

Effect of Personality on Study Habits of Young Adults (18-25) with Correlation to Self Esteem and Emotional Intelligence

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this study are to determine the impact of self-esteem and emotional intelligence on study habits, as well as the impact of personality traits on the study habits of people aged 18 to 25 years. Study habits in contemporary academic settings are a multifaceted construct and a growing concern among educators and students owing to its profound impact on student achievement. Psychological factors and their influence on study habits wield significant importance, thus compelling attention in an academic context. The research was carried out using standard instruments: Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale, The Ten Item Personality Inventory, Wong and Law's Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS), and Study Habits Inventory for University Students by Saroj Sahu and Dr. Partha Sarathi Mallik. A young adult sample was taken for the study and the data was analysed using descriptive statistics as well as Pearson's correlation for the determination of strength and direction of relation among variables. This research is likely going to help educational psychologists and academic counsellors by helping them appreciate how personality traits, self-esteem, and emotional intelligence can construct productive study habits in young adults.

Keywords: *Self-Esteem, Emotional Intelligence, Personality Traits, Study Habits*

In the 21st century, a student's academic success is often presumed to be a function of intelligence and effort. However, extensive psychological research contradicts this notion, emphasizing the significant influence of emotional and psychological factors on educational outcomes. Among these, personality traits, self-esteem, and emotional intelligence have emerged as pivotal determinants of academic behaviour and the development of effective study habits in young adults. While often overlooked, these variables not only shape a student's academic performance but also predict long-term success or failure.

Study habits refer to the strategies and routines students adopt to engage with learning material, manage their time, concentrate, and prepare for academic tasks. The complexity of study habits transcends mere memorization or note-taking; they encompass the learner's ability to schedule time effectively, maintain concentration, utilize revision techniques, and

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self-evaluate performance. Importantly, these habits are deeply influenced by a student's psychological disposition.

The transitional period of 18 to 25 years is crucial for identity formation and emotional development. During this stage, individuals navigate multiple challenges including academic progression, career planning, and evolving social roles. These experiences shape their self-concept, emotional regulation, and cognitive frameworks, all of which influence their ability to form and sustain productive study habits. Students with higher emotional intelligence and self-esteem tend to manage academic stress more effectively and exhibit better discipline, focus, and motivation.

Personality, defined as a relatively stable pattern of thinking, feeling, and behaving, has been widely studied in the context of academic achievement. The Big Five personality traits — openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism — each contribute uniquely to learning behaviours. Conscientiousness, in particular, is frequently linked with strong organizational skills, goal setting, and self-regulation, making it a reliable predictor of academic success.

Emotional intelligence (EI) encompasses the ability to perceive, understand, and regulate emotions in oneself and others. Students with high EI are better equipped to handle stress, maintain motivation, and engage positively in academic interactions. Emotionally intelligent individuals tend to demonstrate resilience in the face of academic challenges, contributing to the formation of effective study routines.

Self-esteem, or one's overall sense of self-worth, influences motivation, effort, and persistence in academic contexts. High self-esteem fosters a proactive approach to learning, while low self-esteem may lead to avoidance, procrastination, and academic disengagement. The interplay among personality traits, emotional intelligence, and self-esteem creates a comprehensive framework that can either support or hinder academic development. Understanding these interactions is essential for educators, counsellors, and policymakers aiming to enhance student learning outcomes. This study aims to explore these complex relationships within the Indian young adult population, offering insights that can inform targeted interventions and educational strategies.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is widely recognized as a critical component of academic and personal success. Mayer and Salovey (1990) defined EI as the ability to perceive, use, understand, and regulate emotions effectively. Their four-branch model includes emotional perception, emotional facilitation, emotional understanding, and emotional regulation. Students with high EI often demonstrate improved stress management, greater adaptability, and enhanced interpersonal relationships—all of which contribute to more consistent and effective study habits.

Goleman (1995) popularized the idea of EI beyond academic circles by emphasizing its importance in professional and personal life. He argued that emotional competencies such as self-awareness, empathy, and self-regulation are as important as IQ in achieving success. In educational settings, these competencies enhance motivation, time management, and resilience in the face of challenges, making students more likely to engage in sustained academic effort.

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Bar-On (1997) developed the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i), which measures emotional and social functioning. His research supports the notion that individuals with high EI are better equipped to cope with academic demands. Parker et al. (2005) found that students with high EI demonstrated better transition outcomes from high school to university, maintaining academic engagement and psychological well-being.

Personality traits have also been shown to significantly influence academic behaviors. The Five-Factor Model—consisting of openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism—has been extensively studied in educational psychology. Komarraju et al. (2011) found that conscientiousness was the strongest predictor of academic success due to its association with self-discipline, goal-setting, and time management. Openness was linked to intellectual curiosity and a preference for variety in learning approaches, which can enrich study habits.

John and Srivastava (1999) highlighted how students with high conscientiousness tend to plan their tasks well and avoid procrastination, while those high in openness engage more deeply with learning materials. Neuroticism, on the other hand, is associated with emotional instability and anxiety, which can hinder academic performance through stress and avoidance behaviors (Eysenck, 2012).

Self-esteem has been closely tied to academic performance and persistence. Orth and Robins (2014) reported that students with high self-esteem exhibit confidence, persistence, and a proactive attitude towards academics. Conversely, low self-esteem is often linked to academic avoidance, procrastination, and a lack of commitment. Baumeister et al. (2003) emphasized that self-esteem motivates students to exert effort and persist in the face of academic challenges, acting as a buffer against stress and failure.

Studies by Petrides et al. (2004) and Sanchez-Ruiz et al. (2013) further illustrate the interactive effects of personality traits and EI on academic success. Students with high levels of conscientiousness and EI are better at managing their emotions, staying motivated, and engaging effectively in academic tasks. These traits also contribute to better interpersonal relationships and academic collaboration.

METHODOLOGY

Aim

The aim of this study was to examine how emotional intelligence, self-esteem, and personality traits influence study habits among young adults.

Objectives

1. To determine whether emotional intelligence significantly predicts study habits.
2. To examine the relationship between self-esteem, personality traits, and study habits.
3. To evaluate whether personality traits mediate or influence the effect of self-esteem on study habits.

Rationale

Study habits are fundamental to academic success, yet they are influenced by a complex interaction of emotional, motivational, and dispositional factors. This study was conducted

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to better understand these influences within an Indian young adult population, providing data that can help in designing effective psychological and educational interventions.

Hypothesis

- **H₁:** Higher levels of emotional intelligence will be positively associated with effective study habits and academic persistence.
- **H₂:** Self-esteem will significantly influence personality traits, which in turn will affect study habits.
- **H₃:** There is a significant relationship between personality traits and study habits among young adults.

Research Design

The research design was correlational and cross-sectional in nature. It employed quantitative analysis using standardized self-report tools and statistical techniques such as correlation and regression analysis to test the hypotheses.

Description of Tools

1. Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965): A 10-item scale used to assess global self-worth.
2. Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI): A brief measure of the Big Five personality traits using 10 items.
3. Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS): A 16-item instrument measuring four dimensions of emotional intelligence.
4. Study Habits Inventory (Sahu & Mallik): A measure developed to assess study patterns, routines, and academic behaviours in university students.

Procedure

Participants were recruited from young adult populations in India via online forms. They were asked to provide informed consent before completing the survey. The survey included all four psychological scales and demographic questions. Responses were anonymized and scored according to standardized procedures for each tool. The data was then analyzed using Python to compute descriptive statistics, Pearson correlations, normality tests, and regression models.

Statistical Analysis

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables

Variable	Mean (M)	SD	Min	Max
RSES Score	10.63	4.24	0.00	20.00
Study Habits Score	2.27	1.10	0.00	4.00
WLEIS SEA	4.71	1.51	1.00	7.00
WLEIS OEA	5.50	1.21	1.75	7.00
WLEIS ROE	4.55	1.66	1.00	7.00
Extraversion	4.85	1.08	1.86	7.00
Agreeableness	5.51	0.87	3.58	7.00
Conscientiousness	5.99	0.73	3.41	7.00
Emotional Stability	5.06	0.88	2.88	7.00
Openness	5.93	0.69	4.39	7.00

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Interpretation:

Most participants showed average self-esteem and moderate emotional intelligence. Conscientiousness and openness scored relatively higher among personality traits.

Table 2. Shapiro-Wilk Normality Test
Shapiro–Wilk Test for Normality

Variable	<i>W</i>	<i>p</i> -value
RSES Score	0.9783	.089
Study Habits Score	0.9040	< .001
WLEIS SEA	0.9444	< .001
WLEIS OEA	0.9200	< .001
WLEIS ROE	0.9583	.003
Extraversion	0.9873	.436
Agreeableness	0.9668	.011
Conscientiousness	0.9526	.001
Emotional Stability	0.9905	.688
Openness	0.9637	.006

Interpretation:

Most variables violated normality except self-esteem, extraversion, and emotional stability. Pearson correlation was used regardless due to adequate sample size ($N > 30$).

Table 3. Correlation with Study Habits
Correlation Between Emotional Intelligence, Personality Traits, and Study Habits

Variable Pair	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i> -value
WLEIS SEA vs. Study Habits	.14	.158
WLEIS OEA vs. Study Habits	.09	.344
WLEIS ROE vs. Study Habits	.22	.025
Extraversion vs. Study Habits	-.04	.659
Agreeableness vs. Study Habits	-.01	.931
Conscientiousness vs. Study Habits	.17	.082
Emotional Stability vs. Study Habits	.12	.234
Openness vs. Study Habits	-.04	.706

Interpretation:

Self-esteem and emotion regulation (ROE) were significantly positively correlated with study habits. Conscientiousness showed a positive trend but was not statistically significant.

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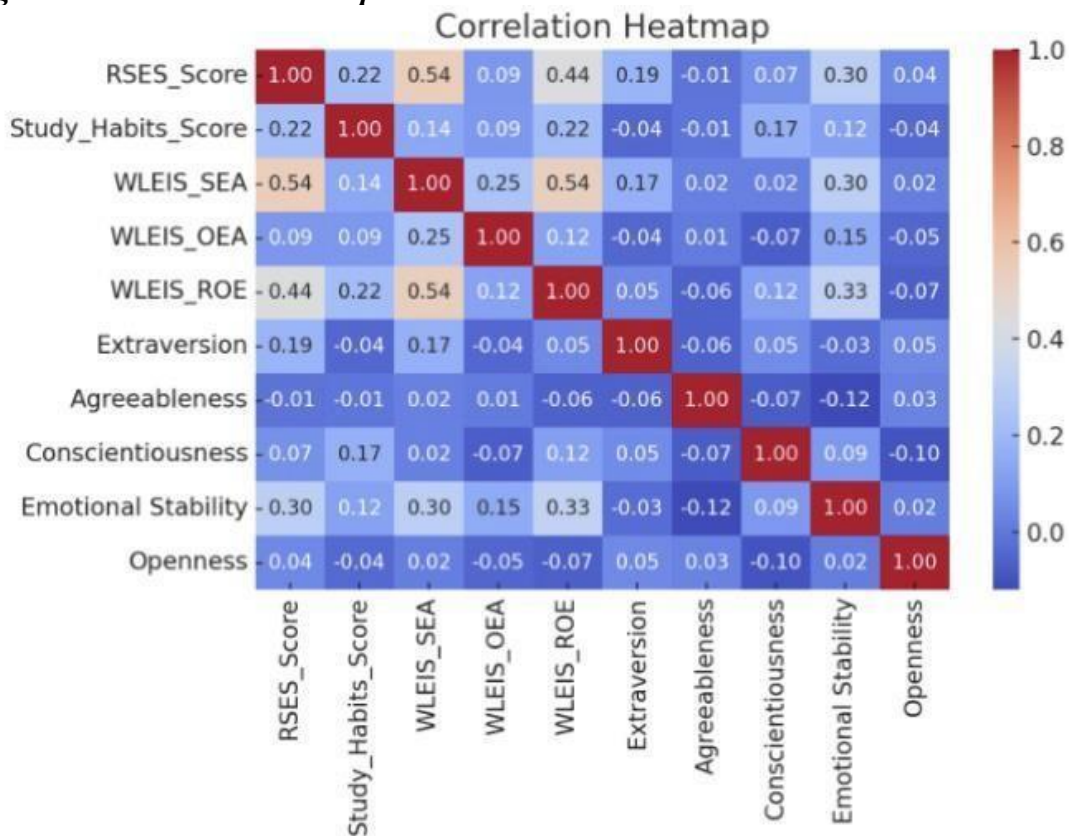
Table 4 Multiple Regression Summary Predicting Study Habits

Predictor	B (β)	p-value
Intercept	0.168	.925
RSES Score	0.047	.139
WLEIS SEA	-0.031	.744
WLEIS OEA	0.070	.449
WLEIS ROE	0.092	.255
Extraversion	-0.081	.432
Agreeableness	0.012	.923
Conscientiousness	0.229	.131
Emotional Stability	0.005	.971
Openness	-0.021	

Interpretation:

The regression model did not significantly predict study habits overall. However, self-esteem and conscientiousness showed meaningful trends in the expected direction.

Figure 1. Correlation Heatmap



Visualization:

The heatmap displays relationships among self-esteem, emotional intelligence, personality traits, and study habits. Emotion regulation (ROE) and self-esteem showed visible correlation with study habits.

DISCUSSION

In this research, the objective was to explore the impact of social-emotional factors including emotional intelligence, self-esteem, and personality on the study habits of young adults. Data was gathered through standardized instruments which included the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, the Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI), Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS), and Study Habits Inventory by Saroj Sahu and Dr. Partha SarathiMallik. The data collected from the participants was analyzed employing descriptive technique, along with correlation and multiple regression techniques. The results indicated that self-esteem and emotional regulation were closely associated with study habits but lacked predictability compared to other factors. In contrast, personality traits were found to have minimal impact. This study emphasizes that the user's motivation and emotions serve as key aspects in shaping their academic conduct. It is recommended that subsequent efforts aim to work on the development of emotional intelligence alongside self-concept.

This study sought to examine how emotional intelligence, self-esteem, and personality traits come together alongside study habits in young adults. The first hypothesis stated that having higher emotional intelligence would relate to more effective study habits and academic persistence. Results showed that only the emotion regulation component (ROE) of emotional intelligence was associated with study habits. Those who control their emotions better are more likely to organize and maintain consistent academic routines. Nonetheless, other components of emotional intelligence (SEA and OEA) did not exhibit strong predictive power, suggesting that not all emotional competencies are equally related to academic behaviors.

The second hypothesis suggested that self-esteem would affect personality, which would in turn have an effect on study habits. Correlation analyses indicated that there was a significant relationship between self-esteem and study habits, whereas personality traits did not have direct statistically significant relationships. Nonetheless, some traits, like conscientiousness and emotional stability, did show slightly positive trends contrary to what was expected; stronger conscientiousness was somewhat positively linked to better study habits. These results imply that self-esteem may be the central motivational influence for academic behavior, while the mediating role of personality traits may need to be explored in a more longitudinal context.

The third hypothesis aimed at an understanding how personality traits relate to study habits. In this sample, however, traits such as openness, agreeableness, and even extraversion did not predict study habits as was expected. Perhaps the explanation lies within the culture and context surrounding academic activities for younger adults in India. Here, familial expectations, systemic stress, and the availability of resources seems to have more bearing than personality tendencies. This highlights the need to consider environmental context at culture level as mediators to the relationships being studied.

Overall, the findings indicate that given the high self-perception (self-esteem) and emotion regulation, these participants are more likely to display academically driven behavior relative to other personality-based constructs in the sample. It appears that actively enhancing emotional regulation and academic self-worth could strongly improve study patterns more than training on personal attributes related to study.

CONCLUSION

This study partially validates the proposed relationships between psychological variables and academic behaviours amongst young adults. Self esteem and emotional regulation were shown to relate significantly with effective study habits. Some personality traits, such as conscientiousness, showed a positive trend devoid of statistical relevance in predicting academic persistence. These results capture the significance that students' emotional and motivational states have towards learning and call for educators and psychologist to create training programs that focus on emotion control and self-trust. The findings also point to the need for more comprehensive and contextualised models of academic achievement that extend beyond personality to include aspects such as culture, environment, and support systems.

Limitations

1. **Cross-Sectional Design:** The study used a cross-sectional research design, which limits the ability to infer causality between psychological traits and study habits. Longitudinal studies would better capture developmental patterns over time.
2. **Self-Report Bias:** All measures were self-reported, which may have introduced social desirability bias or inaccuracies in how participants assessed their traits and behaviors.
3. **Sample Representation:** The sample was limited to young adults from an Indian context, primarily students, which restricts the generalizability of the findings to other cultural groups or age brackets.
4. **Non-normal Distribution of Data:** Some variables did not follow a normal distribution, potentially affecting the assumptions of the statistical tests used and reducing the robustness of the findings.
5. **Limited Predictive Power:** Although correlations were found, the regression model failed to significantly predict study habits overall, indicating that unmeasured variables may also play a key role.

Future Research Directions

1. **Longitudinal Studies:** Future research could adopt a longitudinal design to assess how self-esteem, emotional intelligence, and personality traits evolve and affect study habits over time.
2. **Experimental Interventions:** Designing interventions to improve emotional intelligence or self-esteem and assessing their direct impact on study habits could offer stronger causal insights.
3. **Cross-Cultural Comparisons:** Research comparing participants from different cultural or educational backgrounds can help determine whether the observed relationships are universal or context-specific.
4. **Inclusion of Additional Variables:** Future studies could examine other psychological factors like academic motivation, resilience, learning styles, or social support to provide a more comprehensive model.
5. **Qualitative Analysis:** Incorporating qualitative data (e.g., interviews or focus groups) could deepen understanding of how students perceive and experience the interplay of personality and emotional traits in their academic lives.

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Implications

- 1. Educational Interventions:** The findings support the need for integrating emotional intelligence and self-esteem training into educational programs to improve students' academic habits and emotional well-being.
- 2. Counseling and Support Services:** School and university counselors can use insights from this research to tailor support plans focusing on emotional regulation and confidence-building for students struggling with study discipline.
- 3. Policy Development:** Institutions should consider psychological development — not just academic performance — when creating student support programs, thus adopting a more holistic approach to learning.
- 4. Teacher Training:** Educators should be trained to recognize emotional and personality-related challenges among students and respond with empathy and appropriate strategies.
- 5. Promoting Self-Regulated Learning:** Enhancing students' self-awareness and metacognitive strategies can be a powerful way to promote better study habits and academic success.

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Conflict of Interest

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