

## Effect of Creative Personality on Self-Awareness and Self-Acceptance

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### ABSTRACT

A study was carried out on creative personality to understand its impact on other variables. The focus of this study was to see if creative personality has an effect on self-awareness and self-acceptance. Self-awareness and self-acceptance are two crucial characteristics of a healthy personality. It is known by now that self-awareness, which is a part of emotional quotient, is a key barometer for success in life. It helps people be aware of their feelings and thoughts and helps them enhance their interpersonal relations. Positive and healthy interpersonal relations create a healthy environment and promote values required not only for individual success but also for group success as well. Self-acceptance helps people accept their strengths and weakness so that they can work on themselves in deficient areas. This awareness and training are intended to increase healthy competition with reduce jealousies, politicking and mind games. By focusing on training children in developing creative personality, if the above mentioned two qualities can be inculcated it would be beneficial to children to have a smooth life. Results do confirm the above-mentioned hypothesis. Therefore, these results can be used in Schools, colleges and offices to develop self-awareness and self-acceptance. Government, schools and offices can organize various seminars, workshops and other activities to promote creative personality in students and employees. Sixty-four college students aged 18 to 25 were asked to fill the questionnaires using snowball sampling technique. The data was collected online using Google forms.

**Keywords:** *Self-Awareness, Self-Acceptance, Creative Personality, Emotional Quotient, Creativity*

Some people just possess a greater ability to come up with unique ideas and solutions than others that are completely out of the box. These individuals stand out in a crowd and are capable of innovating – in fact, they appear to favour originality to imitation and may frequently choose to go against the grain. There has been a long-standing interest in understanding these creative abilities at individual and organizational levels. Creativity allows us to view and solve problems more openly and with innovation. It helps us to see things differently and deal better with uncertainty (Cheltenham Design Festival, 2019). A wide range of research addresses the question of understanding creativity comprehensively. Intrinsic motivation to learn has been associated with creativity by many

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researchers. When students are involved in learning skills that will help them accomplish a creative goal, they tend to be engrossed in the learning process (Auger & Woodman, 2016, Eisenberger & Shanock, 2003).

Creativity researchers have attempted to relate creativity to other aspects of life like imagination, mental well-being and entrepreneurship. They explained how creativity influences each one of these concepts and how we can foster creativity in individuals. One study focused on the role of creativity in building sustainable futures. Kajzer Mitchell and Walinga (2017) proposed that sustainability problems that are faced by organisations could be solved by combining creative and insight problem solving while taking a holistic approach to address the issue at hand. Researchers have also focused on how creativity can help improve mental health. One such research states that creativity is a complex of cognitive, affective, personal, motivational, and social factors, and is characterized by openness, flexibility, autonomy, playfulness, humour, willingness to take risks, and perseverance are also necessary for sound mental health (Cropley, 1990). Others focused on how creativity affects entrepreneurship. Hamidi et al. (2008) found that high scores on a creativity test and prior entrepreneurial experiences are positively associated with entrepreneurial intentions, whereas perception of risks has a negative influence. Research has also focused on the relation between creativity and imagination. Imagination promotes innovation, novel challenges and prospects that are based on reality, which is exactly what creativity is all about (Mellou, 1995).

Similarly, researchers have tried to find out how creativity is related to several other variables like self-awareness and self-acceptance. Self-awareness, as discussed by Goleman is knowing your emotions, recognizing feelings as they occur and differentiating between them is being emotionally literate. Being able to identify and label specific feelings in yourself and others; being able to discuss emotions and communicate clearly and directly. The ability to empathize with, feel compassion for, validate, motivate, inspire, encourage and soothe others (Goleman, 1995).

One study found that self-awareness is negatively correlated to transgressive behaviour (Diener & Wallbom, 1976). Duval and Wicklund (1972) theorised that self-awareness has motivational properties deriving from social feedback. It affects conformity, attitude-behaviour discrepancies, and communication sets. It has been theorised that there are five levels of self-awareness starting from birth to approximately 4-5 years of age. Consciousness develops in levels right from an early age which forms the basis of adult self-awareness (Rochat, 2003). The theory of objective self-awareness states that the attribute of being directed either towards the self or the environment is seen as a dichotomous property of conscious attention. Events that compel attention inward, such as self-reflection, and events that tug attention outward, such as distracting stimuli outside the self, govern attention direction. Depending on whether the individual focuses on the negative or positive discrepancy, the person will experience either negative or positive affect. (Wicklund, 1975).

Whereas, Self-acceptance is defined as the person possessing the following characteristics:

1. Has a sense of personal worth and has faith in his capacity to cope with life.
2. Relies primarily on internal values rather than external pressures as a guide to behaviour.
3. Assumes responsibility for his behaviour and accepts praise or criticism objectively.
4. Is relatively free from self-doubt or disillusionment.

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5. Considers himself a person of worth on an equal plane with others.

This definition was adapted from The California Psychological Inventory and the Berger Scale of Self-Acceptance (1952).

One research showed that mindfulness enhances self-acceptance (Carson & Langer, 2006). Another research suggests that though the general notion considers low self-esteem detrimental to one's mental health, any level of self-esteem indicates self-evaluation. Instead, the focus should be on accepting yourself unconditionally (Chamberlain & Haaga, 2001). Macinnes (2006) found that while self-esteem is more concerned with affect, it is negatively correlated with depression. Self-acceptance is an essential aspect of general psychological well-being and can be a root cause of many psychological problems. Another research found that the concepts of self-acceptance and self-description are overlapping and not well differentiated. (Shepard, 1979).

The personality of an individual plays an important role in generating creative ideas. Creative personality is defined as openness to experience, sensitivity, audacity, individualism, initiative, curiosity, and imagination. (Benlliure,2006).

Selby (2005) did a meta-analysis of studies on creativity. Characteristics of creative people, as enlisted by many psychologists, are included in this article. Barron (1955) suggested that creative individuals have a preference for intricacy, autonomy, self-assertion and are impulsive. Vervalin (1962) mentioned qualities such as being high on general intelligence, openness to sensitivity, flexibility, autonomy, enjoying creation for creation's sake, and love for unique and novel solutions. MacKinnon (1962) observed that creative architects scored lower on self-abasement, submissiveness, diffidence and conformity. They didn't hesitate to admit unusual and unconventional self-views and were dissatisfied, irresponsible, aloof, impulsive and assertive. Stein (1974) illustrated a creative person as a curious, self-assured, ambitious achiever, driven by a need for order, is self-critical, conventional, self-sufficient, intuitive, and empathic while also being less constrained.

While some experts listed the characteristics of creative people, others focused on the contradiction that exists because of the seemingly inconsistent characteristics of creative people. Bruner (1973) coined the term "connectedness" to describe the merging of seemingly opposing and contradictory elements. According to him, a creative person is emotionally unstable, yet is capable of making good use of that instability. Creative people, according to Csikszentmihalyi (1996), have a lot of physical energy yet are often calm and at rest. They are intelligent, but they can also be naive. They may appear excitable and undisciplined, yet they are extremely hardworking and responsible. They might switch between "flights of fantasy" and a highly "down-to-earth" sense of reality. They've accepted the values of their domains while keeping their sense for questioning the domain's "givens" and assumptions. Creative people are both enthusiastic and objective about what they do. Finally, because of their openness and sensitivity, they are subjected to a considerable amount of pain as well as pleasure. Another researcher stated that individuals who are creative display a variety of "paradoxes." They are calm but alert, confident but humble, uninterested but selfish, distant but involved, constructive but dissatisfied, thoughtless but perceptive, convergent but divergent, and able to postpone closure but stick to a choice once made. (McMullen, 1976).

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Other experts tried to expand the knowledge about creative personalities by adding more characteristics. Amabile (1989) added work self-discipline, endurance in the face of adversity, the ability to wait for gains, self-motivation, and a willingness to take chances. Dacey's (1989) list is based on eight attributes of the creative mind, including ambiguity tolerance, adaptability, androgyny (the ability to be unconstrained by gender norms), and the ability to delay gratification. According to one study on creative personality, creative people have strong symbolic interests, independence, and high goals, and they see themselves as self-centred rather than other-centred. (Helson, 1996). More than 100 references were categorised by Feist (1999), who compared artists and non-artists, scientists and non-scientists. Imagination, impulsivity, lack of conscientiousness, anxiety, emotional sensitivity, ambition, norm-doubting, anger, aloofness, unfriendliness, lack of warmth, domination, arrogance, and autonomy were among the traits he listed, to distinguish "creatives" from "non-creatives."

The studies that have been done to understand the relationship between creativity, self-awareness and self-acceptance have contradictory results. While some studies suggest that there's no significant relationship between these variables. (Mostafavi et al., 2020), other studies point in the opposite direction. (Sakkijha et al., 2015, Qudsi. 2013, MacKinnon, 1962). However, these empirical studies emphasised creative products more than the unique personality characteristics of individuals.

Hence, the goal of the present study is to study the effect of creative personality on self-awareness and self-acceptance. Four hypotheses were conceived for the present study.

H1: - Creative personality doesn't have a significant effect on self-acceptance.

H2: - Creative personality doesn't have a significant effect on self-awareness.

H3: - Self-awareness doesn't have a significant effect on creativity.

H4: - Self-acceptance doesn't have a significant effect on creativity.

To test these hypotheses, data were collected from college students of Pune, Maharashtra, India. The data was analysed to see if creative personality predicts self-awareness and self-acceptance which in turn would predict creativity.

## METHODS

### *Participants and procedures*

#### *Sample:*

Age Group	Male	Female	Total
18-25	21	43	64

#### *Procedure for Data Collection:*

1. Participants were selected from various colleges in Pune.
2. Snowball sampling method was used to collect the sample.
3. The survey form was distributed online using Google forms.
4. Informed consent was taken.
5. The inclusion criteria for the sample were the age group 18-25.
6. The exclusion criteria were the group of people having any psychological illness or who lack basic English reading skills.

Single group correlational design was used for the present study.

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### Measurements

#### *Creative Personality Scale*

It is a creative personality checklist developed by Harrison. G. Gough. It consists of 30 adjectives relating to creativity. 12 adjectives are not related to creativity. Checking those adjectives will get one negative mark while checking the rest of the adjectives will be given one mark each. Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient was computed and it ranged from -.73 to .77. Construct validity of the scale ranged between .64 and .82 with different scales of creativity.

#### *Emotional Intelligence Scale (Self-awareness)*

It was developed by Hyde, Lethé and Dhar. It consists of 34 items 5-point Likert type scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. For determining the reliability of the scale, reliability coefficient was calculated on a sample of 200 subjects. The split-half reliability was found to be .88 and a validity of 0.93.

#### *Unconditional Self-acceptance Scale*

It was developed by Dave Haaga. It consists of 20 items 7-point Likert type scale. 11 items are reverse scored. Internal consistency of the scale is moderate ( $\alpha = .72$ ). Participants were adult volunteers, age group 91 to 81.

#### *Visual Remote Association Test (Creativity)*

It is developed by Ana-Maria Olteteanu and Faheem Hassan. It consists of 46 vRAT queries, given visual entities wa, wb,wc, there exists an entity wx,which generally co-occurs visually with the other shown entities wa, wb and wc. It is a formalization from the linguistic remote association test by Mednick to the visual domain. All internal validity results for the visual RAT are above 0.75 showing that the results have high internal consistency.

### Analysis

1. Statistical analysis was performed to check the normality, Mean, Median, Mode, Skewness and Kurtosis of the data.
2. To check the correlation between variables under study, Pearson Correlation was used.
3. To measure the impact of creative personality on self-awareness and self-acceptance, Regression analysis was used.

## RESULTS

*Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of the variables*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Creative Personality	64	-2	11	3.61	3.240
Self-acceptance	64	43	124	84.44	15.592
Creativity	64	2	32	16.30	6.329
Self-awareness	64	4	20	14.00	4.731
Age	64	18	26	23.23	1.725
Valid N (listwise)	64				

As shown in Table 1, the Mean and standard deviation of all the variables is presented in the above table. The mean score of creative personality is 3.61 while SD is 3.25. Self-acceptance has a mean score and standard deviation of 84 and 15, respectively. The mean

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score of creativity is 16 and SD is 6. Self-awareness has a mean score of 14 and SD is 4. The mean score of age is 23 and SD is 2.

**Table 2 Correlation among variables**

	Creative Personality	Self-acceptance	Creativity	Self-awareness
Creative Personality	1			
Self-acceptance	.252*	1		
Creativity	.399**	.026	1	
Self-awareness	.257*	.405**	.085	1

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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

Table 2 shows correlation among the variables. Creative personality was positively correlated with self-awareness, self-acceptance and creativity ( $r = .257^*$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ,  $r = .252^*$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ,  $r = .399^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Self-acceptance was positively correlated with self-awareness ( $r = .405^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). There was no significant relation between self-awareness and creativity and between self-acceptance and creativity. So, no further analysis was done for these variables.

Regression analysis was done to see the effect of creative personality on self-awareness and self-acceptance. Table 3 shows the results of regression analysis of creative personality and self-awareness. It shows a significant  $R^2$ , indicating that creative personality significantly predicts self-awareness. It has a 5.1% effect on self-awareness, significant at 0.05 level. Table 4 shows the regression analysis of creative personality and self-acceptance. Creative personality has a 4.8% effect on self-acceptance. It is significant at 0.05 level.

As seen in Table 5, creative personality has a 14.6% effect on creativity and Table 6 shows that self-awareness has a 15% effect on self-acceptance, both significant at 0.01 level.

**Table 3 Regression analysis of creative personality and self-acceptance**

Model 1	R	R <sub>2</sub>	F	B	t	Sig.
Creative personality	.252 <sup>a</sup>	.048	4.193	.252	2.048	.045

a. Dependent Variable: Self-acceptance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Creative personality

**Table 4 Regression analysis of creative personality and self-awareness**

Model 1	R	R <sub>2</sub>	F	B	t	Sig.
Creative personality	.257 <sup>a</sup>	.051	4.379	0.257	2.093	.040

a. Dependent Variable: Self-awareness

b. Predictors: (Constant), Creative personality

**Table 5 Regression analysis of creative personality and creativity**

Model 1	R	R <sub>2</sub>	F	B	t	Sig.
Creative personality	.399 <sup>a</sup>	.146	11.741	.399	3.426	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Creativity

b. Predictors: (Constant), Creative Personality

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**Table 6** Regression analysis of self-awareness and self-acceptance

Model 1	R	R <sub>2</sub>	F	B	t	Sig.
Self-awareness	.405 <sup>a</sup>	.150	12.133	.405	3.483	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Self-acceptance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Self-awareness

### DISCUSSION

This study addresses the question whether creative personality has a significant effect on self-awareness, self-acceptance and creativity using regression analysis. For the said purpose, the researcher selected 64 boys and girls of age 18 to 25. The following tools were used to measure the variables: Gough's creative personality checklist scale, Emotional Intelligence Scale by Hyde and Dhar, Unconditional Self-acceptance Scale by Dave Haaga and Visual Remote Associates test by Ana-Maria Olteteanu.

For checking the normality of the sample, the Shapiro-Wilk test was calculated using the 26<sup>th</sup> version of SPSS. It was found that data is normally distributed. Hence, parametric tests were used for the analysis. To calculate the correlation between the four variables, Pearson Correlation was used and to find out the impact of creative personality on self-awareness and self-acceptance, Regression analysis was used. The researcher formulated four hypotheses for this study.

Hypothesis one stated that creative personality doesn't have a significant effect on self-acceptance. The value of R<sub>2</sub> was found to be 0.48 and the F value was 4.193. The analysis thus proves that the null hypothesis got rejected as there's a significant effect on self-acceptance. As shown in Table 3, creative personality has a 4.8% effect on self-acceptance, significant at 0.05 level. The possible explanation for these results is the characteristics of a creative personality being high in confidence, individualistic and capable. These traits make them broad-minded and so the chances of self-acceptance are high. Though a few studies have been done on self-acceptance and creativity, this study is the first to study creative personality in relation to self-acceptance.

Hypothesis two stated that Creative personality doesn't have a significant effect on self-awareness. The value of R<sub>2</sub> was found to be 0.51 and the F value was 4.379. Thus, the analysis proves that the null hypothesis got rejected as there's a significant effect on self-awareness. As seen in Table 4, Creative personality has a 5.1% effect on self-awareness, significant at 0.05 level. One possible reason for this effect can be that the creative personality characteristics measured by the scale include being resourceful and insightful. These traits help the person to explore himself. Hence, the chances of being self-aware are high in such individuals. A few studies have been done on self-awareness and creativity, yet creative personality was not studied in relation to self-awareness.

Hypothesis three stated that self-awareness doesn't have a significant effect on creativity. The null hypothesis got accepted as there was no significant relation between self-awareness and creativity. One possible explanation for this result is that though creative personality predicts self-awareness, being self-aware doesn't necessarily mean that the person will come up with creative ideas. This finding was contrary to the findings by Sakkijha et al., 2015.

Hypothesis four stated that self-acceptance doesn't have a significant effect on creativity. The null hypothesis got accepted as there was no significant relation between self-acceptance and creativity. This finding converges with the previous findings of Mostafavi et

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al. (2020) and in contrast with the findings of MacKinnon (1962). The possible explanation for this result is that even non-creative people can accept themselves. Being creative is not a condition for self-acceptance.

### CONCLUSIONS

1. There is a positive correlation of 0.252 between creative personality and self-acceptance.
2. Creative personality is producing 4.8% change in self-acceptance.
3. There is a positive correlation of 0.257 between creative personality and self-awareness.
4. Creative personality is producing 5.1% change in self-awareness.
5. There is no significant relation between self-acceptance and creativity.
6. There is no significant relation between self-awareness and creativity.

### *Implications*

As we can see that creative personality affects self-awareness and self-acceptance significantly, government can come up with policies to include activities in the school curriculum to develop children's creative personalities right from a tender age. The same activities can be implemented in colleges and offices. Workshops and seminars to develop these characteristics, in children and in themselves, can be valuable for teachers, parents and other caregivers.

### *Limitations and future research directions*

The most important limitation of this study is that due to pandemic restrictions, it was not possible to take measures to avoid cheating on the creativity test. So, the scores on the creativity test should be accepted with caution. Despite this limitation, a significant correlation was found between creative personality and creativity, indicating that the results could be used to draw meaningful conclusions. Another limitation is that the study used a correlational design. Hence, cause and effect could not be established with these results. However, this can be a starting point for further studies where cause and effect relation among these variables could be found across different age groups. Lastly, the data was collected using snowball technique, so, the results can't be generalised.

In future, experiments, where self-awareness and self-acceptance are measured before and after the intervention on developing characteristics of creative personality, can be conducted to see if there's a cause-and-effect relationship between these variables. This could be done on different samples (different ages, cultures etc) to see if similar results are found across the population. More variables can be included in the model to see if the regression effect increases. A comparative study of people from creative professions and non-creative professions can be done to see if there's a significant difference between the groups.

In the present study, an effort has been made to see whether creative personality has a significant effect on self-awareness and self-acceptance or not. The results showed a significant effect of creative personality on self-awareness and self-acceptance. As this is the first study to investigate the relationship between creative personality and the other two variables, these results can be used for further studies on the topic across various age groups. Cause and effect relation between these variables can be tested and lastly, these results can be used to help children and adults develop characteristics of creative personality in them that will in turn affect their self-awareness and self-acceptance.



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### **Conflict of Interest**

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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