

## PERSONALITY TYPE A AND B AS CORRELATES OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AMONG MALE AND FEMALE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN NORTH-CENTRAL NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*This study examines personality type A and B as correlates of emotional intelligence of undergraduate students in North-Central, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive correlational survey of 378 200-level Social Science undergraduates in North-Central Nigeria, selected via proportionate and simple random sampling techniques. Data were collected using adapted Type A and B Personality and Emotional Intelligence questionnaires, both of which were validated and reliable, and analyzed using means, percentages, and the Chi-square test. The findings of the study revealed that the common dimensions of personality type among undergraduate students in North-Central, Nigeria, were achievement striving. It is revealed that the personality type among undergraduate students was type B. It is also found that the level of emotional intelligence of undergraduate students was average, and that there is no statistically significant relationship between personality types and emotional intelligence among the undergraduates. The study found achievement striving as the dominant personality trait among undergraduates in North-Central Nigeria, with Type B predominance. Emotional intelligence was average, and no significant relationship existed between personality type and emotional intelligence. It was recommended that students across personality types should have a better understanding of each other's emotions to relate harmoniously in the school setting. The university management should introduce universal emotional development programs to foster emotional intelligence across all personality types.*

**Keywords:** Personality Type (A & B), Emotional Intelligence, Undergraduate Students, North-Central, Nigeria.

### INTRODUCTION

Psychological concepts such as personality type and emotional intelligence, which affect how people think, feel, and behave, can help us better understand various behaviours. For example, some individuals can control their emotions well, while others respond impulsively; some people remain composed under pressure, while others experience

anxiety. Likewise, some people are reticent, while others are gregarious and outspoken. It is only through the study of personality that the relevant differences among individuals can be made clear (McAdams & Pals, 2006). Personality type and emotional intelligence are closely related concepts that shed light on how people perceive, control, and use emotions to manage social connections, scholastic obligations, and personal struggles. Personality

patterns, which are the constant ways that people differ from one another, are reflected in these differences. Individuals' risk management, emotional control, and ability to adjust to the demands of their developmental stage are thus significantly influenced by their personalities and emotional intelligence. More importantly, personality has long been acknowledged in psychology and education as a key concept that describes how people think, feel, and act in diverse situations, making it an essential area of study for comprehending how students learn and adapt. In educational settings, personality is regarded as a key determinant of students' engagement, adjustment, and overall academic attainment, since it affects both their cognitive processes and interpersonal relationships (Morosanova, et al. 2022). This recognition has motivated psychologists to classify personality into broad categories to better understand individual differences in learning and adaptation. One of the most influential classifications is the distinction between Type A and Type B personality patterns, developed by Friedman and Rosenman in their pioneering research on behaviour and health in the mid-twentieth century (Horwitz, 2024). Type A individuals are typically ambitious, competitive, impatient, and highly driven, while Type B individuals tend to be more relaxed, patient, and tolerant. These traits not only have health implications, as originally studied, but have also been found to play a significant role in determining academic behaviours, emotional stability, learning approaches, and social interactions in social and educational contexts (Owunna, et al. 2025). Understanding this distinction allows psychologists and researchers to predict how students with different personality types might approach academic challenges. In the context of higher education, these personality patterns directly influence how students each and everyone's emotions, set goals, and cope with the pressures of school life. Type A students often display strong achievement striving and

competitiveness, which can enhance performance but also increase susceptibility to anxiety and burnout. On the other hand, Type B students usually exhibit calmness and resilience under stress, though sometimes at the expense of drive and urgency in academic pursuits (Akinduyo, 2024).

Emotional intelligence has emerged as a vital construct in psychology and education, describing the ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and utilize emotions effectively. Samuel et al. (2024) described emotional intelligence as the capacity to monitor one's own and others' feelings, discriminate among them, and use such information to guide thought and behavior. In the school settings, emotional intelligence is crucial because it determines how students manage emotions during learning, interact with peers and teachers, and cope with challenges both inside and outside the classroom. Emotional intelligence is crucial to undergraduate students' overall academic and personal development since it shapes interpersonal relations and emotional equilibrium. Psychologists have outlined five key components of emotional intelligence, namely: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills (Antonopoulou, 2024). Self-awareness entails recognizing emotions and their influence on behavior, while self-regulation involves managing impulses and adapting constructively to change. Motivation implies maintaining drive and persistence in achieving goals, empathy emphasizes understanding others' feelings and perspectives, and social skills focus on building and sustaining healthy relationships. These interconnected dimensions empower students to balance emotional responses with rational thought, equipping them to thrive in complex social and academic settings. Hence, emotional intelligence is not just an abstract concept but a set of actionable skills that strengthen

resilience, adaptability, and effective engagement in higher education.

The relationship between personality and emotional intelligence has been widely explored in psychology, as both variables help explain individual differences in behaviour, coping strategies, and adaptability. Theoretically, personality types provide the foundation upon which emotional intelligence operates, influencing how individuals perceive, interpret, and regulate emotions (Babalola, et al. 2025). Olowodunoye and Irewole (2022) showed that students with higher emotional intelligence reported better interpersonal relationships and lower levels of academic burnout. Empirical studies further suggest that certain personality patterns, such as the structured, competitive orientation of Type A individuals and the relaxed, patient disposition of Type B individuals, are associated with different levels of emotional awareness and regulation (Azeez, 2023). This interplay underscores the significance of examining personality and emotions together in understanding students' behaviour and adjustment. Type A individuals, characterized by competitiveness, urgency, and high ambition, may demonstrate strengths in certain aspects of emotional intelligence, such as motivation, but weaknesses in areas like self-regulation and empathy due to heightened stress responses and impatience (Antonopoulou, 2023). Contrariwise, Type B personalities, who are often calm, patient, and laid back, frequently exhibit higher resilience and emotional equilibrium, which improves their ability to control their emotions and interact with others. However, their calm disposition may sometimes limit their sense of urgency and drive, particularly in academic contexts that demand high levels of achievement. These contrasts highlight that while personality types shape students' emotional tendencies, their emotional intelligence profiles determine how

effectively they manage these tendencies in real-life situations.

In academic, social, and professional contexts, the interaction between personality and emotional intelligence becomes especially relevant. For instance, Type A students with lower self-regulation may struggle with stress during examinations or group projects, whereas Type B students may excel in collaborative environments due to their interpersonal sensitivity but lack a competitive edge in highly demanding tasks (Okeke, 2025). In the professional world, these differences extend to leadership, teamwork, and decision-making, where both personality traits and emotional intelligence are critical for success. Thus, understanding the link between personality and emotional intelligence not only provides a framework for explaining undergraduates' academic behaviors but also offers practical insights for fostering emotional and social competencies necessary for holistic development. These insights become particularly relevant when situated within the Nigerian context, where undergraduates contend with unique academic, social, and cultural pressures that shape both their personality expression and emotional intelligence (Ambe, et al. 2024).

Personality traits and emotional intelligence become particularly important in this context, as they shape how students perceive stressors, regulate their emotions, and interact with peers and teachers. Students with stronger emotional intelligence skills and adaptive personality patterns are more likely to cope effectively with challenges, maintain focus on their goals, and build healthy support systems during their school journey. At the same time, cultural and environmental factors in Nigeria strongly influence how personality and emotional intelligence are expressed. The communal orientation of Nigerian society emphasizes interdependence, respect for authority, and

collective achievement, which may enhance empathy and social skills as key dimensions of emotional intelligence (Okokoyo, 2024). However, social pressures linked to academic excellence and family expectations may also reinforce Type A tendencies such as competitiveness and urgency among students, sometimes at the expense of emotional balance. Personality patterns determine behavioural tendencies such as competitiveness, resilience, or calmness, while emotional intelligence equips students with skills for emotional regulation, empathy, and social interaction (Akinola & Johnson, 2025). Together, they provide a framework for understanding individual differences in academic engagement, motivation, and coping strategies. The educational and social relevance of this focus extends beyond the classroom into career readiness, counselling, and mental health support. High levels of emotional intelligence and adaptive personality traits have been linked to improved academic performance, employability skills such as teamwork and problem-solving, and resilience in the face of challenges (Johnson & Njoku, 2024).

Empirically, numerous studies have examined the relationship between personality types and emotional intelligence among students, emphasizing their role in shaping academic performance, stress management, and interpersonal relationships. For instance, Rajaeepour and Mohammadi (2021) demonstrated that personality traits such as conscientiousness and emotional stability are closely linked to emotional intelligence and academic achievement. Similarly, Awomokun (2022) highlighted how Type A students often experience higher stress levels but show greater drive, while Type B students demonstrate better emotional regulation but sometimes lack urgency in academic tasks. These findings underscore the importance of integrating personality and emotional intelligence in understanding students' development, but

much of this research has been concentrated in Western and Asian contexts, leaving limited evidence from African settings.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Within Africa, and Nigeria in particular, studies have begun to highlight the influence of emotional intelligence and personality on students' outcomes. Ikpe, et al. (2021) found that emotional intelligence significantly predicted academic achievement and adjustment among Nigerian undergraduates, while Odulate-Ogunubi et al. (2024) linked emotional intelligence with stress management and coping strategies among university students. Ndukaihe et al. (2025) further emphasized emotional intelligence in reducing academic burnout and improving interpersonal relations. However, most of these studies examined emotional intelligence or personality traits in isolation, with limited attempts to assess their combined effects. Furthermore, little attention has been given to undergraduates in the North-Central region of Nigeria, where cultural, social, and economic dynamics may uniquely shape these constructs. Thus, examining emotional intelligence alongside personality types provides a richer framework for understanding undergraduates' behaviors and emotional intelligence in the North-Central Nigeria geo-political zone.

This gap highlights the need for region-specific research that jointly examines personality types and emotional intelligence to provide deeper insights into students' academic behaviours, coping strategies, and overall well-being. Since personality types and emotional intelligence offer helpful frameworks for comprehending individual variations in social interaction, resilience, and decision-making, evaluating them is essential to improving research outcomes. The researcher therefore deems it necessary to fill the gaps left by the previous studies by carrying out a study on personality types and emotional intelligence among male

and female undergraduate students in North-Central, Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to assess personality types A and B and the emotional intelligence of undergraduates in North-Central, Nigeria. Specifically, this study examines:

1. Common dimensions of personality type among undergraduate students in North-Central, Nigeria.
2. Personality type among undergraduate students in North-Central, Nigeria.
3. Level of emotional intelligence of undergraduate students in North-Central Nigeria.
4. Personality types A and B and emotional intelligence of undergraduates in North-Central, Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were raised and answered to sharpen the focus of the study

1. What are the common dimensions of personality type among undergraduate students in North-Central, Nigeria?
2. What is the common personality type among undergraduate students in North-Central, Nigeria?
3. What is the level of emotional intelligence of undergraduate students in North-Central Nigeria?
4. What is the relationship between personality type A and B and the emotional intelligence of undergraduate students in North-Central, Nigeria?

### **Hypothesis**

Only one null hypothesis was formulated and tested in the context of the study

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between personality type A and B and Emotional intelligence of

undergraduate students in North-Central, Nigeria.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

The study employed a descriptive survey of a correlational type. This design allowed the researcher to sample a large number of undergraduates in North-Central Nigeria, capture spontaneous responses through the questionnaires, and analyze patterns of personality types and emotional intelligence. It was therefore considered appropriate, as it provided a reliable basis for making deductions and drawing meaningful conclusions about the relationship between the study variables.

### **Population Sample and Sampling Techniques**

The population for this study consisted of all undergraduates in universities within the North Central region of Nigeria. The target population comprised all 200-level Social Science students in eight (8) universities selected from four (4) out of the six (6) states in the North Central Zone, including FCT (Federal Capital Territory). Using Cochran's formula at a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error, an initial sample size of 348 was obtained. Applying the finite population correction for the total number of 200-level Social Science students across the selected universities and allowing for a 10% non-response rate, the final sample size for this study was 378 students. This sample was proportionately allocated to each of the eight universities based on the number of 200-level Social Science students in each institution, after which simple random sampling was used to select the respondents.

### **Instrumentation for Data Collection**

For this study, an adapted Personality Type A and B questionnaire developed by Alao (1989) was employed to categorize respondents into Type A and B personalities. The adapted

questionnaire consists of 28 items divided into two sections: Section A collects demographic data, while Section B assesses the four personality dimensions with seven items per subscale, ensuring comprehensive measurement of Type A and B traits. The instrument was scored on a modified four-point Likert-type rating scale as indicated, thus, 4 = Always True of Me, 3 = Sometimes True of Me, 2 = Rarely True of Me, and 1 = Never True of Me. The second instrument used was the Emotional Intelligence Inventory (EII) developed by Mangal and Mangal (2004). This inventory contains 21 items designed to assess different aspects of emotional intelligence, with responses rated on a four-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree=4, Agree=3 Disagree=2, Strongly Disagree=1

**Psychometric Properties:** Validity and reliability were established for the instruments used in this study. Content validity was ensured by subjecting the instruments to experts' review, while reliability was determined through the test-retest method. The reliability coefficients obtained were 0.83 for the Personality Type Questionnaire and 0.80 for the Emotional Intelligence Inventory, respectively.

**Data Analysis Techniques**

Mean ratings were used to answer research question one, while percentages addressed research questions two and three. The Chi-square test was employed to test the formulated hypothesis at the 0.05 significance level, as these statistical tools were deemed appropriate given the study variables, research questions,

and hypothesis. Importantly, the chi-square was considered appropriate here because of the nature of the formulated hypothesis, which comprised a categorical variable (Type A and B) and a continuous variable (Emotional Intelligence)

**Ethical Approval and Consents**

1. Informed consent from all participants before data collection, ensuring they understand the purpose and benefits of the study, was adhered to.
2. Confidentiality: Participants' anonymity and confidentiality were safeguarded by removing identifying information from data and ensuring secure storage.
3. Voluntary participation: participants were allowed to withdraw from the study at any time without consequences
4. Ethical approval: approval from relevant ethics committees or institutional review boards (school administrators) before commencing data collection was sought. An introduction letter from the school was collected by the administration of the instruments.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Results**

**Research Question 1:** What are the common dimensions of personality type among undergraduate students in North-Central, Nigeria?

**Table 1:** Mean Rating of the Common Dimensions of Personality Type among Undergraduate Students in North-Central, Nigeria

S/N	Common Dimensions of Personality Type	Mean	Ranking
1	Achievement Striving	20.89	1 <sup>st</sup>
2	Aggressiveness/Hostility and Impatience	17.44	2 <sup>nd</sup>
4	Sense of Time Urgency	15.66	3 <sup>rd</sup>
3	Competitiveness	14.30	4 <sup>th</sup>

**Source:** Researcher Field Study, 2025

Table 1 indicates that the common dimensions of personality type among undergraduate students in North-Central, Nigeria were achievement striving, ranked 1<sup>st</sup>, while Aggressiveness or Hostility and Impatience ranked 2<sup>nd</sup>, Sense of Time Urgency ranked 3<sup>rd</sup>, and the least was Competitiveness was ranked 4<sup>th</sup>.

**Research Question 2:** What is the personality type among undergraduate students in North Central, Nigeria?

**Table 2:** Percentage Analysis of the Personality Type among Undergraduate Students in North-Central, Nigeria

Personality Type	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Type A	160	42.3
Type B	218	57.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** Researcher Field Study, 2025

The personality type distribution of North-Central Nigerian undergraduate students is displayed in Table 2. A greater percentage of students were defined as having Type B personalities, whereas a smaller percentage of respondents was classified as having Type A personalities. This suggests that Type B

personality characteristics are more common than Type A personality characteristics among undergraduates in North-Central Nigeria.

**Research Question 3:** What is the level of emotional intelligence of undergraduate students in North-Central Nigeria?

**Table 3:** Percentage Analysis of the level of emotional intelligence of undergraduate students in North-Central Nigeria

Level of Emotional Intelligence	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High	23	6.1
Average	353	93.4
Low	2	.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** Researcher Field Study, 2025

The emotional intelligence distribution of undergraduate students in North-Central Nigeria is shown in the above table. The finding indicates that the majority of undergraduate students in North-Central Nigeria have average emotional intelligence, with a small percentage

demonstrating extremely high or extremely low levels.

**H01:** There is no significant relationship between personality type A and B and Emotional intelligence of undergraduate students in North-Central, Nigeria.

**Table 4:** Summary Table of Chi-square Analysis of Relationship between Personality Type A and B and Emotional Intelligence of Undergraduate Students in North-Central, Nigeria

Emotional Intelligence		Personality Type		df	Total	Cal.X <sup>2</sup> -value	Cal. Sig. (2-sided)	Decision
		A	B					
High	Count	12	11		23			
	Expected Count	9.7	13.3		23.0			
Average	Count	146	207		353			
	Expected Count	149.4	203.6	2	353.0	3.77	.15	Accepted
Low	Count	2	0		2			
	Expected Count	.8	1.2		2.0			
Total	Count	160	218		378			
	Expected Count	160.0	218.0		378.0			

$\rho > 0.05$

Source: Researcher Field Study, 2025

Table 4 presents the Chi-square analysis of the relationship between personality types (A and B) and the emotional intelligence levels of undergraduate students in North-Central Nigeria. The results show that out of 23 students with high emotional intelligence, 12 were Type A and 11 were Type B, which is close to the expected counts. Among the 353 students with average emotional intelligence, 146 were Type A, and 207 were Type B, while for the 2 students with low emotional intelligence, 2 were Type A and none were Type B. The calculated Chi-square value of 3.77 with a significance level of 0.15 ( $p > 0.05$ ) indicates that there is no statistically significant relationship between personality type (A or B) and emotional intelligence among the undergraduate students in North-Central, Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted.

### Discussion of the Findings

The findings of the study indicate that the common dimensions of personality type among undergraduate students in North-Central, Nigeria, were achievement striving. This may be because undergraduates are highly motivated by academic success and competition, which drives them to set goals and work hard to achieve them. This finding is consistent with prior studies identifying

achievement striving as a central component of Type A personality. Keltikangas-Järvinen and Rääkkönen (1990) emphasized its positive link to leadership and social activity, while Ovcharchyn et al. (1981) found that Type A students engaged more academically and achieved higher performance than Type B counterparts. Similarly, Justin and Saroja (2023) reported that conscientiousness, which includes achievement striving, significantly predicts undergraduate academic success.

The result of the finding revealed that the personality type among undergraduate students in North-Central, Nigeria was personality type B. Many students may adopt a more relaxed and less aggressive approach to academic and social life, possibly due to cultural and environmental influences that encourage patience and sociability. This finding aligns with Hisam et al. (2014), who reported that among 500 undergraduate medical students in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, only 10.8% were classified as Type A, while 89.2% were Type B, indicating that Type B dominance is common in university populations. However, Adeniyi et al. (2014) found the reverse among fresh undergraduates at Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria, where 64.4% were Type A and 35.6% Type B, suggesting that personality type distribution may vary across regional or institutional contexts.

Furthermore, findings indicate that the level of emotional intelligence of undergraduate students in North-Central Nigeria was average. Most undergraduates may possess moderate skills in self-awareness, empathy, and emotional regulation, but lack advanced training or structured programs to develop high emotional intelligence. This finding negates that of Amailo et al. (2024), who found a low positive relationship between emotional intelligence and social adjustment among first-year undergraduates in Anambra State, indicating that emotional intelligence may be present but not strongly developed, which aligns with average-level trends.

The finding indicates that there was no statistically significant relationship between personality type (A or B) and emotional intelligence among the undergraduates. Emotional intelligence may cut across both Type A and B personalities, suggesting that being competitive or relaxed does not necessarily determine how students perceive, manage, or use emotions effectively. This finding against that of Mallikaarachchi and Arachchige (2015), who found that most personality dimensions, except for neuroticism, showed a positive and significant relationship with emotional intelligence. Their model explained about 41% of the variance in emotional intelligence.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusions

This study concludes that accomplishment seeking is the most prevalent personality trait, with Type B personalities predominating. Overall, the students' emotional intelligence was average, indicating that they had moderate abilities in interpersonal interactions, emotional awareness, and regulation. Interestingly, there was no significant correlation between emotional intelligence and personality type, suggesting that emotional competence is not predicted by Type A or Type B classification.

In order to assist academic and personal development, the findings highlight the significance of focused programs that improve emotional intelligence across all personality types.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Students across personality types should have a better understanding of each other's emotions to relate harmoniously in the school setting.
2. Policy makers should create supportive policies and programmes that will help students, regardless of their personality types, to develop positive emotions; this will help them achieve their academic objectives.
3. The university management should put in place training and development programs to improve students' emotional awareness, self-regulation, empathy, motivation, and social skills, as emotional intelligence is at an average level.
4. To promote emotional intelligence and holistic growth across a range of personality types, the university's counselling centre should implement universal emotional intelligence enhancement initiatives, such as required soft skills seminars, stress management instruction, and peer mentorship.

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