

Personality Traits of Gifted Students at Ajloun Governorate

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Abstract

The current study examines the personality traits of gifted students at Ajloun governorate. The sample of the study consisted of all gifted students at King Abdullah II School for Excellence/ Ajloun, totaling (380) male and female students. A 60-item questionnaire for five personality traits (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Vigilance Conscientiousness) was administered. The study revealed that the means scores of gifted students' personality traits at Ajloun governorate ranged between (3.52-4.07); as the "openness to experience" ranked first (M = 4.07), then the "extraversion" (M = 3.91), the "agreeableness" (M = 3.81), the "vigilance conscientiousness" (M = 3.77), and the "neuroticism" (M = 3.52), respectively. The study showed no statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) due to gender in the total domains, except for the "neurotic" domain, where differences were in favor of females.

Keywords: Personality Traits, Gifted Students, King Abdullah II School for Excellence, Ajloun Governorate, Jordan

INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of the 20th century, the concept of "giftedness" has started to broaden, accompanied by an expansion in the fields of giftedness, methods of finding the gifted, and services offered for their care and the purposes for which they are offered. Giftedness is no longer just intelligence; it has expanded to encompass any notable achievement in any area of life. However, the concept has gone beyond the latent abilities that have not manifested yet due to a lack of appropriate opportunities (Wahsheh, 2015; Al-Nawasra, 2021).

Thus, the concept of "giftedness" and its fields have expanded, leading to the development of multiple and diverse methods for identifying gifted individuals, including lists of traits and characteristics distinguishing them at various age stages in terms of their mental and cognitive abilities, their attitudes and interests, their mental health and compatibility, and a wide range of other abilities that vary over time and space (Jarwan, 2008).

The theoretical literature makes it abundantly evident that gifted students differ from average students in a variety of personality traits. According to VanTassel-Baska (2009), the most notable personal traits distinguishing gifted students are extreme sensitivity, a sense of fairness and idealism, and the drive for excellence.

Gifted students are also characterized by self-control, endurance, emotional stability, leadership, self-fulfillment, sense of humor, tendency to take risks, personal and social harmony, and high levels of social values (e.g., tolerance and independence). The findings of related literature confirm that the majority of gifted individuals have high levels of autonomy, play leadership roles in society, and that they are less likely, compared to their average peers, to experience psychotic and neurotic disorders (Hijazy, 2015).

Gratification-delay, perseverance, enthusiasm, independence, willingness to perform tasks, tolerance, openness, and the ability to establish successful social relationships are also among the personality traits of gifted students. Furthermore, they feel happy and comfortable when being with their friends. They are also distinguished by their ability to direct their social behavior as well as their ability to act in situations requiring high levels of responsibility (Davies, 2000).

There are many previous studies and research addressing the personality traits of gifted students in light of different variables. Tannous, Rihani, and Zboon (2012) sought to identify the special traits distinguishing gifted students from average students in light of gender. The sample of the study consisted of (462) students

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selected from the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades. The 16 Personality Factors Test, adapted by Qaraeen (1980) for the Jordanian culture, was used to identify the traits of gifted students. The test contains (187) items distributed through (16) domains. The study revealed that gifted students were more intelligent and had a tendency to control, adventure, and novelty, compared to their average peers, who were more submissive, shy, and less oriented to change. Gifted students were also realistic, practical, relaxed, flexible, skeptic, and untroubled. The study showed statistically significant differences in the means scores of personality traits among gifted students in the domains of flexibility and calmness due to gender, in favor of females. This suggests that compared to gifted males, gifted females are more flexible and anxious.

Al-Gumaei (2019) examined the differences in personality traits among high-achievers and average students in the 10th grade in Sana'a. The sample of the study consisted of (240) students (M = 120 and F = 120), selected using a random sampling method. Two instruments were used; the Academic Achievement Scale and the Personality Traits Scale developed by Muhammad Ali Sharp (2007). The study instrument, in its final form, consisted of (60) items divided into (10) domains. The results revealed no statistically significant differences between the high-achievers and average students in the two traits of independence and flexibility, while there were statistically significant differences between the high-achievers and average students in other traits, in favor of high-achievers. Furthermore, no statistically significant differences were found between male and female students in all traits.

Nirukh (2007) addressed the most important personality traits of gifted students enrolled in Jerusalem Municipality schools. The population of the study consisted of all 4th – 7th gifted students enrolled in Jerusalem Municipality schools, totaling (116). The sample of the study consisted of (62) male and female gifted students. The Personality Test for Kids, developed by Atiya Hana (1965), was used. The results showed that gifted students reported high ability for social adaptation than personal adaptation, especially on the domain of "the child's relationship with his family", followed by the domain of student's recognition of social levels (teachers and peers), and the domain of student's relationship with school. There the personal adaptation, the higher rates obtained were for the domain of student's self-worth, followed by student's freedom from neurotic diseases, and student's self-reliance and freedom from solitude (Hassnain, 2022).

Ismail (1990) investigated the differences in the personality traits distinguishing high-achieving students from the low-achieving students at the secondary schools of Al-Baq'a Basin at Al-Balqa Governorate-Jordan. The sample of the study consisted of (240) male and female students. The Catel Test, adapted for the Jordanian culture, was used. The results revealed that high-achieving students are more intelligent, adventurous, independent, conscientious, and sociable compared to low-achieving students.

Study Problem & Questions

Personality traits are a vital and essential topic in psychology in its numerous fields. They differ from one individual to another, even for the same individual, and from one age group to another. Many teachers and educators in our country are still unaware of the important role of personality traits and their relationship to gifted individuals. Some of them believe that intelligence or mental ability is the only and influential factor in giftedness as well.

Additionally, given that the personality traits of gifted students may set them apart from other students and that these traits may also reflect psychological issues or needs compared to other average students, it is necessary to offer special guidance services to this group of students. Accordingly, the current study attempts to examine the personality traits of gifted students at the Ajloun governorate by answering the following questions:

What are personality traits of gifted students at Ajloun governorate?

Are there any statistically significant differences in the personality traits of gifted students due to gender?

Study Significance

The importance of the current study stems from:

- Highlighting the issue of personality traits' level among gifted students at Ajloun governorate, which in turn affects the gifted students themselves and leads to the success of effective special educational programs for gifted students.
- Identifying the differences in the level of personality traits among gifted students in light of gender.
- Encouraging officials and those concerned with gifted students' affairs to allocate a budget for support training and guidance programs.
- Identifying the appropriate instrument for measuring personality traits level among gifted students.
- Its attempt to enrich the findings of previous literature related to the personality traits of gifted individuals, as well as the suggestions and recommendations it provides in this field.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the study and its sample consisted of all the gifted students at King Abdullah II School for Excellence / Ajloun governorate educational directorate in the second semester of the school year (2023/2024) amounted (380) students distributed based on gender as seen in the table (1).

Table (1): Percentages of the Study Sample Distribution Based on Gender

Variable		Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	214	56.3%
	Female	166	43.7%
Total		380	100%

Instrument of the Study

The researcher developed a questionnaire by reviewing the literature of personal traits and by taking the advantage of Costa and McCrae's (1992) list. The items of the study consisted of (60) items distributed on the (5) domains of personal traits: Neuroticism which is consisted of (12) items (1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26, 31, 36, 41, 46, 51, 56), Extraversion which is consisted of (12) items (2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27, 32, 37, 42, 47, 52, 57), Openness to Experience which is consisted of (12) items (3, 8, 13, 18, 23, 28, 33, 38, 43, 48, 53, 58), Agreeableness which is consisted of (12) items (4, 9, 14, 19, 24, 29, 34, 39, 44, 49, 54, 59), and Conscientiousness which is consisted of (12) items (5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60).

5-point Likert scale (Strongly agree = 5, agree = 4, neutral = 3, disagree = 2, strongly disagree = 1) was employed to respond on each item of the instrument except the reversed ones which reversely scored (Strongly agree = 1, agree = 2, neutral = 3, disagree = 4, strongly disagree = 5) and these items are (1, 3, 8, 9, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18, 23, 24, 27, 29, 30, 31, 33, 38, 39, 42, 44, 45, 46, 48, 54, 55, 57, 59). (5) indicates that the trait is in its higher levels, while (1) indicates that the trait is in its lower levels.

Instrument Validity and Reliability

Face validity was obtained via a jury of (12) specialized members of faculty members in special education, and psychology, as well as measurements and evaluation, in order to define items' clarity, the authenticity of the phrasing, appropriateness to the domain it belongs to, and adding or deleting any item. The jury recommended some amendments to the items in relation to the aspects mentioned above. Thus, the items of the instrument in its final format consisted of (60) items distributed on the previous domains.

To obtain construct validity, correlation coefficients between the items and the total score were obtained through a pilot sample consisting of (30) gifted students in Irbid governorate from out of the original sample. The correlation coefficient of each item was calculated, as the correlation value indicates validity significance for each item since it indicates the correlation value between the item and the total scale. The correlation coefficient of the items and the total score ranged between (0.45-0.84) as shown in the following table.

Table (2): Correlation Coefficients between the Items and the Total Score of the Domain to which they belong

Item	Correlation coefficients	Item	correlation coefficients	Item	correlation coefficients
1	0.46(*)	21	0.79(**)	41	0.51(**)
2	0.75(**)	22	0.84(**)	42	0.62(**)
3	0.66(**)	23	0.82(**)	43	0.71(**)
4	0.46(*)	24	0.72(**)	44	0.71(**)
5	0.58(**)	25	0.60(**)	45	0.70(**)
6	0.59(**)	26	0.55(**)	46	0.80(**)
7	0.52(**)	27	0.71(**)	47	0.72(**)
8	0.83(**)	28	0.71(**)	48	0.69(**)
9	0.59(**)	29	0.51(**)	49	0.64(**)
10	0.58(**)	30	0.58(**)	50	0.60(**)
11	0.80(**)	31	0.53(**)	51	0.69(**)
12	0.84(**)	32	0.82(**)	52	0.77(**)
13	0.51(**)	33	0.61(**)	53	0.66(**)
14	0.52(**)	34	0.81(**)	54	0.76(**)
15	0.45(*)	35	0.82(**)	55	0.76(**)
16	0.75(**)	36	0.78(**)	56	0.53(**)
17	0.69(**)	37	0.82(**)	57	0.50(**)
18	0.45(*)	38	0.52(**)	58	0.71(**)
19	0.62(**)	39	0.63(**)	59	0.52(**)
20	0.81(**)	40	0.70(**)	60	0.58(**)

* Significance at ($\alpha = 0.05$).

** Significance at ($\alpha = 0.01$).

It is worth noting that all the correlation coefficients were acceptable and significant, and for that none of the scale items have been deleted.

To ensure instrument reliability, Test-retest was calculated by administrating and re-administrating it on the previous pilot sample, then Pearson's correlation factor was calculated between their responses in both times. Moreover, Cronbach Alpha Coefficient for internal consistency reliabilities was calculated. Table (3) shows internal consistency, these values considered appropriate to achieve the objectives of the study.

Table (3): Cronbach Alpha Internal Consistency Reliabilities and Test-retest

Domain	Test-retest	Internal Consistency
Neuroticism	0.83	0.71
Extraversion	0.82	0.72
Openness to Experience	0.80	0.79
Agreeableness	0.81	0.77
Conscientiousness	0.85	0.80

Statistical Analysis

The current study employed T-Test and retest, Pearson correlation, Cronbach Alpha Coefficient, and means and standard deviations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Results of the First Question: "What are the personality traits of gifted students at Ajloun governorate?"

To answer this question, means and standard deviations of the personality traits of gifted students at Ajloun governorate were computed as presented in table (4). This table shows that the means scores have ranged between (3.52-4.07). "Openness to Experience" ranked first with the highest mean score ($M = 4.07$), "Extraversion" ranked second ($M = 3.91$), followed by "Agreeableness" ($M = 3.81$), and "Conscientiousness" ($M = 3.77$), while "Neuroticism" ranked last ($M = 3.52$).

Table (4): Means and Standard Deviations of Personality Traits of Gifted Students in Ajloun Governorate in a Descending Order

No.	Domain	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Openness to Experience	4.07	0.577
3	Extraversion	3.91	0.620
2	Agreeableness	3.81	0.583
4	Conscientiousness	3.77	0.619
5	Neuroticism	3.52	0.738

The results showed that "Openness to Experience" ranked first with the highest mean score ($M = 4.07$). this can be attributed to the fact that openness to experience is considered one of the significant factors that reflect the positive personality traits among the gifted students in acquiring many different experiences, in addition to preferring cognitive diversity of expertise and seeking to know and discovering things through its sub domains addressed by Costa and McCrae (1992):

Fantasy, indicates that individuals who are open to experiences have a lively and active fantasy life; as it is their way of creating a fun interior world for themselves; as they believe that fantasy contributes to a rich and creative life.

Feelings, which refers to individuals' acceptance of their inner feelings and emotions as an important part of life.

Aesthetics indicate individuals have a great appreciation of art, beauty, poetry, music, etc... There is no need for them to have artistic talent, but their interest in the arts leads them to acquire extensive knowledge and an appreciation of art greater than ordinary individuals.

Actions (Activities), refer to the individual's desire to try different activities, go to new places, and try unfamiliar foods. Gifted individuals prefer the new and unfamiliar things over the familiar and routine things.

Ideas, as intellectual curiosity is an aspect of openness to experience, that is not limited to persistent pursuit of intellectual interests for a set of purposes, rather it shows in the open mind (to arguments and new ideas) of the individual and the desire to think in a different way and come up with new out of the ordinary. Previous studies confirmed that openness to experience is highly correlated to talent and gifted individuals; as a result of their mental abilities and need for knowledge, and this appears through their curiosity and passion for learning, and motivational orientation (Motivation tendency) to think about what things are and knowing them, as well as examining information accurately.

Values, it is the one's willingness to re-examine social, environmental and political values, as the individual tends to re-examine these values and defend the ones that are open to others and appropriate for them.

The Results of the Second Question: "Are there any statistically significant differences in personality traits of gifted students in light of gender?"

To answer this question, means and standard deviations of the personality traits of gifted students in light of gender. In order to define the statistically significant differences between the means scores T-Test was employed as seen in table (5).

Table (5): Means, Standard Deviations, and T-Test of Personality Traits of Gifted Students

	Gender	Number	Means	Std. Devi.	T Value	df	Sig.
Neuroticism	Male	214	3.43	0.782	-2.600	378	0.010
	Female	166	3.63	0.664			
Extraversion	Male	214	3.87	0.626	-1.497	378	0.135
	Female	166	3.96	0.611			
Openness to Experience	Male	214	4.05	0.582	-0.735	378	0.463
	Female	166	4.09	0.571			
Agreeableness	Male	214	3.79	0.613	-0.874	378	0.383
	Female	166	3.84	0.541			
Conscientiousness	Male	214	3.71	0.651	-1.850	378	0.065

	Female	166	3.83	0.571			
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It can be noted from table (5) that there is no significance differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in light of gender in all the domains except Neuroticism, as the differences were in favor of females. This can be attributed to the fact that females face more anxiety than males, and that generalized anxiety disorder, panic with or without agoraphobia, and depression are usually diagnosed among females more than males, were they show higher levels than males (American Psychiatric Association, 1994). This result is consistent with the results of Costa and McCrae's (1992) which revealed that Neuroticism among females is higher than males. It is also consistent with the results of Budave (1999) which revealed that emotional balance which is considered the opposite of nervousness is higher among males than females.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study revealed that the means scores of gifted students' personality traits at Ajloun governorate ranged between (3.52-4.07); as the "openness to experience" ranked first ($M = 4.07$), then the "extraversion" ($M = 3.91$), the "agreeableness" ($M = 3.81$), the "vigilance conscientiousness" ($M = 3.77$), and the "neuroticism" ($M = 3.52$), respectively. The study showed no statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) due to gender in the total domains, except for the "neurotic" domain, where differences were in favor of females.

Therefore, there is a need to coordinate the efforts of all officials and those concerned with the affairs of gifted students to provide all the moral, guidance, and training tools required to strengthen their positive personality traits, as this would positively reflect on their social, academic, and creative lives.

Recommendations

In light of its findings, the study recommends the following:

Establishing more counseling and training programs to help gifted students develop their positive personality traits.

Developing curricula based on activities enhancing positive personality traits of gifted individuals.

Organizing extracurricular student activities to develop their positive personality traits.

Guiding, enlightening, and training parents on how to develop positive the personal traits of their children.

Conducting further studies addressing parents' role in improving the personality traits of their children.

Conducting further studies addressing teachers' role in improving the personality traits of their students.

Conducting further studies addressing the impact of using computers, modern technology and smart phones on students' personality traits, whether positively or negatively.

Conducting further studies addressing the impact of students' personality traits on their academic aspects.

Conducting further studies addressing the personality traits of gifted students in light of other variables.

Conducting further studies addressing the personality traits of other special education categories.

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