

Exploring the Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Personality Traits Among Students

Emotional
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Students

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To compare the scores obtained in the students' emotional intelligence and the Big Five personality traits (Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism) to establish their correlation and to further see the effect of these traits on the level of the students' emotional intelligence.

Study Design: A Cross sectional study.

Place and Duration of Study: This study was conducted at the International Islamic University, Islamabad from January 2019 to January 2020.

Methods: The study design was cross-sectional and descriptive. The study was carried out at International Islamic University, Islamabad. A convenient sample of 70 students (Female n= 39, Male n=31) with age ranging from 20-30 years was selected. A self-structured Performa was used to assess socio-demographic variables. To measure emotional intelligence and personality trait, Schutte Self Report Emotional Test and Big Five Inventory were administered respectively.

Results: Emotional Intelligence has a significant positive relationship with Extraversion ($r=.43, p<0.05$). Conscientiousness ($r=.35, p<0.05$) and Openness to experiences ($r=.36, p<0.05$) and with Agreeableness ($r=.29, p<0.05$). However, no significant relationship was indicated by results between Emotional Intelligence and Neuroticism ($r=.41, p<0.09$).

Conclusion: It is found out that emotional intelligence has effects on certain personality traits such as extraversion, openness to experience, agreeability and conscientiousness however, it does not seem to affect neuroticism.

Key Words: emotional intelligence, personality traits and student

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INTRODUCTION

EI and personality are critical to students' success academically, social liveliness, and emotional health. EI, defined by Mayer and Salovey, is the skill to experience, employ, recognize and regulate emotions both in oneself and in others^[1]. Goleman later expanded this concept to include five components: Pro-self-regulation skills include; self-awareness, self regulation, motivation, and sympathy as well as social skills^[2]. As in any environment, youth today have many problems: academic problems connected with stress, social problems, and the problem of flexibility. Stress management and resilience appear to be the significant factors that may influence the latter, that is why

emotional intelligence is recognized as a valuable resource for overcoming the challenges for students^[3]. Personality traits according to the MacMillan dictionary refers to the individual patterns of behaviour that determine response to different settings^[4]. The Big Five personality traits as mapped by the OCEAN model include Openness, Conscientiousness, Extroversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism are a viable method of describing personality^[5]. For instance, in the trait of Extraversion, people are sociable and have to be enthusiastic while in the trait of Conscientiousness people have to be organized and should be reliable^[6]. On the other hand, neuroticism is defined as being sensitive to stress and has an emotional instability. Whereas, agreeableness concerns with being compassionate and cooperative^[7]. This reveals creativity and have shown a willingness of an individual to explore new things in life^[8]. These attributes have been associated with different results such as academic performance, mental health and relationship with other people hence their relevance in an academic environment^[9]. A number of Study findings have been made in order to establish a correlation between EI on one hand and the five factor model on the other hand, especially determining that some of these traits have a stronger correlation with EI than others. For instance, Conscientiousness and Extraversion have positive correlation between with EI,

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while people with high scores on these traits are normally deemed to be good handlers of emotions and social relations^[10]. A positive relationship between agreeableness and EI was also found this means that people with high levels of empathy are also likely to have high levels of EI^[11]. On the other hand, there is an inverse relationship between Neuroticism and EI, miserable people who score high to Neuroticism have complications in managing their emotions and may easily prone to stress^[12]. The managerial judgment is somewhat associated with openness to experience, which is generally compatible with increasing flexibility and innovative thinking for problem-solving skills in the scope of the employee's emotional competencies^[13]. Age differences in EI have also been shown in empirical Study while, Gender differences in EI have also been reported but are inconclusive. Several Study indicate that females have significantly higher EI scores in emotional empathy than males in self-regulation^[14]. This variance supports the suggestion that the future study of EI should study demographics in which stressors and personal development occur differently compared to university students, for example, and that it should focus on particular populations such as university students^[15]. The current study aims to investigate the correlation between the emotional intelligence level, and personality characteristics in the students of the International Islamic University, Islamabad. Knowledge of this relationship may offer educators and policymakers an idea of how the students' supporters can be better arranged for improving the student profiles.

METHODS

The present Study is a cross-sectional, descriptive survey which was carried out in the International Islamic University, Islamabad. The study targeted 70 students, 31 males, and 39 females aged between 20 and 30 years were chosen through convenient sampling techniques. Participants consisted of undergraduate, master, M.Phil, and PhD students belonging to all faculties. Participants with present or previous psychiatric disorders were also not eligible for selection. Data collection involved two standardized assessments: Self-estimates of EI with the Schutte Self-Report, Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT)^[16], and self-rating of personality traits using the Big Five Inventory (BFI)^[17]. Participant consent was duly obtained and the study was reviewed and deemed favourable by the institutional review board.

Data Collection: Patients completed self-completed questionnaires comprising of demographic data questions, the self-assessment questionnaire for emotional intelligence - the SSEIT, and the Big Five Inventory for personality traits- the BFI. Some details of the procedure followed in clarifying the purpose of the study, issues to do with anonymity, and guide the

subjects on how to fill the forms are as follows: Basically, each subject took approximately 20 minutes to complete all forms.

Statistical Analysis: A formal scientific method of data examination and an inference drawing tool that is used in study to analyze data and draw correct inferences from it Statistical Analysis

Data were analysed with SPSS version 24.0. Pearson correlation coefficient analysis was used to determines the relationship between EI and each of the personality traits with test of significance at 0.05. Internal consistency was measured using Cronbach's alpha coefficients, and the durations were greater than 0.7.

RESULTS

Of the 80 students that were approached, 70 agreed to participate in the study thus giving this study a 87.5 % response rate. The sample comprised of the males at 44.3% and female at 55.7% of the participants; 45.7% were in the age group of 20-25, and 54.3% were in the age group of 26-30. As regards academic classification, 42.9% of the students were studying for a bachelor's degree, 32.9% were in a master's program, 18.6% were in an M.Phil. program, and 5.7% were postgraduate students doing their Ph.D.

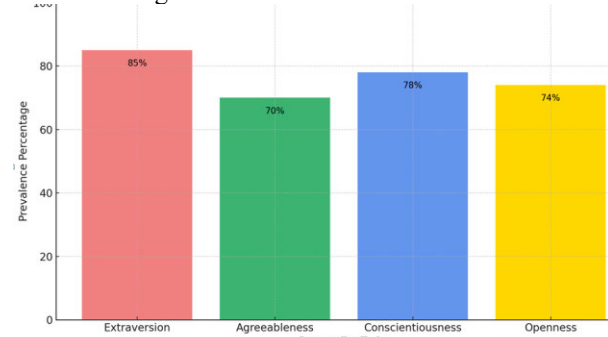


Figure No. 1: Trait Prevalence Among High Emotional Intelligence Students

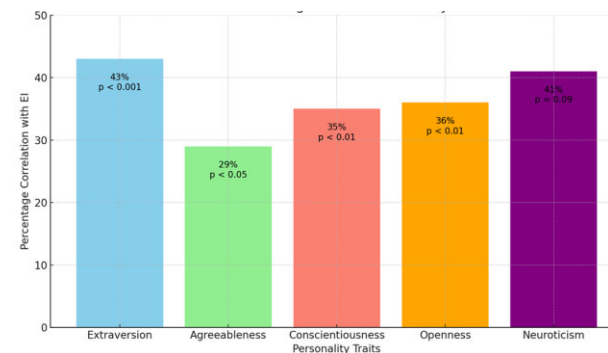


Figure No. 2: Emotional Intelligence and Personality Traits

The statistical test of correlation was carried out to determine significant relationship between EI and personality dimensions; Pearson correlation analysis established positive correlations between EI and

Extraversion ($r=.433$, $p<.001$), Conscientiousness ($r=.351$, $p<.001$), Openness to Experience ($r=.362$, $p<.001$) and Agreeableness ($r = .292$, $p.05$). However, there was no dual correlation of EI and Neuroticism where the coefficient correlation was $r =.41$ and p value of $.09$. The Study results presented in this paper indicate that there is a positive relationship between EI and personality traits like, sociability, openness and organization and there is no relationship between EI and emotional instability.

Table No. 1: Internal Reliability (α -Cronbach) of the Scales. N= (70)

Scale	No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Emotional Intelligence	33	.572
BFI	44	.745

Table No. 2: The Frequency and Percentage of Respondent by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	31	44.3
Female	39	55.7
Total	70	100

Table No. 3: The Frequency and Percentage of Respondent by Age.

Age	Frequency	Percentage
20-25	32	45.7
26-30	38	54.3
Total	70	100

Table No. 4: The Frequency and Percentage of Respondent by Educational Level.

Educational Level	Frequency	Percentage
Ph.D	4	5.7
M.phil	13	18.6
Masters	23	32.9
Bachelor	30	42.9
Total	70	100

Table No. 5: Pearson Correlation of the Relationship between the Big Five Model of Personality and Emotional Intelligence.(N=70)

Scale	R	p-value
EI	.43***	.000
Extraversion	.43***	.000
Agreeableness	.29*	.012
Conscientiousness	.35**	.009
Openness to experience	.36**	.002
Neuroticism	.41	.09

Note. * $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$, *** $p<.001$

DISCUSSION

That is why correlation and interaction between EI and personality traits have become an important focus of psychological and educational Study, as identification of these dependencies could help create conditions for

personal growth, coping with negative experiences, and achievement of academic success. The current study reveals significant positive correlations between EI and four of the Big Five personality traits: The results confirmed the correlation with the first four personality dimensions which include Extraversion, Conscientiousness, Openness to Experience, and finally Agreeableness, and did not prove the correlation with the last dimension, which is Neuroticism. These arguments elaborate or build on much of what has been posited in prior literature, but they also include some interesting shifts to investigative frameworks that, although warrant further study, seem promising in their pursuit of an enhanced understanding of knowledge management.

In this regard, our finding that Extraversion has a positive and significance correlation with EI has been statistically corroborated in prior Study. Past Study has shown that extraverts are usually more sociable, enthusiastic and more competent in handling social relations compared with low EI traits such as empathy, and self-awareness. This connection is also aligned with Goleman's model of EI that impacts an individual entity's recognition of social cues and relationship management skills.² Additionally, Schutte et al.'s study showed that extraversion was one of the most significant predictors of EI due to a higher level of emotion output or intensity concerning others, in persons with extraverted personality^[8].The positive relationship between Conscientiousness and EI found in this study supports the previous studies which has reported conscientiousness as a positive predictor of EI; conscientious people are often reliable, purposeful, and achievement oriented. People who are most conscientious also tend to be in control of their emotions and able to suppress/act on impulse, a part of self-regulation within EI. For example, in their study, Petrides et al refer to a positive correlation between Conscientiousness, EI at workplaces; this implies that compared to other employees, people with high conscientiousness demean their emotions especially at workplaces even during pressure^[3]. We also discovered similar trends concerning Openness in the literature as exhibited by our results. Moderate positive correlation with EI is openness, including curiosity, creativity, and willingness to consider the challenge from different angles, which improves emotional flexibility. In a study study similar works that have proved that people with high openness have better skills in the management of their feelings- an area that forms the core of High EI. Another of the personality constructs that Chord Associate with EI in this study is Agreeableness which encompasses compassion, cooperation and empathy. People with agreeableness have usually better developed abilities for emotional recognition and communication making them valuable in interpersonal relationships. Relevant, Mayer et al holds that people

with high agreeableness are expected to display higher EI because they are good at managing conflicts without aggression^[17]. This increase did not correspond with the negative correlation between Neuroticism and EI documented in other Study. Normally, high Neuroticism, which is linked to emotional sensitivity, anxiety, fluctuations in mood, is inversely related to EI because they can hardly control their feelings. This lack of significance could be due to sample size limits, or there could be some other demographic aspect about our sample that made it different. However, earlier studies indicate that neurotics perform poorly on EI dimensions particularly where emotional regulation and coping with stress is a concern^[18]. The results of this study are meaningful to extend the existing literature analysis of the relation between personality and EI submitting the results, showing higher EI in the context of the students who proved to be more extraverted, conscientious, agreeable and open for the understanding of how these emotional tools can help them succeed academically and socially. Further study could build on these findings by investigating the effects of educational programmes that are designed to foster EI, as such initiatives might serve to strengthen students' positive character attributes and the capacity to cope with adversities. Moreover, more longitudinal study would be helpful to reveal whether fluctuations in EI affect fluctuations in personality characteristics or vice versa and to describe interactions between the two types of variables more thoroughly.

Limitations: The study also lacks generalizability due to a small sample, and convenience sampling. Also, due to the cross-sectional design, the identification of EI and personality traits correlations cannot claim causal relationship. Also, it restricts the 102ypothesizes102ity of these findings by the cultural effect on EI and personality, and the absence of follow-up data..

CONCLUSION

Our study does shows a positive significant correlation between EI and the Big Five personality traits of Extraversion, conscientiousness, openness and Agreeableness and no correlation of Neuroticism among students. Based on these studies, the Study 102ypothesizes that students with elevated or advanced levels of EI, would also possess positive character traits that would inure to their benefit academically, or otherwise in their social lives. The purpose of this study was to examine the correlation between EI and personality to find a way in developing both the emotional as well as personal aspect in educational institutions.

Future Findings: For future study, it will be useful for samples to be genome and larger, as well as more diverse across institutions, and include the longitudinal studies of EI and personality traits. Studying intervention approaches targeting improvement of EI

might offer important information concerning its applicability to academic achievements and social adjustment abilities, which may be useful for designing specific teaching programs.

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Abbreviations

1. EI - Emotional Intelligence
2. OCEAN - Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism (Big Five Personality Traits)
3. SSEIT - Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test
4. BFI - Big Five Inventory
5. SPSS - Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
6. r - Pearson Correlation Coefficient
7. p - p-value

Author's Contribution:

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Drafting or Revising Critically:	Muhammad Kashif, Ammara Butt
Final Approval of version:	All the above authors
Agreement to accountable for all aspects of work:	All the above authors

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