



# INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES AND INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

( Peer-reviewed, Refereed, Indexed & Open Access Journal )

DOI : 03.2021-11278686

ISSN : 2582-8568

IMPACT FACTOR : 8.031 (SJIF 2025)

## Impact of Personality Traits on Components of Love among Young Adults

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DOI No. **03.2021-11278686** DOI Link :: <https://doi-ds.org/doi/10.2582/07.2025-14381739/IRJHIS2507008>

### Abstract:

*Understanding how personality traits shape the way young adults experience love can offer valuable insights into the nature of romantic relationships. Love, being a multidimensional and deeply subjective experience, can be influenced by stable personality factors that govern how individuals feel, think, and behave in emotional contexts. This study aims to discern how the Big Five personality traits—openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism—predict Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Love, which comprises three essential components: intimacy, passion, and commitment. A sample of 200 young adults, aged between 20 and 35 years, was surveyed using the Components of Love Scale (Sternberg, 1986) and the NEO Five-Factor Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Quantitative analysis was performed using multiple linear regression to examine predictive relationships. Results revealed that Conscientiousness is a significant positive predictor of love components ( $\beta = .43, p < 0.001$ ), while other traits such as extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism, and openness did not significantly predict the components. The model accounted for 28% of the variance ( $R^2 = 0.28$ ) in components of love. These findings suggest that responsible and organized individuals may be more likely to form deeper emotional bonds. Future research should explore the impact of culture, attachment styles, and gender to deepen the understanding of how personality and love intersect.*

**Keywords:** Personality traits, Big Five, Components of love, Sternberg's triangular theory, Romantic relationships

### Introduction:

Love is universally regarded as one of the most profound, multifaceted, and emotionally intense experiences in the human lifespan. It holds a central place in individual well-being, interpersonal relationships, and overall social functioning. While love has long been idealized in literature, films, and cultural narratives, modern psychology offers a more nuanced and structured understanding of love, treating it not merely as an abstract feeling but as a measurable and scientifically examinable construct. Contemporary psychological research recognizes love as a

multidimensional phenomenon, shaped by a complex interplay of emotional, cognitive, and behavioral components. One of the most influential and widely accepted psychological models that deconstructs the concept of love is Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Love (1986). According to Sternberg, love consists of three interdependent components—intimacy, passion, and commitment. Intimacy refers to feelings of closeness, connectedness, and emotional bonding. Passion involves physical attraction and romantic or sexual desire. Commitment, on the other hand, encompasses the decision to remain with a partner and maintain the relationship over time. These three components, though conceptually distinct, are believed to interact dynamically, influencing the depth, quality, and longevity of romantic relationships. Variations in the balance of these dimensions give rise to different types of love experiences, such as romantic love, companionate love, or empty love. Parallel to this, the Five-Factor Model of Personality—commonly known as the Big Five Personality Traits—developed by Costa and McCrae (1992), has emerged as a robust and empirically validated framework for understanding personality structure. The Big Five includes openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. These five broad traits represent relatively stable patterns of thought, emotion, and behavior that influence how individuals perceive the world, manage their emotions, relate to others, and navigate life challenges. Given that romantic relationships are deeply rooted in interpersonal dynamics, personality traits are naturally viewed as critical predictors of love-related behaviors and experiences.

The intersection between personality traits and romantic love has become a growing focus of contemporary psychological inquiry. A number of empirical studies have suggested that individuals high in agreeableness and extraversion tend to form more satisfying and emotionally connected romantic relationships due to their sociability, warmth, and positive interpersonal orientation. Conscientiousness has been associated with reliability, commitment, and responsible behavior, all of which contribute to the long-term maintenance of romantic bonds. Conversely, individuals high in neuroticism often display heightened emotional instability, mood swings, and vulnerability to stress, which can negatively affect intimacy and relationship satisfaction (McCrae & Costa, 1997; Shaver & Brennan, 1992). The trait of openness to experience, though less extensively researched in this context, is believed to facilitate emotional depth, creativity, and novelty-seeking in romantic interactions, potentially enhancing passion and intimacy.

Understanding how these personality traits relate to the dimensions of love is particularly important during young adulthood, which typically spans the ages of 18 to 30 or 35 years. This developmental phase is marked by significant exploration in the domains of identity, career, and relationships. It is during this period that many individuals begin to form serious romantic attachments that may evolve into long-term commitments such as cohabitation, marriage, or partnership. How personality traits influence the experience and expression of love during this

critical stage has profound implications not only for personal growth and emotional development but also for psychological interventions, relationship counselling, and educational programs aimed at enhancing relational well-being. Despite the increasing scholarly attention in this field, there remains a need for region-specific research that accounts for cultural, social, and contextual differences. In the Indian context—where relationship norms are evolving amidst the interplay of traditional values and modern influences—it becomes even more pertinent to explore how personality characteristics shape love dynamics among young adults.

Therefore, the present study seeks to examine the predictive influence of the Big Five personality traits on the three components of love—intimacy, passion, and commitment—among young adults in India. Using a quantitative approach and multiple linear regression analysis, the study aims to identify which personality dimensions significantly affect each aspect of love. The findings are expected to contribute to the existing body of literature and offer valuable insights for practitioners working in the domains of relationship counselling, personality assessment, emotional intelligence training, and young adult development.

**Objectives:**

1. To study Neuroticism as a predictor of components of love.
2. To study Extraversion as a predictor of components of love.
3. To examine Openness to Experience as a predictor of components of love.
4. To determine Agreeableness as a predictor of components of love.
5. To study Conscientiousness as a predictor of components of love.

**Hypotheses:**

1. Neuroticism will significantly predict components of love.
2. Extraversion will significantly predict components of love.
3. Openness to experience will significantly predict components of love.
4. Agreeableness will significantly predict components of love.
5. Conscientiousness will significantly predict components of love.

**Method:**

The present study aimed to explore the impact of personality traits on the components of love among young adults residing in India. A quantitative research design was adopted for this purpose to allow for the statistical analysis and interpretation of relationships between variables. The study employed a correlational design, utilizing multiple linear regression analysis to examine how different personality dimensions contribute to the components of love, namely, intimacy, passion, and commitment. A total sample of 200 young adults (both males and females) between the age group of 20 to 35 years was selected for participation in this research. Participants were recruited using the non-probability purposive sampling technique, which allowed for the intentional selection



of individuals who met the inclusion criteria, i.e., falling within the specified age group and demonstrating the ability to understand and respond to the English-language questionnaires. This sampling method was chosen to ensure that only relevant and appropriate respondents were included in the study.

The data collection process was conducted entirely through Google Forms, which enabled convenient and wide-reaching access to the target population, especially given the age group's familiarity with digital platforms. Before administering the questionnaires, a rapport was built with the participants through an introductory section in the form, which provided a brief overview of the research topic, the purpose of the study, and what was expected of them. Participants were also clearly informed about the confidential nature of their responses. It was ensured that their participation was voluntary, and they had the freedom to withdraw at any point during the study without any negative consequences. The informed consent form was attached at the beginning of the Google Form. Only those participants who willingly agreed and digitally signed the consent form were allowed to proceed further.

Special care was taken to uphold ethical standards throughout the research process. Participants were assured that their identities would remain anonymous and that the information collected would be used strictly for academic and research purposes. Additionally, no personally identifiable data was recorded, ensuring complete confidentiality of responses.

The research instruments included two standardized psychological assessments along with a socio-demographic data sheet. The first tool was the Sternberg Triangular Love Scale (STLS), developed by Sternberg in 1986, which assesses the three primary components of love: Intimacy, Passion, and Commitment. The scale comprises 45 items, each rated on a Likert scale, and has been widely validated in romantic relationship studies across various cultural settings. The second instrument was the NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI), developed by Costa and McCrae in 1992, which consists of 60 items and measures five core personality dimensions—Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness. This inventory is a brief version of the NEO-PI-R and has demonstrated strong reliability and validity in multiple cross-cultural contexts. Following the explanation of the purpose and format of the questionnaires, participants were first asked to complete the socio-demographic questionnaire, which collected data related to their age, gender, relationship status, and educational background. This was followed by the STLS and NEO-FFI inventories. Upon successful completion and submission of the forms, participants were thanked for their time and cooperation. The collected data were then compiled and processed for statistical analysis. The primary statistical technique employed was Multiple Linear Regression Analysis, which helped determine the extent to which each of the Big Five personality traits predicted the three components of love. The analysis was conducted using appropriate software

tools to interpret the results and draw meaningful conclusions aligned with the objectives of the study.

### Results and Discussion:

Analysis of the data was done using SPSS version 29. Multiple linear regression was computed to predict the cause-and-effect relationship between the variables.

**Table 1**

***Regression coefficients of Neuroticism, Extraversion, and Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness personality traits on components of love***

Variables	$\beta$	SE	t	p	95% CI
Constant	60.44	7.00	8.62	.00	(46.62,74.26)
Neuroticism	.11	.09	1.20	.22	(-.07,.29)
Extraversion	.15	.08	1.84	.06	(-.01,.31)
Openness	-.11	.10	-1.15	.25	(-.31,.08)
Agreeableness	.12	.10	1.21	.22	(-.08,.33)
Conscientiousness	.43	.09	6.23	.00	(.39,.76)

Table 1 revealed that the  $R^2$  value of .28 indicates that the predictors (Personality traits—Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness) explained 28% variance in the outcome variable (components of love—intimacy, passion, and commitment), with  $F(5, 183) = 14.27, p < .001$ . Among these, Conscientiousness emerged as a significant positive predictor of components of love ( $\beta = .43, p < .001$ ), while Extraversion ( $\beta = .15, p > .05$ ), Agreeableness ( $\beta = .12, p > .05$ ), Neuroticism ( $\beta = .11, p > .05$ ), and Openness ( $\beta = -.11, p > .05$ ) were found to be nonsignificant predictors. **The significant role of Conscientiousness, in particular, aligns with** previous research by Roberts et al. (2009), which emphasized Conscientiousness as a key predictor of long-term relationship success. Individuals who are organized, dependable, and diligent are more likely to cultivate and sustain love through commitment, stability, and consistent effort.

### Limitations and Suggestions:

The investigation into the interplay between personality traits and the components of love is subject to several limitations that may constrain its generalizability and precision. A primary concern is the dependence on self-report instruments, which are susceptible to biases, as participants might offer responses skewed toward social desirability or face challenges in accurately evaluating

their own traits and experiences. Furthermore, the study's sample may exhibit limited diversity with respect to age, cultural backgrounds, and relational histories, thereby restricting the extent to which the findings can be applied universally across different populations. The adoption of a cross-sectional research design further hampers the ability to establish causal relationships between personality traits and the dimensions of love, as it captures only a snapshot of associations at a single point in time. Additionally, while conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism demonstrated significant effects on the components of love, the lack of a significant impact from openness to experience warrants further exploration, potentially through studies with larger or more heterogeneous samples to better elucidate its role. To address these limitations and enhance the validity and scope of the findings, future research should prioritize longitudinal methodologies to track changes over time, incorporate mixed-method approaches that combine qualitative and quantitative insights, and pursue cross-cultural comparisons to account for diverse socio-cultural influences on personality and romantic relationships.

### ***Practical Implications:***

The finding that conscientiousness significantly predicts components of love intimacy, passion, and commitment—suggests that personality traits play a crucial role in shaping romantic relationships. Individuals high in conscientiousness are likely to bring consistency, responsibility, and emotional investment into their relationships, thereby fostering deeper emotional bonds (intimacy), sustained romantic attraction (passion), and long-term dedication (commitment). This insight can inform relationship counselling, compatibility assessments, and personal development strategies aimed at nurturing healthier, more enduring partnerships.

### ***Conclusion:***

The present study aimed to find the impact of personality traits and components of love. The study anticipated that there would be a significant causal relationship between the variables. Components of love were assessed by a 45-item scale, and the Big Five personality traits were assessed by a 60-item scale. The study concludes that among the Big Five personality traits, only conscientiousness significantly predicts the components of love (intimacy, passion, and commitment). While traits like extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism, and openness showed positive or negative trends, their effects were not statistically significant. These findings highlight the unique role of conscientiousness in romantic relationships and suggest that individual responsibility and reliability may be central to sustaining love.

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