



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONALITY TRAITS AND STUDENT'S ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG MEDICAL STUDENTS

Medical Education

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ABSTRACT

Background And Objectives: The aim of the present study was to find out the relationship between personality traits and student's academic achievement among medical students.

Methods: The sample size consists of 110 MBBS students 55 each from both male and female. Students within the age group of 19-24 years studying in 1st year, 2nd year and final year MBBS studying at RIMS and who were willing to give the consent for participating in the study were selected through stratified random sampling technique. The tools that were used are a self-report questionnaire that is the NEO PI R for assessing their personality traits and the academic achievement of the students was obtained from their previous exam results.

Results: The finding of the study showed no relationship between four personality traits that is neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness with regard to academic achievement except with openness to experience (p -value = 0.035)

Conclusion: The present study concluded that personality traits such as openness to experience has significant influence with academic achievement of medical students in Manipur. Students who have a high score on openness to experience will perform better academically than those who score low on the domain. Understanding the pattern of personality traits and its influence on academic achievement of medical students will be of importance today in a country like India as MBBS is a highly preferred choice among the students. The findings of the study will benefit the educators as well as the students. Through the findings the students can strengthened their positive qualities.

KEYWORDS

MBBS students, personality traits, academic achievement.

INTRODUCTION

The word personality is derived from the Latin word Persona, which means theatrical mask which are worn by the artists for their performance.¹ Personality has been defined by many and it is the set of psychological traits and mechanisms within the individual that are organized and reasonably enduring and that in a way influence a person's interactions with, and adaptation to, the intrapsychic, physical and social environments.² Personality refers to how a person thinks, feels and behave in a given situation. It also focuses on understanding how various parts of a person come together as a whole.³

Personality Traits

The Big Five personality traits model as a general taxonomy in a wide range of behavioural and psychological research has been as a point of reference. This model consists of five relatively independent dimensions: extraversion, neuroticism, conscientiousness, agreeableness and openness to experience. In this article we examine openness to experience and conscientiousness. Openness encompasses a wide range of characteristics. This trait is related to being imaginative, perceptive, curious, artistic and being interested in a wide range of issues. On the other hand conscientiousness as one of the reliable dimensions of the Big five deals with self-control, diligence and being reliable, organized, responsible and mindful of details.⁴

Academic Achievement

Academic Achievement is the performance in school in a standardized series of educational tests. The term is more generally used to described performance in the subjects of the curriculum. Academic Achievement is commonly measured by examinations or continuous assessment but there is no general agreement on how it is best tested or which aspects are most important, procedural knowledge such as skills or declarative knowledge such as facts.⁵ Academic Achievement has been a major issue among students, teachers, parents, school administrators and the community at large. There have been many attempts made by researchers to unravel the complexities surrounding academic achievement.⁶ According to a study conducted by Steinmayr R et al⁷ academic achievement represents result that indicates the extend to which a person has accomplished specific goals specifically in school, college and university. Therefore, when a person achieves academically it defines whether one person has the ability to take part in higher education, and based on the educational degrees one attains, influences one's vocational career after education. There are individual differences that influence academic achievement. Academic achievement as such has been linked to intelligence and personality.⁸ So, understanding the pattern of personality traits and its influence on academic achievement of medical students will be of importance today in a country like India as MBBS is a highly preferred choice among the

students. The findings of the study will benefit the educators as well as the students.

Objectives

To study the relationship between personality traits and student's academic achievement among medical students.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A cross sectional study design was adopted in the present study. The study was conducted in the Department of Clinical Psychology, RIMS, Imphal. A sample of 110 MBBS students was selected through stratified random sampling technique. Out of the 110 MBBS students 55 each were males and females. Students within the age group of 19-24 years studying in 1st year, 2nd year and final year MBBS, and who were willing to give consent for participating in the study was selected for the present study. NEO PI R by Costa and McCrae⁹ questionnaire was administered to the students for assessing their personality traits and the academic achievement of the students was obtained from their previous exam results.

Procedures

In the present study, necessary permissions were sought from the academic Dean of RIMS, Imphal to collect the data. He informed about the matter of the study prior to its commencement. He was requested to allow the MBBS students to be approached regarding the collection of the data. All the students were explained about the study and nature and the method for maintaining confidentiality. After obtaining the informed consent, the NEO PI R questionnaire was administered to the students for assessing their personality traits.

RESULT

The present study was based on the primary sample of 110 cases of MBBS students who were within the age range of 19-24 years of age. Parameters such as neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness were analysed statistically with the academic achievement of MBBS students of RIMS, Imphal.

Table 1 Mean And S.D. Of Academic Achievement And Neuroticism Of The Study Sample

Academic Achievement	Mean	S.D.	f-value	p-value
Low (Below 60%)	57.46	7.79	2.610	0.078
Average (60-70)%	60.10	6.47		
High (Above 70%)	61.52	8.66		
Total	59.27	7.65		

p -value < 0.05 is taken as significant

Table 1: The above table described the mean score of neuroticism over

the three categories of academic performance i.e., low (below 60%), average (60-70%) and high (above 70%) of medical students were 57.49, 60.10 and 61.52 respectively. When statistically applied one way ANOVA test it was found to be insignificant relationship between neuroticism and over the three categories of academic performance as manifest by p-value= 0.078. The finding revealed that no significant relationship was found between academic achievement and neurotic of the study sample.

Table 2 Mean And S.D. Of Academic Achievement And Extraversion Of The Study Sample

Academic Achievement	Mean	S.D.	f-value	p-value
Low (Below 60%)	44.65	6.93	0.298	0.743
Average (60-70)%	45.85	8.24		
High (Above 70%)	45.34	5.62		
Total	45.23	7.15		

p-value < 0.05 is taken as significant

Table 2: The above table described the mean score of extraversion over the three categories of academic performance i.e., low (below 60%), average (60-70%) and high (above 70%) of medical students were 44.65, 45.85 and 45.34 respectively. When statistically applied one way ANOVA test it was found to be insignificant relationship between extraversion and over the three categories of academic performance as manifest by p-value= 0.743. The finding revealed that no significant relationship was found between academic achievement and extraversion of the study sample.

Table 3 Mean And S.D. Of Academic Achievement And Openness To Experience Of The Study

Academic Achievement	Mean	S.D.	f-value	p-value
Low (Below 60%)	46.80	7.32	3.457	0.035
Average (60-70)%	50.95	7.76		
High (Above 70%)	50.00	7.92		
Total	48.98	7.78		

p-value < 0.05 is taken as significant

Table 3: The above table described the mean score of openness to experience over the three categories of academic performance i.e. low (below 60%), average (60-70%) and high (above 70%) of medical students were 46.80, 50.95 and 50.00 respectively. When statistically applied one way ANOVA test it was found to be significant relationship between openness to experience and over the three categories of academic performance as manifest by p-value= 0.035. The finding revealed that significant relationship was found between academic achievement and openness to experience of the study sample.

Table 4 Mean And S.D. Of Academic Achievement And Agreeableness Of The Study Sample

Academic Achievement	Mean	S.D.	f-value	p-value
Low (Below 60%)	42.34	9.56	1.432	0.243
Average (60-70)%	38.95	8.33		
High (Above 70%)	40.91	10.40		
Total	40.81	9.35		

p-value < 0.05 is taken as significant

Table 4: The above table described the mean score of agreeableness over the three categories of academic performance i.e. low (below 60%), average (60-70%) and high (above 70%) of medical students were 42.34, 38.95 and 40.91 respectively. When statistically applied one way ANOVA test it was found to be insignificant relationship between agreeableness and over the three categories of academic performance as manifest by p-value= 0.243. The finding revealed that no significant relationship was found between academic achievement and agreeableness of the study sample.

Table 5 Mean And S.D. Of Academic Achievement And Conscientiousness Of The Study Sample

Academic Achievement	Mean	S.D.	f-value	p-value
Low (Below 60%)	37.09	7.85	2.155	0.121
Average (60-70)%	40.80	9.22		
High (Above 70%)	40.61	11.14		
Total	39.17	9.21		

p-value < 0.05 is taken as significant

Table 5: The above table described the mean score of

conscientiousness over the three categories of academic performance i.e. low (below 60%), average (60-70%) and high (above 70%) of medical students were 37.09, 40.80 and 40.61 respectively. When statistically applied one way ANOVA test it was found to be insignificant relationship between agreeableness and over the three categories of academic performance as manifest by p-value = 0.121. The finding revealed that no significant relationship was found between academic achievement and agreeableness of the study sample.

DISCUSSION

The present study was carried out to find out the relationship between Personality traits and students academic achievement. The statistical findings showed no relationship between four personality traits that is neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness with regard to academic achievement except with openness to experience. The findings contradict with the earlier studies which showed that there was a relationship between personality trait such as conscientiousness and academic achievement. The finding concluded that students that were conscientious perform better than their counterpart.¹⁰ Perhaps the elements of openness to experience such as having an active imagination, aesthetic sensitivity, attentiveness to inner feelings, preference for variety, intellectual curiosity and independence of judgement plays a role in academic achievement. Probably because open individuals are more curious they are willing to entertain novel ideas and unconventional emotions more keenly which in turn helps them when dealing with their academic pressure. Openness is especially related to aspects of intelligence such as divergent thinking that contribute to creativity. But openness is by no means equivalent to intelligent. Some individuals who are intelligent are closed to experience and some who are open are quite limited in intellectual capacity. Open individuals tend to be more unconventional, willing to question authority and prepared to entertain new ethical, social and political ideas. These tendencies, however do not mean that they are unprincipled.

CONCLUSION

The present study concluded that personality trait such as openness to experience has significant influence with academic achievement of medical students in Manipur. Students who have a high score on openness to experience will perform better academically than those who score low on the domain. This may be because the elements of openness to experience such as having an active imagination, being sensitive to the pleasant or artful appearance of things or a person, being attentive to one's own inner feelings and having a preference for variety of things, having an intellectual curiosity and being able to judge between right and wrong can affect how one achieve their academic performance. Openness to experience can be viewed as consisting of a set of specific traits, habits and tendencies that cluster together. They may be more open to learning. As openness to experience affects examination results and can be reliably assessed at the start of a medical study career, personality assessment may be a useful tool in student counseling and guidance.

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