

PERSONALITY TRAITS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

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Abstract

The study's main objective was to examine undergraduate students' personality traits and academic achievement. A survey method was used for the study. A simple random sampling technique was used for selecting 1000 undergraduate students from the arts, science and commerce colleges of the Kanyakumari district. A standardized tool, the Big-Five Personality test, developed by Goldberg, L. R. (1992), was used. An academic achievement test was constructed and validated by the investigator and the research supervisor (2022). Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were used for analyzing the data. It was found that undergraduate students had a moderate level of personality traits and their dimensions. There was no significant difference in undergraduate students' personality traits and dimensions in terms of gender and stream of study. Moreover, it was found that there was no significant relationship between academic achievement and personality traits of undergraduate students in their extroversion, agreeableness, neuroticism and openness to experience. However, there is a significant relationship between academic achievement and personality traits of undergraduate students in their conscientiousness.

Keywords: Personality traits, academic achievement, undergraduate students.

Introduction

Individuals vary in their perspectives, emotional sensitivity, physical attributes, etc. Others are loud and aggressive, while others are quiet and meek. This results in the study of personality, which is an important facet of personal differences. A person's personality can be seen in their unique qualities and characteristics. The characteristics of people reflect their interactions with their neighbours. Some people are driven and ambitious, while others are funny and quiet. Personalities are made up of these traits. Many traits make up a person's personality. Different personalities are created by these traits, and behaviour reflects these personalities. Personality is influenced by factors such as family, traits, learning, social influences, psychological traits, etc. In terms of people's psychological behaviour (thoughts, feelings, and actions), personality refers to a stable set of factors and tendencies that determine similarities and differences over time and may be difficult to interpret as the sole product of the social and biological pressures of the moment.

Academic achievement predictors frequently fall on a spectrum, with non-cognitive factors (such as personality traits, socioeconomic background, etc.) at one extreme and cognitive measurements, intellect, and mental ability at the other. Although while studies attempting to predict academic success have produced a variety of outcomes, they have repeatedly highlighted the importance of cognitive talents and personality traits in educational success (Paunonen & Ashton, 2001). Teachers have traditionally questioned students about their personality traits that can support them in achieving excellent academic accomplishment. Because school performance and personality are thought to have cumulative effects over time on accomplishment criteria, it is important to pay attention to how childhood personality impacts these criteria over time (Caspi et al., 2005).

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

A nation's extensive growth can be facilitated by investing in educational and human resources as well as raising educational standards. As a result, raising pupils' academic performance is one of the main objectives of educational planning. Students can completely express their talents and abilities in accordance with educational goals through academic performance. Academic success is one of the most important evaluation criteria for educational quality. On the other hand, learners vary greatly in a wide variety of aspects. In other words, in addition to having diverse personality traits, familial histories, age and gender differences, etc., they also have various attitudes and emotional reactions to their surroundings. Students have unique personality traits that prepare them for having multiple worldviews and, consequently, for acting differently in various social and educational contexts. These variations can aid educators in recognising the unique characteristics of each of their students.

Every undergraduate has a unique opportunity and vital role in contributing to the overall development of school and college. So they should possess good personality traits. Many people think that the most important element in effective teaching is the personality of the student. Each person requires personality. Characteristics promote kindness and a joyful existence in a sound and proper way to handle issues swiftly. So, undergraduate students require this. Research on character qualities and academic success are conducted. So, the researcher believes that undergraduate students will have certain personality features. Knowing their personality and how it relates to academic success is crucial as a preliminary step before developing personality features. Therefore, the present study, "Personality Traits and Academic Achievement of Undergraduate Students", is undertaken.

OBJECTIVES

1. To find out the level of personality traits of undergraduate students.
2. To find out the significant difference between male and female undergraduate students in their extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience.
3. To find out the significant difference among arts, science and commerce undergraduate students in their extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience.

4. To find out the significant relationship between personality traits and academic achievement.

HYPOTHESES

1. There is no significant difference between male and female undergraduate students in their extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience.
2. There is no significant difference among arts, science and commerce undergraduate students in their extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience.
3. There is no significant relationship between personality traits and academic achievement.

METHODOLOGY

A survey method is used for the study. The study sample has been selected using a simple random sampling technique. The investigator selected 1000 undergraduates from the arts, science and commerce colleges of the Kanyakumari district. A standardized tool, the Big-Five Personality test, developed by Goldberg, L. R. (1992), was used. An academic achievement test was constructed and validated by the investigator and the research supervisor (2022). The investigator has used descriptive and inferential analysis.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Objective 1

To find out the level of personality traits of undergraduate students.

TABLE 1

LEVEL OF PERSONALITY TRAITS OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Dimensions	Low		Moderate		High	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Extraversion	87	8.7758	758	75.8	155	15.5
Agreeableness	147	14.7	568	56.8	285	28.5
Conscientiousness	214	21.4	610	61.0	176	17.6
Neuroticism	142	14.2	677	67.7	181	18.1
Openness to Experience	286	28.6	517	51.7	197	19.7

It is inferred from the above table that 8.7% of undergraduate students have low, 75.8% moderate, and 15.5% have a high level of extraversion.

14.7% of undergraduate students have low, 56.8% have moderate, and 28.5% have a high level of agreeableness.

21.4% of undergraduate students have low, 61.0% have moderate, and 17.6% have high conscientiousness.

14.2% of undergraduates have low, 67.7% have moderate, and 18.1% have a high level of neuroticism.

28.6% of undergraduate students have low, 51.7% have moderate, and 19.7% have a high level of openness to experience.

Null Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between male and female undergraduate students in extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience.

TABLE 2

**DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS
IN THEIR PERSONALITY TRAITS AND THEIR DIMENSIONS**

Personality Traits and its Dimensions	Male (N=254)		Female (N=746)		Calculated	Remarks at 5% level
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D		
Extroversion	29.60	6.123	29.34	5.865	0.611	NS
Agreeableness	30.70	3.760	31.05	3.872	1.221	NS
Conscientiousness	28.65	4.437	28.42	4.674	0.658	NS
Neuroticism	30.07	6.553	29.41	6.196	1.440	NS
Openness to Experience	32.14	6.053	31.48	5.986	1.503	NS

(At a 5% level of significance, the table value of 't' is 1.96)

It is inferred from the above table that there is no significant difference between male and female undergraduate students in their extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience.

Null Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference among arts, science and commerce undergraduate students in their extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience.

TABLE 3

DIFFERENCES AMONG ARTS, SCIENCE AND COMMERCE UNDERGRADUATE

STUDENTS IN THEIR PERSONALITY TRAITS AND THEIR DIMENSIONS

Personality Traits and its dimensions	Source of variation	df (2,997)		Calculated 'F' value	Remarks at 5% level
		Sum of squares	Variance estimate		
Extroversion	Between	44.012	22.006	0.625	NS
	Within	35083.152	35.189		
Agreeableness	Between	1.305	0.652	0.044	NS
	Within	14766.014	14.810		
Conscientiousness	Between	15.565	7.782	0.365	NS
	Within	21248.074	21.312		
Neuroticism	Between	58.789	29.395	0.742	NS
	Within	39484.811	39.604		
Openness to Experience	Between	6.528	3.264	0.090	NS
	Within	36037.271	36.146		

(At a 5% level of significance for (2,997) df, the table value of 'F' is 3.00)

It is inferred from the above table that there is no significant difference among arts, science and commerce undergraduate students in their extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience.

Null Hypothesis 4

There is no significant relationship between personality traits and academic achievement.

TABLE 4

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONALITY TRAITS AND ACADEMIC
ACHIEVEMENT OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS**

Personality Traits	Calculated 'J' Value	Remarks at 5% level
Extroversion	0.012	NS
Agreeableness	0.055	NS
Conscientiousness	0.073	S
Neuroticism	0.024	NS
Openness to Experience	0.001	NS

(At a 5% Level of significance for 998 df, the table value of 'J' is 0.062)

It is inferred from the above table that there is no significant relationship between academic achievement and personality traits of undergraduate students in their extroversion, agreeableness, neuroticism and openness to experience. However, there is a significant relationship between academic achievement and personality traits of undergraduate students in their conscientiousness.

FINDINGS

- Undergraduate students have a moderate level of personality traits and their dimensions.
- A significant difference is not observed between male and female undergraduate students in extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience, as the calculated 't' value is less than the table value.
- A significant difference does not exist among arts, science and commerce undergraduate students in their extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience, as the calculated 't' value is less than the table value.
- A significant relationship is not found between academic achievement and personality traits of undergraduate students in their extroversion, agreeableness, neuroticism and openness to experience. However, there is a significant relationship between academic achievement and personality traits of undergraduate students in their conscientiousness.

INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

Undergraduate students have medium extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience. This may be because undergraduate students may be interested in something other than developing their personalities. They find it difficult to relate with others as they lack experience and awareness. Hence, they are interested in something other

than maintaining good academic achievement. To improve the personality traits of undergraduate students, they are encouraged to read, gain awareness about personality and participate in the development of personality and academic achievement at least once a month. The students may organize many group activities. They may be motivated to know themselves and practice them to ask questions.

Eventually, the results of this study showed that diligence was the most significant predictor of academic success. In order to institutionalise these attributes during the early years of education, it is important to provide suitable conscientious role models or to encourage conscientious individuals. The results of this study also highlight the importance of providing curriculum designers with information about the personality traits and individual differences of learners in order to enable them to take these differences into account and be more adaptable when creating educational curricula.

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