion X explained more 10.2% of the variance, and $B = -.313, \beta = -3.13, t (32) = -2.114, p = .043$). So, only Humility H and eXtraversion X were significant predictors of LOPF in the only-child.

The regression equation of the model then becomes as follows:

$$LOPF = 54.281 + (-.535*H) + (-.313*X)$$

Examining HEXACO's Predictability Power of LOPF in Terms of Financial Status

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the predictive relationship between the financial status (high, middle, below average) and the LOPF, as shown in Table (5).

Table 5 Multiple Linear Regression for Predicting LOPF Across Financial Status Sub-Groups

	Dependent V	Predictor	Constant	β	t	α	R	<i>R2</i>	F	df
High	LOPF					0.095			2.332	6,13
level										
Middle	LOPF	Constant	60.107		30.96	.000	.65	.42	132.55	6.1097
Level		Humility	252	22	-8.623	.000				
		Emotionality	.184	.168	7.231	.000				
		Extraversion	457	42	-16.81	.000				
		Agreeableness	149	12	-4.715	.000				
		Conscientiousness	299	23	-8.857	.000				
		Openness	.007	.006	.239	.812				
Below	LOPF	Constant	59.267		17.923	.000	.645	.415	37.793	6,319
Level		Humility	113	09	-1.865	.063				
		Emotionality	.142	.126	2.921	.004				
		Extraversion	456	44	-9.587	.000				
		Agreeableness	121	09	-1.870	.062				
		Conscientiousness	367	28	-5.576	.000				
		Openness	.005	.005	.095	.925				

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• LOPF among High Level Financial Status

The overall model of LOPF in the high level of financial status was statistically insignificant, F(6, 13) = 2,332, p = .095, which means that personality factors did not show significant prediction of LOPF. This result may be mainly due to the insufficient number of this subgroup (n = 20).

• LOPF among Middle Level Financial Status

The overall model was statistically significant, F (6, 1097) = 132.554, p =.000 and accounted for approximately 42.0% of the variance in LOPF ($R^{2} = .420$).

The independent variables that significantly predicted LOPF in the middle financial status were Honesty-Humility H (B = -.252, $\beta = -.212$, t (1097) = -8.623, p =.000), Emotionality E (B = .184, $\beta = .168$, t (1079) =7.231, p = .000), Extraversion X (B = -.456, $\beta = -.412$, t (1097) = -16.81, p = .000), Agreeableness (B = -.149, $\beta = -.116$, t (1079) = -4.715, p = .000), Conscientiousness C (B = -.299, $\beta = -.228$, t (1079) = -8.857, p = .000). Openness to experience was the only insignificant predictor of LOPF.

The regression equation in the middle class becomes as follows:

$$LOPF = 60.107+ (-.252*H) + (.184*E) + (-.456*X) + (-.149*A) + (-.299*C).$$

• LOPF among Below Level Financial Status

The overall model of the below level of financial status was statistically significant, F(6, 319) = 37.793, p = .000 and accounted for approximately 41.5% of the variance in LOPF ($R^{2} = .415$).

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The independent variables that significantly predicted LOPF in below level Emotionality E (B = .142, $\beta = .126$, t (319) =2.921, p = .004), Extraversion X (B = .456, $\beta = ...,440$, t (319) = -9.587, p = .000), Conscientiousness C (B = ...,367, $\beta = ...,280$, t (319) = -5.576, p = ..000). Humility, Agreeableness and Openness to experience were insignificant predictors of LOPF.

The regression equation in the middle class becomes as follows:

$$LOPF = 59.267 + (.142 \times E) + (-.456 \times X) + (-.367 \times C).$$

Examining HEXACO's Predictability Power of LOPF in Terms of Sex

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the differences in the predictive relationship between personality factors (H, E, X, A, C, & O) and LOPF between males (M) and females (F). Results are displayed in Table (6).

Table 6 Multi	ple Linear	Regression	for Predicting	LOPF in Terms of Sex
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	Dep. V	Predictor	Constant	β	t	a	R	<i>R2</i>	F	df
Males	LOPF	Constant	63.062			.000	.666	.444	34.57	7, 303
		Humility	138	120	-2.56	.011				
		Emotionality	.218	0198	4.45	.000				
		Extraversion	146	131	-2.19	.029				
		Agreeableness	055	044	927	.355				
		Conscientiousness	130	100	-1.86	.064				
		Openness	058	051	-1.04	.299				
Females	LOPF	Constant	70.076			.000				
		Humility	163	134	578	.000				
		Emotionality	.134	.114	5.44	.000				
		Extraversion	218	202	715	.000				
		Agreeableness	018	014	595	.552				
		Conscientiousness	173	132	-5.36	.000				
		Openness	056	048	-2.12	.034				

• In Males:

The overall model was statistically significant, F(7, 303) = 34.536, p = .000 and accounted for approximately 44.4% of the variance in LOPF ($R^{2} = .444$, Adjusted $R^{2} = .431$).

The independent variables that significantly predicted LOPF in males were Humility-Honesty, Emotionality, and Extraversion only. Specifically, Humility H (B = -.138, $\beta = -.120$, t (303) = -2.565, p =.011), E (B = .218, $\beta = .198$, t (303) = 4.456, p = .000), Extraversion X (B = -.146, $\beta = -.131$, t (303) = -2.194, p =.029) were significant predictors. Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness to experience were not found to be significant predictors of LOPF.

• The Regression Equation in Males becomes as follows:

$$LOPF = 63.062 + (-.138*H) + (.218*E) + (-.146*X)$$

• In Females

The overall model was statistically significant, F (7, 1131) = 164.921, p =.000 and accounted for approximately 50.5% of the variance in LOPF (R^2 = .505, Adjusted R^2 = .502).

The independent variables that significantly predicted LOPF in females were Humility-Honesty, Emotionality, and Extraversion only. Specifically, Humility H (B = -.163, $\beta = -.134$,

 $t (1131) = -5.786, p = .000), E (B = .134, \beta = .114, t (1131) = 5.441, p = .000), Extraversion X (B = -.218, \beta = -.202, t (1131) = -7.147, p = .000), C (B = -.173, \beta = -.132, t (1131) = -5.362, p = .000), O (B = -.056, \beta = -.048, t (1131) = -2.122, p = .034$ were significant predictors of LOPF. Only Agreeableness was not found to be a significant predictor of LOPF in females.

• The Regression Equation in Females becomes as follows:

$$LOPF = 63.062 + (-.163*H) + (.134*E) + (-.218*X) + (-.173*C) + (-.056*O)$$

V. DISCUSSION

This study aimed at discovering the relationship between personality factors measured by the six-factor personality model HEXACO and the level of personality functioning LOPF measured by LOPF BF 2.0. It was found that Humility-Honesty, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness to experience are negatively correlated with LOPF; only Emotionality was positively correlated to LOPF. This results makes sense since LOPF measures the dysfunctionality of personality, which explains why the score of an individual on H, X, A, C, & O is inversely correlated with LOPF. As for Emotionality, the higher the score of a person is on this factor, the more vulnerable they are to mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, emotion dysregulation and other mood disorders, which impairs the level of personality functioning.

As for the second research question: Are there any statistically significant differences in LOPF in terms of birth order, financial status and sex? One-way ANOVA showed statistically significant difference in LOPF in terms of birth order. However, one significant difference between the only-child and the middle child was found, but it was only of moderate size effect, which means birth order does not play a major role in personality functioning. This result aligns with the literature that states that birth order per se is not a decisive factor of personality formation, and that birth order does not seem to be an irrefutable consideration for understanding the development of personality traits on its own, but one has to take other confounds into consideration such as the family dynamics, sibship size, socioeconomic status, and the sex of the child.

Similarly, though there were significant differences between LOPF in terms of financial status, it was found to be of a small size effect, which renders the financial status effect on LOPF negligible. This result contradicts with some of the previous studies and aligns with the Finnish study. It may be a result of the increased level of responsibility of the sample in the light of the economic crisis in Lebanon. Likewise, Ttests shows only a small effect of sex on LOPF, which means the sex of a person does not affect their personality functioning.

Regarding the third research question, "Can HEXACO factors predict LOPF?" Multiple Linear Regression showed HEXACO's predictability of LOPF, except for Openness to

experience which did not account for any contribution in the variance of LOPF.

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Openness to experience is not found to predict the level of personality functioning, and that may be interpreted in terms of the age group of the sample (15 - 22 years) since the impact of openness to experience on one's life, character, personality and functionality appears at a later stage with the accumulation of experience. The older the person is, the more or less they become open to experience depending on the location of this trait of their personality on the spectrum of openness ranging from very open and unconventional to very reserved and traditional. Thus, as one grows up, the impact of the degree of this trait on personality becomes more tangible.

Finally, the study depicted the nuances of HEXACO's predictability of LOPF by answering this question: How does HEXACO's predictability of LOPF differ in terms of birth order, financial status, and sex?

It is noted that in the eldest, middle, and youngest children, H, X, A, & C contribute negatively to the LOPF because high levels of these factors act as a buffer for life circumstances, rendering a person more capable at handling different situations and conditions because such people are kind-hearted, honest, humble, sociable, outgoing, assertive, courteous, conscientious, reliable and hardworking; whereas, people with high scores on emotionality are easily irritable, fearful, stressful, and anxious. They are in constant need for reassurance and safety in addition to being too sentimental and empathetic. Such characteristics make them easily vulnerable, impairing the level of their functionality.

The only child exhibited peculiar characteristics. Only Humility – Honesty and Extraversion were accountable for predicting 32,5% of the variance of LOPF. This shows how important it is to raise an only child to be honest, humble and sociable to have a good level of personality functioning.

As for HEXACO's predictability of LOPF in terms of different financial statuses, HEXACO could not predict a significant model of LOPF among the high level subgroup. This could be mainly because this subgroup consisted only of 20 students out of 1450, which means the sample is not sufficient to give a clear picture about this relationship. It is noteworthy to mention that the economic crisis in Lebanon has left its impact on the community, changing the socioeconomic level of many groups drastically, minimizing the number of the highly satisfied people on the financial level.

Within the middle level, all HEXACO factors could predict LOPF, except for openness to experience; whereas, in the below level class, only emotionality, extraversion, and conscientiousness accounted for the predictability of the LOPF.

As for the differences in HEXACO's predictability of LOPF between males and female, it was found that in males only honesty-humility, extraversion, emotionality are significant predictors of LOPF in males; whereas in females Volume 9, Issue 6, June – 2024

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all factors: humility-honesty, extraversion, emotionality, conscientiousness, and openness to experience contribute to the prediction of LOPF. Only agreeableness is not found to contribute significantly to the variance of LOPF in females. Such differences between males and females can give a clue to suitable parenting styles with both males and females. The different regression equations for both males and females highlight the fact that attention to the details and nuances of parenting of each sex contributes highly to the level of stability of personality functioning. Previous literature proves that parenting styles are affected by parents' personality traits, and likewise, yield different types of traits in adolescents. In this way, transmission of transgenerational traits takes places through parenting, which places heavy responsibilities on parents.

The results of this study paves the way to upcoming research to understand how the intricate combination of personality traits, socioeconomic status, birth order and sex contribute to imprinting personality functioning and producing the final outcome of human behavior.

Though the study resulted in good insight into the relationship between its variables, it has its limitations. First, the scales used are self-reporting, which makes them subjective more than objective. Second, the results of this study would be better substantiated if there were other scales used to test personality disorders as well as observer -rating scales to triangulate the results. Third, the sample consists of two subgroups: Secondary school students whose ages range between 16 and less than 18, and the other subgroup comprises university students whose age ranges between 18 and 22. This means that it is too early to talk about personality disorders among students whose age is under 18 since personality is still being formed. So, this factor should have been controlled to capture a clearer image of personality functioning, and the results of the university students are more reliable when the results pinpoint to any possibility of personality functioning or personality disorder.

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