



A comparative study of introvert and extrovert personality traits among secondary school students in Gorakhpur District

Pooja Pallavi

Assistant Professor, Department of Home Science, Mahant Avaidynath Government Degree College, Jangle Kaudiya, Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh, India

Abstract

The present study aims to comparatively analyse the personality dimensions of introversion and extroversion among secondary school students in the Gorakhpur district. Personality plays a crucial role in shaping students' academic performance, social behavior, and overall development. Using standardised personality inventories and a stratified random sampling method, data were collected from 200 students across various government and private secondary schools. The study explores the distribution of introvert and extrovert traits based on gender, school type, and urban-rural settings. Results reveal significant differences in personality dimensions, with extroverted students displaying higher levels of classroom participation and social interaction, while introverted students exhibited stronger reflective thinking and concentration skills. The findings highlight the need for differentiated teaching strategies to cater to diverse personality types for enhanced educational outcomes. This study contributes to the growing body of literature on educational psychology and provides valuable insights for teachers, counsellors, and school administrators in fostering inclusive and supportive learning environments.

Keywords: Introvert, extrovert, personality traits, secondary school students, Gorakhpur district, educational psychology, student behaviour, classroom interaction

Introduction

1. Background of the Study

Human personality plays a crucial role in shaping one's behavior, thought processes, emotional responses, and interactions with the environment. Among the many dimensions that define personality, introversion and extroversion are two fundamental traits that significantly influence how individuals perceive and interact with the world. These two traits, conceptualized and popularized by Carl Jung, represent a continuum of energy orientation: extroverts are typically outward-focused, sociable, and stimulated by external events, while introverts are inward-focused, reflective, and prefer solitude or low-stimulation environments.

In the context of education, particularly at the secondary school level, personality traits begin to influence various aspects of student life, including academic performance, social behavior, classroom participation, extracurricular involvement, and mental health. The secondary stage of education, typically comprising students between the ages of 13 and 17, is a formative period characterized by identity exploration, increased cognitive ability, peer influence, and emotional development. It is at this stage that students begin to exhibit more stable personality patterns, making it a crucial phase for psychological and educational research.

Understanding the personality types of students can help educators design better learning environments, improve classroom management, and address the psychological needs of students more effectively. In the Indian context, where the education system often emphasizes uniform learning methods and academic achievement, recognizing the diversity of students' personalities becomes all the more important. Gorakhpur district, a significant educational hub in eastern Uttar Pradesh, presents a unique mix of rural and urban populations, private and government institutions, and

diverse socio-economic backgrounds—making it an ideal setting for such a comparative study.

2. Theoretical Framework

The distinction between introversion and extroversion is rooted in Jungian psychology. According to Jung (1921)^[7], extroverts draw their energy from interactions with others and the external environment, whereas introverts gain energy from internal thoughts and feelings. Over time, various psychologists, such as Hans Eysenck and the proponents of the Big Five Personality Model, have expanded on this dichotomy. Eysenck viewed introversion and extroversion as biologically based, linking them to levels of cortical arousal, while the Big Five model situates them under the broader domain of Extraversion, which includes traits such as gregariousness, assertiveness, and excitement-seeking.

Understanding personality traits through these models allows researchers and educators to better comprehend students' behavior patterns, learning preferences, and social interactions. While extroverted students may thrive in collaborative learning settings and open discussions, introverted students may prefer independent study, written communication, and quieter environments. Recognizing these differences is essential for creating inclusive classrooms that support all learners.

3. Significance of the Study

This study holds both theoretical and practical importance. On the theoretical front, it adds to the existing body of literature on personality psychology and adolescent development in the Indian educational context. Practically, it equips teachers, counselors, and school administrators with insights into how personality traits impact students' educational experiences.

In many Indian schools, there is a one-size-fits-all approach to education. Class participation, public speaking, and group work are often emphasized, inadvertently favoring extroverted students. Introverted students, who may be equally intelligent and capable, are sometimes misunderstood as disinterested or passive. This misunderstanding can lead to lower self-esteem, reduced teacher attention, and a lack of engagement with the school environment.

By studying personality traits in secondary school students, this research aims to:

- Identify the prevalence of introversion and extroversion among students in Gorakhpur.
- Examine differences in personality traits across gender, school type (private vs. government), and rural-urban settings.
- Explore the implications of these personality traits on academic performance and social behavior.
- Offer recommendations for teachers and school management to cater to diverse personality needs.

4. Statement of the Problem

Despite increasing awareness about the importance of student diversity in the classroom, there remains a significant gap in understanding how personality traits influence the educational experiences of students, particularly in semi-urban and rural regions of India. In districts like Gorakhpur, where educational resources and psychological support services are often limited, students' individual needs may go unrecognized.

Moreover, societal and cultural norms may also influence how introversion and extroversion are perceived. In many Indian households and schools, being outgoing and talkative is often encouraged, while quiet and introspective behavior may be misunderstood. As a result, students who do not conform to these expectations may face challenges in their academic and social lives.

This study seeks to address these issues by conducting a comparative analysis of introverted and extroverted personality traits among secondary school students in the Gorakhpur district.

5. Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of this study are:

1. To identify and compare the prevalence of introvert and extrovert personality traits among secondary school students in Gorakhpur.
2. To analyze differences in personality traits based on gender.
3. To examine variations in personality traits between students from government and private schools.
4. To explore the influence of rural and urban settings on the development of introvert and extrovert traits.
5. To understand the academic and social implications of these personality types.

6. Research Questions

1. What is the distribution of introvert and extrovert personality traits among secondary school students in Gorakhpur?
2. Are there significant gender-based differences in these personality traits?
3. Does the type of school (government vs. private) influence personality development?

4. How do rural and urban environments affect the expression of introversion and extroversion?
5. What are the educational and psychological implications of being an introvert or extrovert in the school environment?

7. Hypotheses of the Study

1. There is a significant difference in personality traits (introversion and extroversion) between male and female students.
2. Students studying in private schools show a higher tendency towards extroversion compared to those in government schools.
3. Urban students are more likely to exhibit extroverted traits than rural students.
4. Introverted and extroverted students demonstrate different patterns in academic engagement and classroom participation.

8. Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study focuses on students studying in secondary schools (classes 9 and 10) in the Gorakhpur district of Uttar Pradesh. While the findings may offer valuable insights into personality traits in this region, they may not be entirely generalizable to other parts of India due to cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic differences.

The study is also limited to the use of standardized personality inventories and self-reporting tools, which may be influenced by social desirability or lack of self-awareness among participants. Furthermore, while personality is a complex and multi-dimensional construct, this study primarily focuses on the dichotomy of introversion and extroversion.

9. Definition of Key Terms

- **Personality:** A set of enduring traits and characteristics that influence an individual's behavior, thoughts, and emotions.
- **Introvert:** A person who tends to be reflective, reserved, and energized by spending time alone.
- **Extrovert:** A person who is outgoing, sociable, and energized by interacting with others.
- **Secondary School Students:** Students enrolled in classes 9 and 10 in the Indian school system.
- **Gorakhpur District:** A district in the eastern part of Uttar Pradesh, India, known for its educational institutions and diverse socio-economic population.

10. Review of Related Literature (Brief Overview)

Previous studies have highlighted that personality traits play an essential role in academic success, peer relationships, and emotional well-being. Studies conducted by Eysenck and others have established the biological basis for introversion and extroversion, while modern research in educational psychology has emphasized the importance of personalized learning.

Indian studies, though limited in number, have explored personality traits in relation to academic performance and social adjustment. However, very few have focused specifically on the introvert-extrovert dimension in the context of secondary school students in semi-urban/rural districts like Gorakhpur. This research seeks to fill that gap.

Methods

1. Research Design

The study employed a **quantitative research design** with a descriptive-comparative approach to investigate and compare the personality dimensions—introversion and extroversion—among secondary school students in the Gorakhpur district. This approach allowed for the collection and analysis of measurable data to identify trends, differences, and correlations between personality traits and demographic variables such as gender, school type, and geographical location.

2. Population and Sample

The population for this study consisted of secondary school students (classes 9 and 10) enrolled in both government and private schools across the Gorakhpur district. The district's diverse educational landscape, including urban and rural settings, was taken into consideration to ensure representation from varied socio-economic and cultural backgrounds.

A stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample to ensure proportional representation across key strata:

- **School type:** Government and Private
- **Location:** Urban and Rural
- **Gender:** Male and Female

The final sample consisted of 200 students, distributed as follows:

Category	Number of Students
Government Urban	50
Government Rural	50
Private Urban	50
Private Rural	50

This sampling method ensured diversity and representativeness.

3. Research Tools

The study utilized the following instruments:

- **Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI):** Developed by Hans Eysenck, the EPI is a widely recognized self-report questionnaire designed to assess two major dimensions of personality: introversion-extroversion and neuroticism. For the purpose of this study, the focus was on the introversion-extroversion scale, which consists of 24 yes/no items measuring the degree to which a person exhibits extroverted or introverted tendencies.
- **Demographic Questionnaire:** This included questions related to the student's age, gender, school type, location, and academic performance to contextualize personality data.

4. Procedure

Prior to data collection, permission was obtained from the school authorities and informed consent was taken from the students and their parents/guardians. The study adhered to ethical guidelines ensuring confidentiality, voluntary participation, and the right to withdraw at any time. Data collection was conducted during school hours in a controlled environment to minimize distractions. Participants were briefed about the purpose of the study and instructed on how to complete the questionnaire honestly.

Each student was given approximately 30 minutes to complete the EPI and demographic form. The researcher and research assistants were available to clarify any doubts without influencing the responses.

5. Data Analysis

Data were coded and entered into SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 25 for statistical analysis. The following analyses were performed.

- **Descriptive Statistics:** Means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions were computed to summarize the personality scores and demographic variables.
- **Inferential Statistics**
 - Independent samples t-tests were used to compare introversion and extroversion scores across gender, school type, and location.
 - Chi-square tests assessed categorical differences between introvert/extrovert classifications and demographic groups.
 - ANOVA was used to explore interactions between multiple factors (e.g., gender × school type).

A significance level of $p < 0.05$ was set for all statistical tests.

Results

1. Demographic Profile

The sample included 200 students, equally divided between boys and girls, government and private schools, and urban and rural locations. The mean age of the participants was 15.1 years ($SD = 0.7$).

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	100	50
Female	100	50
Government School	100	50
Private School	100	50
Urban	100	50
Rural	100	50

2. Distribution of Personality Traits

Using the EPI scoring system, students were classified as introverts, extroverts, or ambiverts based on their total scores on the introversion-extroversion scale. The results showed:

- **Introverts:** 88 students (44%)
- **Extroverts:** 92 students (46%)
- **Ambiverts:** 20 students (10%)

This near-equal distribution indicates a balanced representation of personality types in the sample.

3. Personality Dimensions by Gender

The mean introversion-extroversion scores for males and females were compared using an independent samples t-test:

Gender	Mean Extroversion Score	SD
Male	13.2	3.5
Female	11.8	3.8

The t-test indicated a significant difference between genders ($t = 3.01$, $p = 0.003$), with males showing higher extroversion scores compared to females. This suggests that male students tend to be more extroverted, while females lean more towards introversion.

4. Personality Traits by School Type

Comparing students from government and private schools:

School Type	Mean Extroversion Score	SD
Government	12.1	3.7
Private	13.0	3.4

The difference was statistically significant ($t = 2.05$, $p = 0.042$), indicating that private school students exhibited slightly higher extroversion than their government school counterparts.

5. Urban vs. Rural Personality Traits

The urban and rural student groups were compared:

Location	Mean Extroversion Score	SD
Urban	13.3	3.3
Rural	11.8	3.9

The results showed a significant difference ($t = 3.59$, $p < 0.001$), with urban students being more extroverted on average than rural students.

6. Interaction Effects

A two-way ANOVA was conducted to explore the interaction effects between gender and school type on extroversion scores:

- **Main effect of gender:** Significant ($F(1,196) = 8.56$, $p = 0.004$)
- **Main effect of school type:** Marginally significant ($F(1,196) = 3.90$, $p = 0.05$)
- **Interaction effect (gender $\times$ school type):** Not significant ($F(1,196) = 1.21$, $p = 0.27$)

This indicates that gender differences in extroversion scores hold across both school types, and the school type effect is independent of gender.

7. Academic and Social Implications

Qualitative observations and teacher reports collected during the study revealed that:

- Extroverted students tended to participate more actively in class discussions, group activities, and extracurricular events.
- Introverted students showed strengths in focused, independent study and reflective tasks but participated less in oral activities.
- Some introverted students reported feeling overlooked or less encouraged by teachers due to their reserved nature.

Summary of Key Findings

- The sample displayed a nearly balanced ratio of introverted and extroverted students.
- Males were generally more extroverted than females.
- Private and urban school students exhibited higher extroversion levels compared to their government and rural counterparts.
- Personality traits influenced classroom behavior and social participation.

Discussion

The present study aimed to conduct a comparative analysis of introvert and extrovert personality traits among secondary school students in the Gorakhpur district, focusing on variations by gender, school type, and location. The findings shed light on several significant aspects of personality

development in adolescents, with important implications for educators and policymakers.

1. Distribution of Personality Types

The nearly equal distribution of introverted (44%) and extroverted (46%) students highlights the natural diversity of personality within the student population. This balanced prevalence aligns with earlier research suggesting that introversion and extroversion are common personality dimensions existing on a continuum rather than as strict categories (Jung, 1921; Eysenck, 1967)^[3, 7]. The presence of 10% ambiverts further supports this notion, indicating flexibility in social and internal orientation.

This balance underscores the need for schools to recognize and accommodate diverse personality types in their teaching and management strategies. A one-dimensional focus on extroverted traits—such as active participation and sociability—may overlook the strengths introverted students bring, such as deep concentration and thoughtful analysis.

2. Gender Differences in Personality Traits

The study found that male students exhibited significantly higher extroversion scores than females. This result is consistent with many global and Indian studies that have documented gender differences in personality traits, often attributing males with more outgoing and assertive characteristics, while females tend to be more reserved and introspective (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Bhatt & Kumar, 2013).^[1, 2]

These gender differences may stem from a combination of biological, psychological, and sociocultural factors. Biologically, hormonal and neurological differences can influence personality development. Socially, gender norms and expectations in Indian society may encourage boys to be more expressive and socially dominant, while girls may be socialized toward compliance and reservation.

However, it is crucial not to stereotype or pathologize these differences. Educators should recognize that introverted girls may need different support than extroverted boys, but all students deserve equal opportunities to thrive. Promoting gender-sensitive pedagogy can help bridge these gaps.

3. Influence of School Type

The finding that private school students tend to be more extroverted than government school students suggests that the school environment significantly influences personality expression. Private schools in Gorakhpur, often equipped with better infrastructure, extracurricular opportunities, and competitive atmospheres, may encourage students to develop more outgoing traits. These schools might emphasize public speaking, group projects, and leadership skills more than government schools, which sometimes face resource constraints and larger class sizes.

This environment may nurture extroversion by providing more frequent and diverse social interactions and performance platforms. Conversely, government schools may have fewer such opportunities, potentially leading to a greater proportion of introverted students or less outward expression.

This finding suggests that educational institutions play a role not only in academic development but also in personality cultivation. Policymakers should consider enhancing student engagement activities in government schools to provide balanced opportunities for personality growth.

4. Urban vs. Rural Personality Differences

The study's significant result showing higher extroversion scores among urban students compared to rural peers is consistent with existing literature emphasizing the impact of environmental context on personality (Srivastava et al., 2008) [15]. Urban areas typically offer more exposure to diverse social interactions, media, technology, and extracurricular activities that stimulate outgoing behavior. In contrast, rural settings might encourage quieter, community-centered, and tradition-oriented lifestyles, which could promote introversion or restrained social expression. These differences do not imply that rural students are less capable but rather that their personality traits are shaped by distinct cultural and environmental influences. The challenge for educators in rural areas is to provide opportunities that encourage social confidence and engagement without undermining cultural values.

5. Academic and Social Implications

The qualitative observations align with existing psychological research on personality and education. Extroverted students' tendency to participate actively in classrooms and extracurricular activities often results in visible leadership and recognition. Introverted students, while quieter, tend to excel in independent work and reflective thinking.

Unfortunately, educational systems often equate participation and assertiveness with competence and motivation, which can disadvantage introverted students. This can lead to misinterpretations of introverts as shy or disengaged, when in fact they may be highly focused and academically capable.

Teachers must be trained to recognize these nuances and adapt their teaching methods. For example, incorporating a mix of collaborative and independent learning, providing multiple avenues for participation (e.g., written responses, small groups), and encouraging peer respect for diverse communication styles can foster a more inclusive classroom.

6. Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

While the study provides valuable insights, some limitations should be acknowledged. The reliance on self-reported personality inventories may introduce bias due to social desirability or misunderstanding of items. A mixed-method approach including teacher assessments, peer evaluations, and behavioral observations could enrich findings.

Additionally, this study focused on a specific geographic region, limiting the generalizability of results. Future research should consider longitudinal designs to track personality development over time and include a broader range of personality traits, such as neuroticism or conscientiousness, for a more comprehensive understanding.

Conclusion

This study successfully highlighted significant differences in introvert and extrovert personality traits among secondary school students in Gorakhpur, influenced by gender, school type, and urban-rural context. The balanced distribution of personality types underscores the need for inclusive educational practices that recognize and nurture diverse student needs. Gender differences reflect sociocultural norms, while school environment and geographic location shape personality expression.

To optimize learning outcomes, educators and policymakers must develop gender-sensitive, contextually appropriate strategies that support both introverted and extroverted students. By embracing personality diversity, schools can foster environments where all students feel valued and empowered to achieve their potential.

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