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# Relationship between Personality Traits and Emotional Intelligence among Male Adolescents of Boarding School in Pakistan

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## Abstract

This study was conducted to explore the relationship between Personality Traits (PT) and Emotional Intelligence (EI) among male (12-18 years *M:SD*;) boarding students of Pakistan. This research hypothesized that there is a significant positive relationship between PT and EI among boarding adolescents. Non-probability convenient sampling was used to collect the data from 267 participants, residing in a boarding school in Pakistan. Personality traits were assessed using International Personality Item Pool (IPIP), while emotional intelligence was assessed using Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (EIQ). Pearson product-moment correlation analysis yielded highly significant results which indicated that there is a strong positive relationship between PT and EI among boarding adolescents. Understanding this relationship between emotional intelligence and personality traits can help them in deciding the appropriate career for their coming professional life. Moreover, it can also help educational institutes to identify the appropriate professional fields for students depending upon their personality traits and emotional intelligence so that they can arrange counseling for parents and children about the future.

**Keywords:** personality traits, emotional intelligence, male boarding students, adolescents

## Introduction

The World Health Organization (WHO) also described adolescents as any person between 10 to 19 years of age. Furthermore, the most important development period, i.e., adolescence, is when teenagers continue to grow physically, mentally, and psychologically. During this time, they are also rapidly developing in the social and emotional aspects of personality. Hall

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defines Adolescence as the transition period between childhood and adulthood. He considered the adolescence period traversing from 12 to 18 long stretches of an individual's life, full of turmoil and upheaval (Lerner & Steinberg, [2004](#)).

During this phase, personality is the most pivotal aspect of human beings because it makes people unique, even though it is a combination of human genetics, environment, and experiences (Briley & Tucker-Drob, [2014](#)). Personality is an abstract term that includes the whole sum of each human creature's behaviors, feelings, and recognition of their surroundings (Kant, [2014](#)). Personality is the aggregate of a person's habits, qualities, and traits that remain constant throughout time in normal settings (Luthans, [2002](#)). Additionally, the Big Five personality factor model is universally accepted and was proposed by Gordon Allport and Olberg in 1936 (Gosling et al., [2003](#)). The current main categories/dimensions are extraversion, neuroticism, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness (Strang et al., [2004](#)).

Extraversion focuses on the quantity and intensity of relationships (such as sociability and dominance), energy level, positive emotionality, and excitement seeking as well as a degree of assertiveness. Neuroticism is adjustment variables as well as negative emotional and behavioral traits (ambivalence over emotional expressiveness and aggression). Openness trait predisposes individuals to feel good and bad more deeply. Conscientious individuals are goal-directed behavior (efficacy and rule consciousness) and control-related traits such as internal locus of control and impulsivity. Agreeableness traits had the quality of interpersonal relationships, such as empathy and warmth, as well as compliance and tender-mindedness (Strang et al., [2004](#)).

According to research certain personality characteristics identified in the Big Five have the ability to impact an individual's emotional regulation. A study conducted by Algahmdi ([2014](#)) indicates that personality traits support the development of Emotional Intelligence.

The term Emotional Intelligence (EI) was coined by Salovey and Mayer ([1990](#)), to express emotional features (Salovey & Mayer, [1990](#)). There has been intense interest in EI for the last two decades (Pradhan et al., [2016](#)). Initially, it was considered a type of 'social intelligence' that was linked to the consequence of emotive and motivational responses to act maturely and

intelligently in associations (Thorndike, [1982](#)). The traditional concept of intelligence was dropped by Howard Gardner ([1983](#)), in favor of two major types which included interpersonal (social), and intrapersonal (emotional) intelligence (Bar-On, [2006](#); Cherniss, [2001](#)).

EI as both traits and abilities are important cornerstones of emotional intelligence (Mayer et al., [1995](#)). However, Goleman ([2001](#)) views EI as a “general character”

According to Mayer et al. ([1997](#)), people are typically inclined to seek out positive emotions and avoid negative ones. The ability to control one's emotions can assist individuals in cultivating positive effects, avoiding being overpowered by bad effects, and coping with stress. Other emotional talents, such as recognizing and understanding emotions, implicitly contribute to the quality of emotional experience by enabling individuals to recognize and interpret signs that guide self-regulatory behavior (Kappagoda, [2013](#)).

Sekhri et al. ([2017](#)) also found that EI is most important for the performance of students in educational institutes and in society as a whole (Goleman, [2001](#))

Avsec et al. ([2009](#)) found a positive relationship between EI & PT. Atta et al. ([2013](#)) also found similar results that emotional intelligence and personality traits have a positive correlation except for the neuroticism subscale. Moreover, research has indicated a strong positive influence of EI and PT on performance (Robinson, [2009](#)). Therefore, personality development will contribute toward positive or negative emotional intelligence. Thus present research aimed to understand the relationship between Personality Traits and Emotional Intelligence among Male Adolescents in Boarding schools in Pakistan.

## Method

### Research Design

The current study is based on a quantitative correlation research design.

### Participants

The sample consisted of 265 male adolescents recruited from boarding institutes in Pakistan. After the collection of data, statistical procedures and testing were carried out to reveal significant findings. Non-experiment

quantitative design with Non-Probability Convenient sampling was used to draw a sample

## **Assessment Measures**

### ***International Personality Item Pool (IPIP)***

IPIP measures the big five personality characteristics, developed by Goldberg (1992). It consists of 50 items, 10 items for each personality domain e.g., Extraversion ten items), Neuroticism ten items, Openness ten items, Agreeableness ten items and Conscientiousness ten items. Participants rate their answers on 5 point Likert-type assessment measure 1= *Very Inaccurate*, 2= *Inaccurate*, 3= *Neutral*, 4= *Accurate* and 5= *Very Accurate*. The scores on each domain were calculated separately which provides an overview of personality characteristics which is available in one person. Negative items were coded and scored as reverse scoring. The reliability of each domain was good (e.g., Extraversion .90, Conscientiousness .85, Agreeableness .85, Neuroticism .88, and Openness .84 (Rizvi, 2016).

### ***Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (EIQ)***

Emotional Intelligence scale was established by Goleman (1995). This consists of 50 items with which 10 items for each domain e.g., Self-awareness (10 items), Managing Emotions (10 items), Motivating oneself (10 items), Empathy (10 items), and Social Skill (10 items). Participants rate their answers on 5 point Likert-type rating scale 1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 2 = *Disagree*, 3 = *Neutral*, 4 = *Agree* and 5 = *Strongly Disagree*. The scores on each domain were calculated separately and we also take it as a whole, it provided an overview of Emotional stability/Intelligence in one person. There is no negative scoring. The reliability of the overall scale was .87 which is in a good range.

## **Procedure**

The utilized scales were open access to use from authors. So, the data was collected from a leading Pakistani boarding school Hasan Abdal. The questionnaires based on Google form were distributed among the students gathered in a computer lab; the necessary help and assistance were provided to the research participants. Instructions were given to the students regarding the time required and the purpose of the study and this was also given to them in written form. The data was analyzed in SPSS 22.0. Two

variables (EI and PT) were measured using IPIP (Goldberg, [1992](#)) and Emotional Intelligence (Golemen, [1995](#)).

## Results

Descriptive and inferential analyses were done as per the objective of the study. The results of the present research are shown below.

**Table 1**

*Reliability and Descriptive Analysis*

Variable	Items	$\alpha$	$M$	$SD$	Range
IPIP	50	.66	2.58	.284	1-5
EIQ	50	.89	3.65	.398	1-5

The data was normally distributed, as predicted by skewness and kurtosis analysis, as shown in Table 1. The Cronbach alpha reliability of IPIP is  $\alpha=.660$ , which lies in an acceptable range, and the Cronbach alpha reliability of EIQ is  $\alpha=.896$ , which lies in the good range.

Table 2 represents the relationship between personality traits and emotional intelligence. The analysis results indicate that Emotional intelligence positively predicted with emotional intelligence total score. Moreover, its extroversion only correlated positively with empathy and social skills subscale of EI. Furthermore, neuroticism positively correlated with self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills. Openness personality traits only related with self-awareness and empathy. Consequently, conscientiousness and agreeableness correlated with three subscales of EI i.e. motivation, empathy and social skill.

Table 3 demonstrates the mean differences in age as related to personality traits and emotional intelligence of male adolescents in a Pakistani boarding school. Data analysis revealed that young age is significant with openness personality traits. However, young age was significant in EI subscale of self-awareness, self-regulation and empathy. Other variables are not statistically significant. This shows that lower age exhibit more emotional intelligence as compared to the counterpart.

**Table 2**  
*Correlational Analysis between Demographical Variables, Personality Traits and Emotional Intelligence*

Variable	N	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Extroversion	267	31.7	6.48	-										
2. Neuroticism	267	29.4	5.12	.29**	---									
3. Openness	267	37.2	5.56	.23**	.17**	---								
4. Conscientiousness	267	37.8	6.67	.18**	.25**	.31**	---							
5. Agreeableness	267	37.7	5.32	.42**	.21**	.36**	.31**	---						
6 Emotional Intelligence	267	182	18.9	.40**	.30**	.36**	.52**	.43**	---					
7. Self-Awareness	267	39.3	4.78	.05	.08	.13*	.195	.16	.31**	---				
8. Self-regulation	267	33.5	4.67	.10	.13*	.05	.08	.03	.24**	.41**	---			
9. Motivation	267	35.6	4.93	.06	.19*	.05	.34**	.14*	.35**	.55**	.44**	---		
10. Empathy	267	38.2	5.19	.16**	.13*	.19**	.15*	.17**	.36**	.63**	.45**	.49**	---	
11. Social skill	267	35.6	4.92	.19**	.15*	.11	.21**	.26**	.33**	.49**	.34**	.49**	.62**	--

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

**Table 3**

*Comparison of Mean Scores of Personality Traits and Emotional Intelligence on the basis of age range*

	12-14 Years (n= 87)		15-18 Years (n= 178)		t(243)	p	95% CI	
	M	SD	M	SD			LL	UL
1. Extroversion	32.70	6.09	31.19	6.64	.63	.52	-.04	.09
2. Neuroticism	30.18	5.11	28.99	5.04	1.81	.07	-.13	3.18
3. Openness	37.98	5.59	36.83	5.48	1.96	.05	.00	2.61
4. Conscientiousness	38.75	7.12	37.47	6.38	1.73	.08	-.16	2.67
5. Agreeableness	37.60	5.16	37.79	5.41	1.30	.19	-.57	2.84
6 Emotional Intelligence	40.30	5.07	38.87	4.58	-.17	.86	-1.49	1.24
7. Self-Awareness	33.48	5.27	33.65	4.37	3.00	.00	.05	.25
8. Self-regulation	37.30	5.11	34.87	4.66	2.27	.02	.19	2.63
9. Motivation	39.07	5.71	37.72	4.82	-.30	.75	-1.38	1.01
10. Empathy	36.47	5.36	35.21	4.67	3.89	.00	1.21	3.70

## Discussion

As is other studies, this research also revealed that PT and EI have a significant positive relationship in adolescence. PT and EI help to maintain the equilibrium between the challenged self and the environment. The balance between self and environment is the key factor to achieve the desired position in society. This finding is similar to numerous previous studies (Avsec et al., [2009](#); Ghiabia & Besharat, [2011](#)).

The research further revealed that three PTs (extraversion, openness, and agreeableness) have a significant positive correlation with two domains of EI (motivation and empathy). When adolescent are extroverted, open and also having agreeableness traits they become motivated and can understand others with an emphatic approach. This is because extroversion, openness and agreeableness have a tendency to have enhanced life experiences, with empathy and motivation. Third hypothesis of this study, proposed negative correlation between EI and neuroticism, however, this research found a significant positive correlation. It could be possible that the sample



belongs to a protected hostel/boarding environment, where 24/7 pastoral care, thus leading to short duration of negative feelings, therefore the adolescent don't hold negative feelings for a long period of time as they are well self-aware, open, motivated and have an empathy approach.

### **Limitations and Suggestion**

Certain limitations to this research exist, that future researchers can work on. First, as this research was conducted on male participants only, however, in this era of development where trends are changing on a rapid base, females are also leading the big names, organizations and countries as well. So, future researchers can incorporate female participants also and evaluate the gender differences among the study variables as well.

Secondly, the study is limited to the adolescents' age group, although development theories like social learning, psychosexual theory, and cognitive development theory stress that personality behavior and learning is crucial from birth to 18 years of age but, still there is always a space for individuals to learn and grow at any time of life. So there is a need to study these variables for a broader range of age categories.

Third, the study has been conducted in hostel situations where the students were not as involved in the routine life as the general adolescent population of Pakistan, therefore the study may not be generalized to day scholar population.

### **Implications**

The applicability of research is wide for students who are in adolescent age and going through the process of personality development, to prepare themselves in choosing the right subjects for professional career and self-development. Thus, understanding this relationship between emotional intelligence and personality traits can help them in deciding the appropriate career for their coming professional life. Moreover, it can also help educational institutes to identify the appropriate professional fields for students depending upon their personality traits and emotional intelligence so that they can arrange counseling for parents and children about the future.

### **Conclusion**

Adolescents should be provided with greater opportunities to hold discussions regarding failures and achievements. This practice is currently in corporate sectors and larger institutes like Pakistan Army. This strategy

will allow improvement in PT and EI and thus positively contribute to social interaction in adult life and help improve social standing. Practical and exposure-based learning like Entrepreneurship, national and international games, etc during adolescence is recommended to develop and maintain the three traits of PT which enhance the EI characteristic in adolescence. Improved pastoral care reduces the chances of neuroticism. Those responsible for pastoral care i.e. parents and teachers should increase their exposure to the adolescent.

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