

Relationship between Personality Traits and Self-Esteem Among University Students

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ABSTRACT

The present study examines the relationship between Personality traits and self-esteem among university students. Hundred students of Aligarh Muslim University (50-Girls and 50-Boys) were incorporated as participants of the study. Big five inventory-2-short (BFI-2-S) by Soto and John (2017), and self-esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965) were used as measurement tools. To analyse the data; t-test and Pearson product-moment correlation was used. The findings of the study showed that gender differences exist in terms of neuroticism and agreeableness. Positive and significant correlation was found among conscientiousness, extraversion and self-esteem, whereas negative and significant correlation exhibits between self-esteem and neuroticism.

Keywords: *Big five inventory; Self-esteem, University students.*

Personality traits are important factors of individuals which makes them unique from others. There are five types of personality traits such as openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism. As openness means a person is ready to accept changes, conscientiousness means person is very organised, extraversion refers to outgoing and sociable, agreeableness signifies agreement with others and lastly neuroticism implies aggressive, violent, irritating personality. Whereas, self-esteem refers to how a person evaluates oneself. It is a perception of an individual towards oneself, about one's own capability, worthiness etc. If person evaluation is positive towards oneself then self-esteem will be high and on the other hand if person negatively evaluates oneself then probability is that self-esteem will be low. High self-esteem individuals are more motivated competitive and even more satisfied with their life. On the other side, low self-esteem individuals are prone to lack of confidence, feel worthlessness, lack of capability, lack of motivation and even they are not satisfied with their life as well. In conducting this research our purpose is to explore the relationship between personality traits and self-esteem among university students. The university students are the adult's age group, such students are in the state to

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make a proper and wise decision regarding their career. They face a number of challenges such as parental pressure, peer pressure, selection of area/field in which s/he is interested, lack of opportunities etc. The motive behind conducting this research is that every individual has a different personality and also the degree of traits, due to the varying degree of trait present in one's individual provides a unique identity to an individual. If an individual possesses such personality traits then how s/he evaluates oneself. For example; neurotic personality individual is very aggressive, arrogant in nature then it leads to build-up negative self-esteem towards oneself, such individuals easily get frustrated, violent and they face adjustment problems etc.

Introduction

Personality is the result of the communication of an individual with his environment. Personality comprises numbers of characteristics or combination of characteristics that makes a person unique (Weinberg & Gould, 1999). Family members, batchmates and companions are the nearest environment productive in nature which is responsible to reflect one's personality as an individual. An Individual positively dealing with this environment leads to the development of a positive personality, while negative interaction leads to the negative personality of an individual (John, & Gross (2004). Personality development is a multifaceted condition that requires looking after different components of an individual such as biological, psychological and sociological. The Self and the external environment are the two necessary parts of this configuration. Interaction of self with his environment results in personality development (Eren, 2014). The five-factor model is the well-known personality traits model; different characteristics are organized into five broad domains of personality traits which comprises openness, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and neuroticism, (Markon, Watson, & Krueger 2005). Neuroticism indicates to what extent person deals with stress; Extraversion indicate that to what extent individual can bear different reactions from different people and circumstances; To what extent individual can ready to accept changes refers openness; to what extent we have to receive and tolerate by others people in a group refers agreeableness, and lastly conscientiousness refers to what extent an individual performs efforts in such an efficient manner to get productive outcome. The Person-centered approach developed by Carl Rogers. According to him, individual self-comprises thought processes, observations, and their ideas about oneself. Precise the sense of self is the perception of an individual towards oneself. He believed that those individuals who are nurtured in the environment of unconditional love develop a positive attitude towards oneself. Anxiety results when a discrepancy between the behaviour and the opinions of an individual towards oneself. He says that self will not be conserved in time if an individual cheats oneself and it causes anxiety. He emphasized, for developing self-esteem, three important considerations about the parent-child relationship. The first point is to reveal acceptance, concern, sympathy, understanding, and love regarding adolescents. Next is permitted followed by a penalty. And last one is the independent opinion of father and mother. Adolescents growing up in such a kind of environment will enhance their self-esteem. (Ummet, 2015; Hall & Linzey, 1957). According to Rosenberg (2015), who defined self-esteem as “negative and positive attitude of the individual to oneself”. As per Rosenberg, self-esteem is the outcome of how individuals evaluate themselves. Decisions taken about the evaluation of oneself determines the degree of self-esteem, in other words it is the result of the value associated with the self.

Amirazodi and Amirazodi (2011), who defined self-esteem as “the evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains about concerning himself/herself”. According to Morganett (2005) defined self-esteem as, “A form of self-acceptance, personal

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appreciation and subjective respect of one's own". Research showed that self-esteem was closely associated with dimensions of the "Big Five" personality (e.g., Erdle, Potter, and Gosling 2009; Watson, Haig, & Suls 2002). Experimentally observed relationships between extraversion, neuroticism, and definite self-esteem are entirely healthy: self-esteem positively associated with extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness while negatively with neuroticism (Watson, Haig, & Suls, 2002). Previous studies showed, 34% alteration found in self-esteem due to big five personality traits, emotional stability, extraversion, and conscientiousness traits were the most strongly associated with self-esteem. (Robins, Trzesniewski, Tracy, Gosling, & Potter, 2001). Early research conducted on Chinese people showed that self-esteem positively linked with extraversion whereas negatively with neuroticism (Galchenko & Van de Vijver, 2007; Cai, Wu, & Brown, 2009).

Personality traits (operational definition): Personality is organised in nature which can be changed and due to which an individual adjusted to the environment in a unique way.

Personality traits refer in which an individual's behaviour is same or similar under different circumstances. Traits are a generalised form of behaviour and it is quantitative in nature, which means that intensity of particular behaviour of an individual may vary from one person to another. For example, some people's behaviour is more aggressive in nature than others. Due to personality traits individual differences occur and it brings uniqueness in one's personality. The Big Five personality traits are openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism.

Self-Esteem (operational definition):

Self-esteem refers to the individual perception towards oneself. In which a person evaluates their capabilities, and worthiness. If an individual frames positive perception towards oneself, then his self-esteem will be high while on the other hand if a person frames negative perception, then his self-esteem will be low.

Objectives

- To study the mean differences in personality traits and self-esteem among university students in the context of gender.
- To study the relationship between personality traits and self-esteem among university students.

Hypotheses

- There are no mean differences on personality traits and self-esteem among university students in the context of gender.
- There is no relationship between personality traits and self-esteem among university students.

METHODOLOGY

Participants: Participants of the present research were 100 U.G. students of Aligarh Muslim University (50 girls and 50 boys). Only those students were selected who were interested to participate or voluntarily come to the researchers and the sampling technique was purposive in nature.

Measures

1. **Big five personality traits scale:** Big Five Inventory-2-Short (BFI-2-S) developed by Soto & John (2017). It consists of 30 items and five subscales and each item is

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scored on 5 points Likert scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

- The Self-Esteem scale:** Rosenberg's self-esteem scale (RSES), developed by Rosenberg (1965). It consists of ten items, which are quantified on 4 ratings, 3 (strongly agree) to 0 (strongly disagree). Those who achieve higher scores indicate high self-esteem. The RSES demonstrates a Guttman scale coefficient of reproducibility of 0.92, shows better internal consistency. Test-retest reliability shows correlations of .85 and .88, specifying well stability.

Procedure

First of all, researchers approached the participants and established the rapport with them. Researchers assured the participants that their anonymity will be preserved and data will be used only for research purposes. Questionnaires with demographic information presented to them; and instructions were given on how they have to respond. After the completion of the questionnaire, it was collected with thanks.

RESULTS

The result of the t-test revealed that significant mean differences exist in boys and girls in terms of neuroticism and agreeableness. Girls' mean score is greater than boys. Although, in terms of extraversion, conscientiousness, openness, and self-esteem no significant mean difference was found in boys and girls (Table 1).

Table 1: Gender differences among variables.

Variables	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	Df	P
Self-esteem	Male	50	19.78	3.576	0.980	98	0.33
	Female	50	18.82	5.934			
Extraversion	Male	50	20.34	3.426	1.775	98	0.07
	Female	50	19.02	3.987			
Conscientiousness	Male	50	20.88	4.26	0.146	98	0.88
	Female	50	20.76	3.92			
Openness	Male	50	20.58	3.79	0.598	98	0.55
	Female	50	20.16	3.20			
Neuroticism	Male	50	15.70	6.84	-2.204	98	0.03
	Female	50	18.24	4.42			
Agreeableness	Male	50	22.66	3.50	-1.978	98	0.05
	Female	50	24.08	3.67			

Means, Standard deviations (SD), t=gender differences, Df= Degree of freedom, P= value of significance.

The results showed (table 2) that the insignificance relationship exists between extraversion and agreeableness, while Extraversion shows positive and significant relationship with conscientiousness, self-esteem and big five factor (0.324**, 0.310** and 0.525** respectively) at 0.01 level of significance, whereas, extraversion and openness are positively (0.249*) and significantly correlated at 0.05 level of significance. Only one dimension i.e., neuroticism is negatively and insignificantly correlated with extraversion.

If we talk about agreeableness, result shows that conscientiousness and big five factor (0.354** and 0.561** respectively) are positively and significantly correlated with agreeableness at 0.01 level of significance while openness and agreeableness are positively and significantly correlated at 0.05 level of significance. Only two dimensions i.e., neuroticism and self-esteem are insignificantly correlated with agreeableness.

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Conscientiousness shows positive and significance relationship with self-esteem and big five factor (0.346** and 0.570** respectively) at 0.01 level of significance. On the other hand, neuroticism and openness are insignificantly correlated with Conscientiousness.

Neuroticism shows negative and significant relationship with self-esteem (-0.466**) at 0.01 level of significance while positively and significantly correlated with big five factors (0.391**) at 0.01 level of significance. Remaining dimension i.e., openness is negatively and insignificantly correlated with neuroticism.

Result shows that Openness is positively and significantly (0.523**) correlated with big five factors at 0.01 level of significance while it insignificantly correlated with self-esteem. And lastly, the big five inventory (BFI) shows a positive but insignificant relationship with self-esteem.

Table 2: shows the correlation between personality traits and self-esteem.

Variables	Extravers ion	Agreeable ness	Conscientious ness	Neurotic ism	Openn ess	S.E	B FI
Extraversion	1						
Agreeableness	0.126	1					
Conscientiousness	0.324**	0.354**	1				
Neuroticism	-0.154	-0.066	-0.195	1			
Openness	0.249*	0.203*	0.152	-0.047	1		
S.E.	0.310**	0.166	0.346**	-0.466**	0.177	1	
BFI	0.525**	0.561**	0.570**	0.391**	0.526*	0.102	1

* $P < 0.05$ ** $P < 0.01$. S.E.=Self-Esteem, BFI=Big Five Inventory

DISCUSSION

The objective of conducting this research was to find out the relationship between personality traits and self-esteem among the students of university and also to know whether gender play any role in terms of these variables. Findings of the table1, revealed that in terms of neuroticism and agreeableness mean differences exist in scores of boys and girls, girls achieved higher scores than boys, which are significant at 0.05 level. While in extraversion, conscientiousness, openness, and self-esteem there was not a significant difference in the mean of both groups that is boys and girls. From table 1, we conclude that boys are more outgoing, sociable as compared to females may be due to this reason boys are more extrovert and less on neuroticism, while females are more neurotic and less extrovert because they are easily trust on others and more agreeableness in nature. Significant gender differences exist in terms of neuroticism (Amirazodi & Amirazodi, 2011). One of the findings showed that negative and strong association was found with self-esteem in relation to despair and hopelessness (Rosenberg, 1985; Schooler, Rosenberg, & Schoenbach, 1989).

The results of the correlation (table 2) showed, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness were negatively and insignificantly related with neuroticism, while negative and significantly linked with self-esteem.

Extraversion positively and significantly correlated with conscientiousness and self-esteem. Agreeableness shows a positive and significant relationship with conscientiousness. Conscientiousness is positive and significantly correlated with self-esteem. Neuroticism

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versus emotional stability was negatively associated with self-esteem (Amirazodi & Amirazodi, 2011). The Previous study showed that neuroticism among the five dimensions of personality is associated with depression and also predicts it (Kotov, Gamez, Schmidt, & Watson, 2010; Bunevicius, Kakkute, & Bunevicius, 2008). Another research on Chinese medical students explored that manifestation of depression forecasted by neuroticism, openness and agreeableness dimensions of personality, whereas this association mediated by self-esteem (Shi, Liu, Yang, & Wang, 2015). The other research findings reveal that players of combat sports achieve high positive score in conscientiousness, agreeableness, extraversion, while got low score in neuroticism, self-esteem, and in openness, whereas players of team sports showed reverse results as that of combat sports (Bojanic, Nedeljkovic, Sakan, Mitic & Drid, 2019). Another finding showed that Self-esteem was significantly and negatively predicted by neuroticism versus emotional stability (Sushma, Kumar and Batra, 2015). Previous study showed that low level of neuroticism and high level of extraversion and conscientiousness brings creativity, with the mediating role played by self-esteem and psychological capital (Hong, Dyakov, & Zheng, 2020). One of the findings of the study revealed that low level of marital satisfaction found among couples high in neuroticism, while more satisfaction from their married life found among couples high in conscientiousness (Sayehmiri, Kareem, Abdi, Dalvand, & Gheshlagh, 2020). Another research suggested that high risk of lifetime asthma diagnosis linked with high neuroticism and openness, while conscientiousness linked with less risk of lifetime asthma diagnosis (Najjab, Palka, & Brown, 2020).

Abood et al. (2020) found that academic self-efficacy and academic adaptation was positive and significantly correlated with extraversion and openness to experience, on the other hand negative and significantly correlated with neuroticism and conscientiousness. But not correlated with agreeableness dimension of personality. Ngamaleu & Nke (2021) explored that academic procrastination is significantly and negatively correlated with conscientiousness and openness to experience, while on the other side, positive and average relation was found with neuroticism dimensions of personality traits. Negative relationship found between self-esteem and academic procrastination.

CONCLUSION

The present study found that neuroticism is negative and significantly correlated with self-esteem. It indicates an individual who has a neurotic personality that is emotionally unstable, highly anxious, easily frustrated, lacks confidence, and their self-esteem will be lower. It means neurotic individuals do not formulate a positive attitude towards oneself while extraversion, conscientiousness is positively and significantly related with self-esteem. Agreeableness and openness insignificantly related with self-esteem. It indicates that outgoing, social and organised individuals formulate a positive opinion towards oneself, and similar cases with those individuals who are ready to accept new experiences. On the other side, on the basis of gender differences on personality traits and self-esteem, it was found that girls were more neurotic and agreeable in nature than boys.

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Conflict of Interest

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