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## A Correlational Study between Different Dimensions of Personality and Self Expression among Young Adults

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### ABSTRACT

The present research work explored the relationship between various dimensions of personality and self-expression among young adults. Personality traits have been acknowledged as influential factors in shaping an individual's behaviour and self-perception. Self-expression, on the other hand, is a critical component of interpersonal communication. By examining the correlation between personality traits and self-expression in young adults, this research aims to provide insights into how individual differences in personality contribute to the way individuals express themselves. The study employed cross-sectional research design for the collection of data using Multidimensional Assessment of Personality (MAP) Series Form-A to assess personality dimensions and Adult Self-Expression Scale to assess self-expression. 80 young adults between the range of 18 to 30 years of age were included in the sample. The results show significant correlation in the dimensions of Boldness (Bo) and Competition (Co) and self-expression suggesting that individuals who exhibit higher levels of boldness and competitiveness are more likely to express themselves openly and assertively. Significant negative correlation between Guilt-proneness (Gp) and self-expression indicates individuals who are more prone to feeling guilty tend to exhibit lower levels of self-expression. The results of this study could further expand our knowledge of how young adults' personalities shape how effectively they can express themselves.

**Keywords:** *dimensions of personality, self-expression, interpersonal communication, MAP Series, correlation*

## INTRODUCTION

Personality provides us with an opportunity to understand humans. It is the study of the characteristic traits of an individual, the inter relations between them and the way in which a person responds and adjusts to other people and situations. Gordon Allport defined personality as the dynamic organisation within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his unique adjustments to his environment. It is the study of the characteristic traits of an individual, relationships between these traits, and the way in which a person adjusts to other people and situations. Personality, often described through trait theories, provides a stable framework from which individual differences in emotional expression can be examined. Emotional expressivity serves as a fundamental and essential aspect of human communication, incorporating both verbal and non-verbal forms (Mehrabian, 1981).

As inherently sociable beings, humans interact through the expression of emotions. These emotions that build up the psychosocial and sociocultural aspects of a man are not only inherent but have a way of projecting on the surface as their primary quality (Darwin, 1872). Personality traits, such as those encapsulated by the Big Five—openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism—offer a comprehensive lens through which to view the spectrum of emotional responses. Emotional expression, a key component of human interaction, is influenced by these traits, affecting how individuals perceive, experience, and communicate emotions.

Personality encompasses a collection of characteristics and tendencies in an individual's thoughts, behaviours, and emotions that distinguish them as unique and distinct from others. Every individual has a unique set of characteristics, which we usually refer to as his or her personality, that distinguish him from the rest of the population. (Dhani & Sharma, 2017). One's personality includes patterns of thoughts, behaviours and emotions. The study of personality looks at the developmental processes that give shape to your distinctive features and characteristics and personality traits, as well as how they appear and develop over time.

According to American Psychological Association (APA), "Personality refers to, individual differences in characteristic patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving." Various theories of personality seek to explain how our personality is formed, and developed throughout our life and how it affects our thoughts and behaviour. They explain how personality forms, how it changes, and its impact on our behaviour. Psychologists use personality theories to analyse human personality, including the reasons and meanings behind their thinking and causes behind the behaviours. These theories seek to explain why certain characteristics and traits emerge, or don't emerge, in some people over others.

Biological Theories of Personality also known as Developmental Approach or Evolutionary Approach, suggest that genetics are responsible for the way personality of individuals develops (Pandey, N. 2015). Psychodynamic Theories of Personality argue that people's unconscious minds are largely responsible for important differences in their behavioural styles. It makes use of the important assumption of psychological determination – the doctrine that all psychological events have a cause (Pandey, N. 2015). The Humanistic approach to personality theories involves delving into not just behaviours and thought patterns, but also the individual's perceptions of what gives their life significance (Schultz & Schultz, 2020). According to humanistic theories, personality is heavily influenced by an individual's self-concept — their perception of themselves and their beliefs about who they are (Feist & Feist, 2021).

Behavioural Theories, on the other hand, state that an individual's personality develops as a result of interactions with their surroundings. Trait Theory's purpose is to analyse these patterns to identify a collection of characteristics that are present in all people but possessed by an individual in varying degrees and proportions. Differences in personality result from this variation (Pandey, N. 2015). These theories, however, provide a broad framework for us to get a better understanding of an individual's basic functioning.

Emotional Expression is the fundamental level of communication for human beings. Human beings interact through the expression of emotions verbally as well as non-verbally. The level of emotional expression and the kind of emotions expressed are controlled by various factors that surround their genetic components, cultural environment, and situational context. Emotional expressivity is a very crucial part of our everyday lives and of our social relationships on which it has a strong influence (Campos et al., 1994). Individuals share their thoughts and feelings daily and across numerous social contexts when they express themselves (Itzhakov et al, 2018).

The ability to express oneself offers individuals a window into their personalities, desires, social preferences, and thought processes. It is crucial in either supporting or hindering the growth of relationships. Yet, it is generally acknowledged as a vital component for people to build meaningful relationships (Graham et al., 2008) and to foster healthy psychological development and overall wellbeing (Clark & Finkel, 2004). Feeling able to express oneself honestly and fully is an important way individuals can feel they are being themselves (Lynch et al., 2009; Ryan and Deci, 2017). Research has shown that emotional expressivity has been studied in various psychological fields and is, thus, of great importance.

It shows a major influence on interpersonal interaction (Lavee, 2004). Positive emotions encourage a person to explore for himself and experience new things (Fredrickson, 1998). Emotion expression has important implications for intrapersonal and interpersonal functioning (Mesquita, 2007). Highly expressive individuals have been found to have greater psychological well-being than individuals who are less expressive (Kring et al., 1994). The present study aims to explore these correlations further, examining how personality domains influence emotional expression

across different contexts. By understanding these relationships, we can gain insights into the adaptive and maladaptive patterns of emotion expression and their implications for mental health.

**RATIONALE:** Personality traits have been acknowledged as influential factors in shaping an individual's behaviour and self-perception. Self-expression, on the other hand, is a critical component of interpersonal communication. Studying the correlation between personality domains and self-expression among young adults can offer valuable insights into their psychological development, social interactions, and overall well-being. Research suggests that individuals with certain personality traits may exhibit distinct patterns of emotional expression (Kring et al., 1994). Understanding the relationship between personality traits and self-expression among young adults is important for various reasons. Firstly, personality traits play a significant role in shaping an individual's thoughts, feelings, and behaviours across various domains of life. Secondly, self-expression is a fundamental aspect of human behaviour, involving how individuals convey their thoughts, emotions, and identity with others. However, there remains a gap in understanding how specific sub-traits within these broad personality domains relate to different aspects of self-expression among young adults.

The current study aims on studying the relationship between personality dimensions and self-expression among young adults. Studying the correlation between personality domains and self-expression among young adults can offer valuable insights into their psychological development, social interactions, and overall well-being. The result of this study further expands the knowledge of how young adults' personalities are shaped and how effectively they can express themselves.

### **OBJECTIVE**

The objective of the paper was to study the correlation between different dimensions of personality and emotional expression among young adults.

**HYPOTHESIS** The researcher hypothesised that there will be a correlation between personality dimensions and self-expression among young adults.

### **METHODS**

#### **SAMPLE**

The study included 80 young adults from Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, who were between the ages of 18 and 30. The random sampling approach was used to choose the sample. The study excluded individuals who were using drugs or alcohol, experiencing mental illness, personality disorders, or under the influence of psychiatric medications.

#### **TOOLS USED**

The following tools were used for collection of data in the study:

**Multidimensional Assessment of Personality (MAP Series Form-A)** is a series of tests developed by Sanjay Vohra. Multidimensional Personality Assessment is a method of measuring

personality that makes use of scientifically based frameworks of personality to evaluate a broad range of traits and subfactors. Multidimensionality, as used in trait theory, describes measures that evaluate multiple aspects of dimensions of personality traits. It may be used to explain wide variation in personality and temperament.

The MAP Series provides a sequence of scales which measure the same demonstrated personality dimensions at different ages. The various forms: Form-A (for Adults), Form-T (for Teenagers) Form-C (for Children) and Form-P (for Primary level) cover essentially the same dimensions from ages 5 and above. MAP Series Form-A has been used in the present research.

**Adult Self-Expression Scale (ASES)** is a self-report measure of assertiveness designed for use with adults in general. It is commonly used to provide information about the way in which individuals express themselves. It was developed by James G. Hollandsworth Jr, and consists of 47 items. The ASES is used to measure how effectively adults express their thoughts, feelings and needs in interpersonal settings.

## **PROCEDURE**

The researcher gathered data randomly, from a sample population of Young Adults between the age range of 18 to 30 years. Data was collected from Eighty (80) individuals from Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. The researcher asked for the respondent's consent and accordingly distributed the questionnaires to the selected respondents and instructed them to answer the questions as per the given instructions of the tools used (MAP Series FORM-A and Adult Self-Expression Scale). Respondents were guided not to spend excessive time on any specific item, and reassured that there are no right or wrong answers, and ensured confidentiality. The respondents were encouraged to provide their answers swiftly, in alignment with their true feelings.

## **RESEARCH DESIGN**

The research design employed in the present study is Correlational Research

## **STATISTICAL ANALYSIS**

The collected data was analysed using SPSS version 20. Descriptive statistics (Mean and Standard Deviation values) was calculated for the sample and the obtained results were analysed using Correlation and Regression analysis to study the relationship between the variables and their degree of association.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The objective of the present study research was to explore the relation between different dimensions of personality and emotional expression among young adults. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the participants on the measure of Adult Self-Expression Scale (ASES) and 20 dimensions of MAP Series Form-A. It shows the correlation values between Personality Dimensions and scores on the Adult Self-Expression Scale.

The results suggest how different dimensions of personality are associated with varying levels of self-expression, as measured by the Adult Self-Expression Scale (ASES). It provides detailed information on the scores obtained on the Adult Self-Expression Scale, the scores obtained in various dimensions of the MAP Series Form-A questionnaire, and the correlations between these scores. It offers insights into how different aspects of self-expression relate to the broader dimensions measured in the questionnaire.

**Table No. 1: Descriptive Statistics of Adult Self-Expression Scale (ASES) and 20 dimensions of MAP Series Form-A of 80 (N) Young Adults and Correlation between the Scores**

	TOTAL SCORES	MEAN VALUE	STANDARD DEVIATION	CORRELATION VALUES
<b>ASES</b>	7794	97.4250	17.95548	0.242*
<b>DIMENSIONS</b>				
<b>AD</b>	549	6.8625	1.95353	0.203
<b>AM</b>	569	7.1125	2.32757	0.052
<b>BO</b>	524	6.5500	3.42700	0.302**
<b>CO</b>	630	7.8750	2.39395	0.369**
<b>EN</b>	493	6.1625	2.26947	0.082
<b>GA</b>	710	8.8750	2.48222	0.044
<b>GP</b>	579	7.2375	2.54202	-0.239*
<b>IM</b>	649	8.1125	2.33300	-0.008
<b>IN</b>	525	6.5625	1.94118	0.056
<b>LD</b>	614	7.6750	2.63268	0.279
<b>MA</b>	593	7.4125	2.47874	-0.073
<b>MH</b>	511	6.3875	2.47772	0.146
<b>MO</b>	663	8.2875	2.96047	0.141
<b>SC</b>	666	8.3250	3.06377	0.050
<b>SE</b>	732	9.1500	2.43965	0.113
<b>SH</b>	589	7.3625	1.96323	-0.105
<b>SS</b>	621	7.7625	2.60109	-0.150
<b>SU</b>	541	6.7625	1.91757	-0.109
<b>SW</b>	595	7.4375	2.38053	0.069
<b>TN</b>	623	7.7875	3.07169	-0.102

\*\* Correlation is significant at 0.01 level \* Correlation is significant at 0.05 level

From the above table, it can be inferred that correlation between Personality Dimensions and Self-expression has been found significant at 0.05 level in the dimension of Guilt Proneness (Gp).

The significant negative correlation between Guilt Proneness and Self-Expression suggests that individuals who are more prone to feeling guilty may experience barriers to expressing themselves fully. Guilt proneness may be more cautious or self-critical in their behaviour, fearing negative consequences or judgment from others. As a result, they may suppress their thoughts, feelings, or desires, leading to lower levels of self-expression. The results also show significant positive correlation between Personality dimensions and self-expression at 0.01 level in the dimensions of Boldness (Bo) and Competition (Co).

The significant positive correlations between Boldness (Bo), Competition (Co) and self-expression suggest that individuals who exhibit higher levels of boldness and competitiveness are more likely to express themselves openly and assertively. Similarly, individuals high in competitiveness may be driven to assert themselves and demonstrate their abilities or achievements, leading to more assertive and expressive behaviour. A positive correlation indicates a positive relationship, meaning that higher scores on the personality dimension are associated with higher scores on the ASES. This suggests that individuals with higher levels of that personality trait tend to express themselves more.

Out of 20 personality dimensions, there exists negative correlation between 7 personality dimensions and positive correlation in 13 dimensions. Overall, the findings suggest that certain personality traits, such as guilt proneness, boldness, and competitiveness, play a role in shaping how individuals express themselves. Understanding these associations can provide valuable insights into individual differences in self-expression and how personality influences behaviour and social interactions.

**TABLE 2: Showing Regression analysis presenting Guilt Proneness, Boldness and Competition as predictors of Self-Expression**

Variables	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
Guilt Proneness (GP)	.239 <sup>a</sup>	.057	.045
Boldness (BO)	.302 <sup>a</sup>	.091	.080
Competition (CO)	.369 <sup>a</sup>	.136	.125

a. Predictors: (Constant), Guilt Proneness b. Predictors: (Constant), Boldness c. Predictors: (Constant), Competition

**Table number 2** presents the findings of a regression analysis examining the relationship between Guilt Proneness (GP), Boldness (BO), and Competition (CO) as predictors of Self-Expression. The regression analysis shows that Guilt Proneness (GP), Boldness (BO), and Competition (CO) are all positively correlated with Self-Expression, meaning higher values of these traits tend to be associated with higher levels of Self-Expression.

Guilt Proneness (GP) has a correlation coefficient R value of 0.239, explaining 5.7% of the variance in Self-Expression; Boldness (BO) shows a slightly stronger correlation with an R value of 0.302, explaining 9.1% of the variance; Competition (CO) demonstrates the highest correlation, with an R value of 0.369, explaining 13.6% of the variance.

Therefore, it can be seen that the regression analysis shows that Guilt Proneness (GP), Boldness (BO), and Competition (CO) are all positively correlated with Self-Expression, meaning higher values of these traits tend to be associated with higher levels of Self-Expression.

Overall, the findings suggest that while Guilt Proneness, Boldness, and Competition contribute to Self-Expression, there are likely other factors influencing this outcome. However, in order to fully

understand the complex interactions between the various components influencing self-expression, more research is necessary.

The overall pattern of correlation discussed in the results show that certain personality traits shape how an individual expresses themselves and how it effects individual behaviour, as stated in previous researches as well (Ali, 2019). The distribution of negative and positive correlations observed in the study reflects the complexity of the relationship between personality and self-expression. While some traits may limit self-expression (negative correlations), others may facilitate it (positive correlations), highlighting the multidimensionality of human behaviour (McCrae & Costa, 1999). This suggests that there isn't a simple linear relationship between personality traits and self-expression; rather, it's influenced by various factors and can manifest in different ways depending on the individual's personality profile.

Regression analysis shows that the impact of each trait appears to vary. Guilt Proneness (Gp) shows a modest effect, explaining about 5.7% of Self-Expression, while Boldness (Bo) demonstrates a slightly stronger influence, explaining approximately however Competition (Co) exhibits the strongest relationship, explaining around 13.6% of Self-Expression. However, when considering all three traits together, the overall understanding of Self-Expression is limited, indicating that other factors beyond these personality traits likely contribute to the one's expression of self.

## CONCLUSION

The study highlights that certain personality traits influence an individual's ability to express themselves. Specifically, it mentions guilt proneness, boldness, and competitiveness as examples. This suggests that personality traits are not static but rather dynamic factors that shape behaviour, including how individuals express themselves.

The results of the study suggested that individuals who experience higher levels of guilt may encounter barriers to self-expression. This could be due to internal conflicts or fears, such as fear of judgment or negative consequences. Guilt proneness, in this context, acts as an inhibitory factor that restrains individuals from fully expressing themselves.

Conversely, traits such as boldness and competitiveness facilitate self-expression. Individuals with higher levels of boldness are more likely to express themselves openly and assertively, while those with a competitive nature may also exhibit a similar tendency. These traits serve as catalysts for self-expression by reducing inhibitions and fostering confidence.

The research emphasized that the relationship between personality traits and self-expression is not straightforward. Instead, it is characterized by distinctions and varying degrees of influence. For instance, while guilt proneness may modestly affect self-expression, boldness and competitiveness may exert stronger influences. This varied understanding underscores the complexity of human behaviour and personality dynamics.

Additionally, the researcher also acknowledged that considering multiple personality traits simultaneously provides a more comprehensive understanding of self-expression. When examining guilt proneness, boldness, and competitiveness together, the researchers find that the overall understanding of self-expression is still limited. This suggests that while individual traits contribute to self-expression, their combined effects may interact in complex ways. In conclusion, the present study suggests that while personality traits are significant, there are likely other factors that influence self-expression. These could include environmental factors, past experiences, cultural influences, and interpersonal relationships. Acknowledging the presence of these additional factors is essential for a holistic understanding of self-expression.

Overall, the paper emphasises on and highlights the complexity of human behaviour and the multifaceted nature of self-expression. By exploring how personality traits interact with various factors, researchers can gain deeper insights into how individuals express themselves and interact with others. This understanding has implications for fields such as psychology, communication studies, and interpersonal relationships.

### **SUGGESTIONS AND LIMITATIONS**

More research on a bigger sample could be conducted to ensure that the study is representative and diverse. Future studies could investigate more variables in order to build on these findings.

The study sample, which comprises of 80 young persons in Lucknow city between the ages of 18 and 30, might not be representative of the whole population. Furthermore, the results' generalizability is restricted by the sample size, which is relatively small. Additionally, the current study depends on self-reported questionnaires for data collection, which raises the possibility of response bias or inaccurate reporting.

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