

Article

Psychological Passion and Its Relationship to Self-Awareness Among Graduate Students

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Abstract: This study was undertaken to determine the prevailing level of psychological passion among graduate students and to identify statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level attributable to gender (male–female), as well as to assess the level of self-awareness among the same population and examine corresponding gender-based differences at the same significance threshold. A further aim was to investigate the correlational relationship between psychological passion and self-awareness among sample members. Employing a simple random sampling method, the researcher selected a sample of 100 male and female students. Two instruments were developed for this purpose: a 15-item psychological passion scale and a 27-item self-awareness scale, with the psychometric properties of both—validity, reliability, and discriminatory power—duly established. Findings indicated that graduate students demonstrate a high level of psychological passion, with no statistically significant difference between male and female students; a comparably high level of self-awareness was likewise observed, again without gender-based variation. Furthermore, a statistically significant correlational relationship was found to exist between psychological passion and self-awareness.

Keywords: psychological passion Employing, graduate students, self-awareness.

1. Introduction

In this era characterized by rapid change and tremendous technological development, and the accompanying effects in all aspects, there is a trend among psychologists to focus on what is called positive psychology, which advocates focusing on the positive forces of humans. Among the modern variables that fall under the framework of positive psychology is what is called passion. The authors findings indicate that there are two perspectives on passion: one negative that views passion as suffering, and that students who suffer from it have some problem, and that this problem controls them to the degree that they become like slaves [1]. The second views passion more brightly, considering passion as positive and necessary human feelings for the individual to reach the peak in performance [2].

Passion can be defined as a strong tendency or drive toward a specific end, activity, idea or person, and as the spending of time and energy on that pursuit, until it becomes one's very identity [3]. There are two main forms of passion. The first, harmonious passion, is coherent and whole with other aspects of self and one's wider life, and is usually accompanied by adaptive outcomes. The second, obsessive passion, is characterized by conflict with other aspects of the self and life situations and tends to lead to less adaptive, and at times maladaptive [4].

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The level of passion differs from person to person, and perhaps self-awareness is one of the reasons as it is associated with the ability to understand the self, perceive the self, and think. It is considered the conscious part of the human psyche for dealing with the external world, thus the individual becomes capable of facing problems of self-regulation and successfully overcoming trauma [5]. The importance of self-awareness lies in the individual's ability to direct themselves, include and modify aspects of their behavior, thoughts, emotions, and attitudes. Its influence may extend to various dimensions of personality. Judgment of normal personality in the field of personality psychology stems from the individual's ability to control their feelings, motives, and emotions in the manner and direction they desire. Among the first scientists who researched the subject of the self was the scholar [6]. Consciousness is part of the psyche and is knowledge of the self and attention to it. The self represents the face of personality because it is the conscious part that deals with the external world [7]. Self-awareness is considered one of the factors that help control emotions and impulses in different situations, which helps the individual enhance social communication skills and increase the level of social intelligence. Individuals with self-awareness enjoy the ability to perceive their mood and self-insight into their emotions [8].

1.1. Research Objectives: The research aims to identify:

1. The level of psychological passion among graduate students.
2. The level of statistically significant differences at the (0.05) level in psychological passion among sample members according to gender (males-females).
3. The level of self-awareness among graduate students.
4. Statistically significant differences at the (0.05) level among sample members according to gender (males-females).
5. The correlational relationship between psychological passion and self-awareness.

1.2. Research Boundaries: The current research is limited to graduate students at the University of Tikrit for the academic year (2024-2025).

1.3. Definition of Terms: *Psychological Passion* can be defined by:

- 1) **Vallerand (2012):** A strong desire toward a specific activity that people prefer and love, in which they engage their effort, energy, and time on a regular basis [9, 10].
- 2) **Sabbar (2023):** An urgent desire toward a specific work of high value that captures the individual, so they immerse themselves in it and exert effort to invest time and energy, finding pleasure and comfort in it to achieve a balanced life pattern [11].

Operational Definition by the Researcher: A strong inclination toward specific work that the individual admires and finds important, striving earnestly to achieve and obtain it. It is the score that the respondent obtains for their answers to the scale items.

Self-Awareness can be defined by:

- 1) **Al-Akayshi (2019):** Includes an important aspect of the individual's personality evaluation process and a penetrating self-vision of the individual and their environment [6].
- 2) **Sabbar (2023):** The individual's awareness and understanding of their feelings and emotions to become more effective and monitor actions and recognize their consequences, contributing to their harmony and influence in their environment [12].

Operational Definition by the Researcher: How the individual perceives themselves in terms of positives and negatives; knowing abilities and potentials; constant attempt for development and overcoming weaknesses; and attention to the self as a goal in itself. It is the score that the respondent obtains as a result of their answers to the scale items.

1.4. Theoretical Background: Introduction to Psychological Passion

Happiness, optimism, hope, and passion are among the subjects of positive psychology that have not received attention for study until recently, despite their importance in this era. Many psychologists interested in research have called for discovering aspects of positive human forces instead of studying weakness and frailty. Seligman and others indicate that merely focusing psychology and psychiatry on psychological and destructive disorders is considered a limited view. Psychology is not just the study of diseases, weakness, and identifying errors, but it is the study of strength and virtue, and discovering the positive potentials of the individual [13].

In addition to being motivational, psychological passion is an important factor in students' ability to remain motivated and persistent in the face of academic demands, and to deeply engage with learning activities, which allows them to competently manage pressures and challenges associated with academic life. This passion fosters high levels of commitment and sustained positive engagement, essential for excellence and creative achievement. This in turn is related to positive academic achievement, and has a positive impact on pupils' happiness, well-being, and overall satisfaction with their educational experience [14].

1.5. Concept of Psychological Passion

Passion depends on what the activity represents from the individual's identity. Passion works to control the activity in the direction of achieving strong support and achieving more adaptive results, while passion works on the compulsiveness of practicing the activity that the individual is passionate about with the strength of perseverance in practicing it and in a way that hinders practicing other life activities and leads to less adaptive results. Passion enhances long-term commitment and perseverance in practicing the activity and facilitates achieving better positive results toward a subject that has emotional components like strong emotions and desires, behavioral components like long-term commitment to practicing the activity, and cognitive components like perceiving the activity with the possibility of considering it as future work.

The model that explains passion is related to motives and identity, and is characterized by the desire to engage in the activity all the time, exert effort in it, full engagement, and feeling of flow during activity practice. While the author [15] suggested that desire and commitment are two basic components of passion, both general passion and harmonious passion are associated with feelings of pleasure, interest, happiness, and focus. Passion differs between individuals as well as within individuals in specific situations, which clarifies that passion is primarily a positive experience, and that individuals differ in the degree of their passion in their preferred activity, the number of activities in which they feel passion, as well as the number of daily life situations in which they feel commitment and intensive motives. In addition, individuals differ among themselves in the degree to which they express their passion toward a specific activity [16].

Among the modern variables that fall under the framework of positive psychology is passion. The authors indicate that there are two perspectives on passion: one negative that views passion as suffering, and that students who suffer from it have some problem, and that this problem controls them to the degree that they become like machines [1]. The second views passion more brightly, considering passion as positive and necessary human feelings for the individual to reach the peak in performance. Passion is also viewed through focusing attention on a subject so that it expresses extreme interest or maximum interest. The term passion is used synonymously with strong preferences or personal interests. Some view it as a personality trait, for example, it is said that gifted children are full of passion. According to the author [17], passion figures prominently among the defining traits of creative individuals, functioning as a catalyst for creativity and exerting substantial influence on both the personal lives and professional output of such

individuals. Thus, passion can be thought of as a strong inclination of the person towards an activity and as two main elements: an affective dimension represented by the individual's extreme liking of the activity and a cognitive dimension represented by the individual's involvement in the activity in his or her identity. The combination of these two dimensions and the motivational dimension becomes the phenomenon of passion [18].

1.6. Dimensions of Passion: Drawing upon Self-Determination Theory, Vallerand formulated the Dualistic Model of Passion (DMP), which delineates two principal dimensions underlying the construct:

1. **Harmonious Passion:** This dimension originates from a regulated internal disposition that permits the individual to engage in cherished activities autonomously and without external coercion. It is distinguished by a balanced and coherent integration with the other domains of the individual's life, such that no discord or tension arises among them.
2. **Obsessive Passion:** This dimension stems from an unregulated internal state that overtakes the individual's emotions during recurrent, structured engagement in the valued activity. It is marked by internal compulsions that impel the individual toward the activity, often at the expense of neglecting other significant life pursuits, thereby giving rise to potential conflict between the passionate activity and competing demands [18].

1.7. Self-Awareness: Concept of Self-Awareness:-

Self-awareness is a concept that falls under the author finding [19] framework of emotional intelligence as an internally oriented form of personal intelligence; it is a necessary foundation for emotional intelligence and includes the ability to attend to and accurately perceive one's emotions and sensations [20]. According to [21], self-awareness is the ability to accurately identify one's own strengths and weaknesses, including the ability to understand one's emotional state and what it means for their actions. It has also been described as a person's ability to recognize his or her emotions, beliefs and tendencies in the here and now in order to aid in decision-making and problem-solving, and as the deliberate awareness of the person's motives, attitude and thought processes [22].

In a general sense, consciousness refers to the experience of being aware of something or of a phenomenon that can take different forms and intensities, and can be perceived in different ways, also known as "awareness" or "perception". More specifically, self-awareness is located in internal psychological variables which can register, to varying degrees, on the individual's cognitive and intellectual structures in regard to events and stimuli. It includes two functional modes at the same time: an Externally oriented mode based on sensory input and an Internally oriented mode based on memory [23].

Buss differentiates two types of self-awareness. The first one, private self-awareness, refers to a temporary shift in the focus of attention on the internal and external components of the private self, when the individual directs consciousness toward aspects that are not part of the shared self. The second, public—or external/environmental—self-awareness involves drawing the individual's attention to the self as a social entity, and the increased awareness that comes from being seen by others in public places, meaning that the emotions and feelings that may result will lead to the construction and experience of the self in some social contexts [24].

There is a further distinction between "conceptual self-awareness," and "representational self-awareness" advanced by [25]. The former refers to the capacity of the subject to develop a conceptual representation of himself, including his mental states, in a way that is only personally and subjectively relevant. The latter requires the construction of a mental model that also includes oneself as well as other people, which involves autobiographical memory, explicit recollection of oneself and inferential judgements about

the experiential state of other people. In addition, [26] theorises a hierarchy of four levels of consciousness, which include:

- a. Unconsciousness, characterized by an absence of responsiveness to either the self or the surrounding environment;
- b. Consciousness, involving the orientation of attentional resources toward the environment and the processing of external stimuli;
- c. Self-awareness, entailing the directing of attention inward, with a focus on processing both privately and publicly held self-related information; and
- d. Meta-self-awareness, defined as the reflexive awareness of one's own state of self-awareness [27].

1.8. Previous Studies:

A. Previous Studies on Psychological Passion:-

- 1) The study by Al-Harithi, conducted in Saudi Arabia and titled "Passion and Its Relationship to Happiness among Secondary School Students in Mecca," sought to ascertain the prevailing levels of passion and happiness among secondary school students in Mecca. Findings revealed elevated levels of both harmonious passion and general passion, alongside a moderate level of obsessive passion. A statistically significant positive association emerged between harmonious as well as general passion and happiness, whereas obsessive passion exhibited a negative but non-significant correlation. With respect to cumulative academic average, a positive though statistically insignificant association was observed for harmonious and obsessive passion, while general passion demonstrated statistical significance. No variation attributable to grade level was detected across harmonious, obsessive, or general passion, nor did age yield differences in harmonious or obsessive passion; general passion, however, differed significantly in favor of the younger cohort aged 15–17. Specialization was not found to differentiate levels of harmonious or general passion [27].
- 2) The investigation conducted by the author [10] in Iraq, entitled "Internet Passion and Its Relationship to Electronic Gaming Addiction (PUBG as a Model) among Secondary School Adolescents," aimed to examine internet passion in relation to gaming addiction among this population. Drawing on a sample of 200 male and female students selected through simple random sampling with balanced gender representation, the researchers developed two instruments—an internet passion scale and a gaming addiction scale—and established their psychometric adequacy through item analysis and validity and reliability testing. Principal findings indicated that secondary school adolescents display marked internet passion coupled with gaming addiction, and that a significant correlational relationship links the two constructs [10].

B. Previous Studies on Self-Awareness

- 1) The study conducted by the author [6] at the University of Sharjah in United Arab Emirates on the relationship between self-awareness and cognitive control strength aimed to find out the level of self-awareness and cognitive control strength of the students of the university during the 2017–2018 academic year as well as associated relationships and any gender differences. A random sample of 300 male and female students was selected and two valid instruments were used to measure self-awareness and cognitive control strength respectively. The results showed that participants had high self-awareness scores and a moderate score for cognitive control strength, and that there were significant gender differences, with females scoring higher than males on the self-awareness scores, and there were no significant gender differences on the cognitive control strength scores. Additionally,

there was a statistically significant correlation between self-awareness and the strength of cognitive control [28].

- 2) The aim of the study conducted by the author [10] in Iraq "Internet Passion and Its Relationship to Electronic Gaming Addiction (PUBG as a Model) among Secondary School Adolescents" was to examine internet passion in relation to electronic games addiction among the secondary school students. The researchers used simple random sampling technique to select 200 students, both males and females, and the obtained data were analyzed by using two scales consisting of an internet passion scale and a gaming addiction scale which were developed by the researchers and tested for their psychometric adequacy using item analysis and validity and reliability testing. The main results were that secondary school adolescents exhibited high level of internet passion and high level of internet gaming addiction while a strong correlational relationship between passion for internet and gaming addiction was identified [10].

2. Methods

- 1) **Research Methodology:** The descriptive methodology was adopted in this study as it is the appropriate methodology for the current study that aims to describe the phenomenon as it is in reality, by collecting the necessary data.
- 2) **Research Population:** The targeted research population was among the colleges that have graduate programs, indicating that their students have high mental abilities that qualified them to compete and obtain a study seat in graduate studies, totaling (1045) male and female students.
- 3) **Research Sample:** The sample was selected by (simple random method) and consisted of (100) graduate students, with (50) male and (50) female students selected.
- 4) **Research Tools:** To complete the research procedures, the researcher adopted two tools for the research [29]:
 - 1) **Psychological Passion Scale:** The researcher constructed a scale and then verified its validity and reliability. The total number of scale items was (16) items.
 - a. **Validity:** The researcher used the following types of validity for the scale:
 - b. **Face Validity:** To determine the validity of the scale items, alternatives, and instructions, totaling (16) items, (11) experts from specialists in education and psychology were consulted. The researcher adopted an agreement rate of (80%) or more as a rate for the validity, deletion, or modification of items. The percentage of experts' validity reached (93%), which is a high agreement rate based on measurement conditions.
 - c. **Self-Validity:** Reliability is based on the correlation of (true scores) of the test itself if re-applied to the same group, thus there is a strong relationship between self-validity and reliability. This is measured by calculating the square root of the scale's reliability coefficient, and the average self-validity coefficients for the scale reached (0.91).
 - d. **Scale Correction:** After directing the questionnaire to students and distributing it with clarification of how to answer the questionnaire, the answer alternatives consisted of several alternatives, one correct and the others incorrect.
 - e. **Scale Reliability:** The reliability sample reached (20) students selected (randomly). To measure the scale's reliability coefficient, the researcher used the test-retest method (external consistency of items) and calculated the Pearson correlation coefficient between the first application scores and the second application scores. The Pearson correlation coefficient was (0.84), which is considered a good indication of the stability of students' answers.

- 2) **Self-Awareness Scale:** To obtain suitable items for their tool, the researcher constructed a scale and then verified its validity and reliability. The total number of scale items was (27) items. The researcher used Face Validity to verify the scale's validity and by adopting an 80% rate of experts' approval, the scale consisted of (27) items [30 -35].

- **Reliability:** Reliability was established through the test-retest procedure, whereby the scale was initially administered to a sample of 20 male and female students; following a fifteen-day interval, the same scale was re-administered to the identical sample. Upon scoring the responses, the correlation coefficient between the two sets of scores was computed, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.87.

3. Results and Discussion

The researcher collected and analyzed the data, reaching the following results after interpretation:

- 1) **First Objective:** Assessing the Level of Psychological Passion among Graduate Students. To address this objective, sample scores were subjected to statistical analysis employing the one-sample t-test. The obtained arithmetic mean was 37.424, with a standard deviation of 4.262, against a hypothesized mean of 30. The computed t-value of 17.419 exceeded the tabulated value of 1.98 at the 0.05 significance level with 99 degrees of freedom, indicating statistical significance. These findings are presented in the table below.

Table 1. Level of Psychological Passion

Sample	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Hypothetical Mean	Degrees of Freedom	Calculated t-value	Tabulated t-value	Significance Level 0.05
100	37.424	4.262	30	99	17.419	1.98	Significant

From the above, it was found that there is a difference in favor of the arithmetic mean among students. The researcher may attribute the result to the fact that students have a high level of passion because their high mental abilities place them in a responsibility that requires them to achieve high goals. This is evidence that their psychological passion is at high levels commensurate with their abilities and ambitions and these findings were agreed with [36 – 40].

2. **Second Objective:** Identifying differences in psychological passion level among sample members of graduate students according to gender variable (males-females). To achieve this objective, data was processed using the t-test for two independent samples as a statistical means. The arithmetic mean for males was (36.86) with a standard deviation of (4.232), while for females the arithmetic mean was (37.98) with a standard deviation of (5.051). The calculated t-value was (1.691) while the tabulated value was (1.98) with degrees of freedom (98) and significance level (0.05). Table (2) illustrates this.

Table 2. Results of t-test for two independent samples

Gender	Sample Size	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Calculated t-value	Tabulated t-value	Significance Level 0.05
Males	50	36.86	4.232	1.691	1.98	Not significant
Females	50	37.98	5.051			

Since the calculated t-value is less than the tabulated value, the results showed no statistically significant differences between the means of the two groups. The researchers may attribute the result to the fact that all students, regardless of their schools and gender type as males or females, are close in their mental ability levels and ambition levels and have psychological passion to achieve their hopes and aspirations.

3. **Third Objective:** Measuring the level of self-awareness among graduate students for the above objective, sample scores were analyzed using statistical methods, specifically a one-sample t-test. The resulting arithmetic mean was 63.765, and the standard deviation was 4.545 against the hypothesized mean of 54. The calculated t value of 140.178 was far above the tabulated value of 1.98 at 99 degrees of freedom and at a 0.05 significance level, proving the statistical significance. The table below lists these results.

Table 3. Level of Self-Awareness

Sample	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Hypothetical Mean	Degrees of Freedom	Calculated t-value	Tabulated t-value	Significance Level 0.05
100	63.765	4.545	54	99	140.178	1.98	Significant

From the above table, it was found that there is a difference in favor of the arithmetic mean among students. The researcher may attribute the result to the fact that students have a high level of self-awareness, which may be due to their awareness of their reality, aspiration to achieve their goals, and awareness of their levels through which they seek to achieve their objectives. The researcher may attribute the result to the fact that students have mental habits that are somewhat similar and have sound planning in order to reach the goal and achieve objectives.

4. **Fourth Objective:** Identifying the level of self-awareness among sample members of graduate students according to gender variable (males-females). To achieve this objective, data was processed using the t-test for two independent samples as a statistical means. The arithmetic mean for males was (63.651) with a standard deviation of (5.291), while for females the arithmetic mean was (63.876) with a standard deviation of (6.012). The calculated t-value was (0.279) while the tabulated value was (1.98) with degrees of freedom (98) and significance level (0.05). Table (4) illustrates this.

Table 4. Results of t-test for two independent samples in self-awareness level

Gender	Sample Size	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Calculated t-value	Tabulated t-value	Significance Level 0.05
Males	50	63.651	5.291	0.279	1.98	Not significant
Females	50	63.876	6.012			

Since the calculated t-value is less than the tabulated value, the results showed no statistically significant differences between the means of the two groups. The researcher may attribute the result to the fact that students have mental habits that are somewhat similar and have sound planning in order to reach the goal and achieve objectives, and they are well aware of what they do in terms of planned and organized cognitive and life practices.

5. **Fifth Objective:** The correlational relationship between psychological passion and self-awareness among sample members. To verify the correlational relationship between psychological passion and self-awareness, the researcher analyzed the data statistically using Pearson correlation coefficient. The correlation value was (0.812). After extracting the t-value for correlation coefficients, it was found to be statistically significant at the (0.05) level as the calculated t-value reached (13.772) while the tabulated value was (1.98) as shown in the following table:

Table 5. Correlation coefficient and its t-value

Sample	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	Calculated t-value	Tabulated t-value	Significance Level at 0.05
100	0.812	13.772	1.98	Significant

From the above table, it was found that there is a positive correlational relationship. The reason may be attributed to the fact that psychological passion is a mental cognitive ability that needs self-awareness of the self and environment in order to implement its skill to reach the goal.

4. Conclusion

The researcher reached these conclusions in the levels of psychological passion among graduate students are high. There is no difference between males and females in psychological passion levels. Self-awareness level is high among graduate students. There is no difference between males and females in self-awareness among graduate students. There is a statistically significant correlational relationship between psychological passion and self-awareness. After reaching the results, the researcher recommends that Ministry of Education should enhance students' mental abilities and create an atmosphere of competition and rivalry, valuing those who try to develop their mental abilities. Media institutions should highlight those categories that are considered to have high mental abilities in order to encourage other students to emerge and develop abilities and develop their psychological passion and psychological awareness. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education should adopt an educational cognitive project by developing students' mental abilities and advancing them through psychological programs with high measurement indicators. Finally, the researcher suggests conducting some future scientific studies on the level of mental alertness and its relationship to psychological passion among graduate students. Compensation for deficiency and its relationship to psychological passion among graduate students. The cognitive domain and its relationship to self-awareness among graduate students. Openness to experience and its relationship to self-awareness among graduate students.

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