



## Short Communication

# Effect of Gender on Personality Trait

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## Abstract

The present investigation was undertaken to study one of the sixteen traits of personality i.e. factor C proposed by Cattell of male and female students of undergraduate and postgraduate students of management studies. 120 students (60 male and 60 from female) were selected randomly from various management institutions of Indore. After selection of the elements of the sample, 16 Personality Factor Questionnaire developed by Cattell was administered on them. The result shows that male and female students are significantly different on factor C “(affected by feelings, emotionally less stable, easily upset vs. emotionally stable, faces reality, calm, mature)”. Female students are found to be more emotionally stable, mature, calm and comfortable in facing reality.

**Keywords:** Personality, Gender, Emotional, Calm, Mature.

## Introduction

The term personality has been derived from Latin word ‘Persona’, which means ‘to speak through’. This Latin term denotes the mask, which actors used to wear in ancient Greece and Rome. Thus, personality implies influencing others through external appearance. But, only external appearance does not make the whole personality. Personality is the concept that is used continuously in day-to-day interaction by the people. “Personality is a dynamic organization inside the person of psychophysical systems that create the person’s characteristic patterns of behavior, thoughts and feelings”<sup>1</sup>. Personality can also be defined as stable set of characteristics and tendencies that determine those commonalities and differences in the psychophysical behavior (thoughts, feelings and actions) of the people that have continuity in time and that may not be easily understood as the sole result of the social and biological resources of the moment<sup>2</sup>.

Gender is a prominent part of person’s self-presentation. Gender typing is the process of categorizing things and people as masculine or feminine<sup>3</sup>. Universal organizing principle in all the societies is the distinction between male and female. Boys and girls are expected to learn different skills and to develop different personalities as children. Research finds that men are commonly rated higher than women on traits associated with competence, such as leadership, objectivity and independence<sup>4</sup>. On the other hand, women are usually rated higher on traits associated with warmth and expressiveness, such as gentleness and awareness of the feelings of others.

The sense of gender identity and knowledge that one is a male or female is acquired early in life. In self-concept, gender is a basic element. By the age of 2 or 3 years, as children, all are

aware of their own gender and can tell whether they are a girl or a boy. By the age of 4 or 5 years, one can correctly identify other people by gender. However, this understanding of gender differs from that of adults. Gender is one of the basic categories in social life. In meeting new people, we inevitably try to identify them as male or female.

**Literature Review:** Gender role training; social roles and individual child’s aspiration as well as biology are the determinants of these gender differences<sup>5</sup>. Thus the differences reflect a complex interaction between biological, cultural and psychological factors. Biological influences and childhood socialization predisposes a sexual division of labor. Men tend to be found in roles demanding social and physical power and women in more nurturing roles. The expectations, skills and beliefs associated with these differing roles affect the behavior of men and women. A person’s behavior is strongly influenced by social roles<sup>6</sup>. Interesting gender differences are revealed through a play situation<sup>5</sup>. He found that boys tend to construct scenes that incorporate tall structures and involve a lot of action, whereas girls use the table as the interior of a house having furniture and people. Their scenes are rarely having tall structures and the action tends to be peaceful.

For the two sexes many important social roles are defined differently. People usually have quite different expectations from mothers and fathers, husbands and wives, sons and daughters within the family. Sometimes, occupational roles also are sex typed. Women’s work roles are often lower in prestige, power and social status than those of men. Behaviour of men and women in many ways is affected by traditional social roles. The skills and interests of people developed in childhood and later refined as adults are influenced by roles. In preparation for adult roles as wives and mothers, little girls often play with

cooking sets and dolls. Gender roles vary time to time and from culture to culture. According to a survey, Nigerian and Pakistani students had much more traditional ideas about distinct roles for men and women than did Dutch and German students<sup>7</sup>. Generally, girls spend more time helping with housework and child care, while boys spend more time in playing<sup>8</sup>. These boy-girl role differences are very sharp in some countries. In rural central India, girls spend two-thirds of their time doing household work, while their brothers spend two-thirds of their time in leisure<sup>9</sup>. Few studies have reported that more priority to relationships is given by women than men<sup>10-14</sup>.

Gender differences emerged from childhood. Boys try to be independent; they define their identity in separation from the person who cares for them, usually their mother. Girls want to be interdependent; they see their identity in their social relationships. Boys' play often involves group activity. Girls play in smaller groups, with less aggression, more sharing, more imitation of relationships and more intimate discussion<sup>15</sup>. In an experiment, researcher presented slides or told stories to boys and girls and found that girls react with more empathy<sup>16</sup>. These gender differences extend in adult relationships. In conversation, men more often focus on tasks, women on relationships. In groups, men show more task-oriented behaviors, such as giving information and women contribute more positive social-emotional behaviors, such as giving help or showing support<sup>6</sup>. Women spend more time caring for both preschoolers and aging parents<sup>17-19</sup>.

In both modern and traditional societies around the world, people expect men to be and perceive them as, the more dominant and driven sex<sup>20</sup>. After reviewing several research findings, it was concluded that sexes do not differ in overall intelligence or in general level of achievement motivation or striving for excellence<sup>21</sup>. They concluded that it is not true that girls are better at rote learning and simple repetitive tasks, whereas boys are better at tasks requiring higher-level cognitive processing. They also concluded that sex differences had been established in only three major areas of intellectual ability: verbal ability (favoring females), math ability (favoring males) and visual-spatial ability (favoring males). In one research, it was also argued that females do have a clear verbal advantage over males<sup>22</sup>. Our everyday experiences repeatedly show that men and women frequently use their basic talents in different ways. Boys who are good in maths are more likely than equally talented girls to choose careers in science and engineering<sup>23</sup>. In view of these differences, the present study was undertaken to understand the difference in the personality traits of male and female students of business administration.

## Methodology

**The Study:** The present study is an exploratory study in nature. The students of both genders of undergraduate and postgraduate studies in management were selected as a sample of universe. A standardized measure was used to understand the difference

amongst male and female students in terms of various personality traits.

**Sample:** The sample consists of 120 management students, 60 males and 60 females taken randomly from Prestige Institute of Management and Research, Indore. All the students were pursuing education through full time stream. The male students had an average age of 20.93 years (range: 17-24 years), whereas female students had an average age of 20.22 years (range: 17-24 years).

**Data Collection:** Form A of the 16 Personality Factor Questionnaire developed by Cattell<sup>24</sup> was used in this study. This test covers 16 primary source traits and 4 secondary traits (Table-1). The test is constituted of 187 multiple choice type statements. Reliability and validity of the test (Form A) is shown in Table-2. The Questionnaire was administered on the students in a group and after giving necessary instructions, the respondents were asked to mark their responses on a separate response sheet. Scoring was done as per directions given in the manual.

**Data Analysis:** Analysis was done for selected items related to factor C i.e. "affected by feelings, emotionally less stable, easily upset, changeable vs. emotionally stable, mature, faces reality, calm". Z-test was applied to find out the significant difference, if any, regarding this personality factor between the male and female students of undergraduate and postgraduate programs of management studies.

## Results and Discussion

It is clear from the results (Table-3) that female and male students of management studies were found significantly different on factor C (affected by feelings, emotionally less stable, easily upset vs. Emotionally stable, faces reality, calm, mature). Female students are found to be more emotionally stable, mature and calm than male students. It is common fact that though women are more sensitive than men, they have cooperative nature with others and very good tolerance power towards their surroundings.

In one study it is found that girls are more likely tend to set up rules to avoid clashes with playmates and to cooperate with their parents<sup>25</sup>. It is also found that women share more rewards than men<sup>26</sup> or to deprive them in order to help someone else<sup>27</sup>.

It is found in many studies that males tend to be more aggressive than women. Girls try to defuse conflicts by persuasion rather than confrontation while Boys argue and fight more often and are more apt to use force or threats of force to get their way<sup>28</sup>. Girls are more likely to be empathic, that is, to identify with other people's feelings<sup>29,30</sup>.

Other research indicates that these gender differences are related to the person's self-esteem, Josephs<sup>31</sup>. Self-esteem is a function

of interpersonal attachments to specific others for women but for men self-esteem is linked to individual personal achievements. In managerial roles, women tend to get things done by means of leadership styles characterized as *connective* and *interactive*. It

means, women prefer collaboration, consultation, and negotiation rather than the more masculine tradition of competition, individual achievements, and demands<sup>32,33</sup>.

**Table-1**  
**Showing the Traits Covered by 16 PF<sup>24</sup>**

Primary Source Traits		
Factor	Low Sten Score Description	High Sten Score Description
A	Reserved, Detached, Critical, Aloof, Stiff	Outgoing, Warmhearted, Easygoing, Participating
B	Dull	Bright
C	Affected by feelings, Emotionally, less stable, Easily upset, Changeable	Emotionally stable, Mature, Faces, reality, Calm
E	Humble, Mild, Easily led, Docile, Accommodating	Assertive, Aggressive, Competitive, Stubborn
F	Sober, Taciturn, Serious	Happy-go-Lucky, Enthusiastic
G	Expedient, Disregards rules	Conscientious, Persistent, Moralistic, Staid
H	Shy, Timid, Threat-sensitive	Venturesome, Uninhibited, Socially, Bold
I	Tough-minded, Self-reliant, Realistic	Tender minded, Sensitive, Clinging, Overprotected
L	Trusting, Accepting conditions	Suspicious, Hard to fool
M	Practical, "down-to-earth" concerns	Imaginative, Bohemian, Absent minded
N	Forthright, but socially clumsy, Unpretentious,	Astute, Polished, Socially aware
O	Self-assured, Placid, Secure, Complacent, Serene	Apprehensive, Self-reproaching, Insecure, Worrying, Troubled
Q1	Conservative, Respecting traditional Ideas	Experimenting, Liberal, Free-thinking
Q2	Group-dependent, A "Joiner and sound Follower	Self-sufficient, Resourceful, Prefers own decisions
Q3	Undisciplined self-conflict, Lax, Follows own urges, Careless of social, Rules	Controlled, Exacting will power, Socially precise, Compulsive, Following self-image
Q4	Relaxed, Tranquil, Torpid, Unfrustrated, Composed	Tense, Frustrated, Driven, Overwrought
The Secondary Traits		
QI	Introversion	Extraversion
QII	Low Anxiety	High anxiety
QIII	Tender minded Emotionality	Tough poise
QIV	Subduedness	Independence

**Table-2**  
**Showing Reliability and Validity of the Factor C<sup>24</sup>**

Factor	Reliability	Validity
	(Test-Retest)	(Direct Concept)
C	0.82	0.70

**Table-3**  
**Showing Means, S.D. and z values of the study groups on Factor C**

Factor	Female		Male		Value of z
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
C	15.77	3.85	13.03	4.09	3.75*

\*significant at 0.01 level of confidence, Critical value of z at 1% level of confidence: 2.58

## Conclusion

From this study we can conclude that gender has a significant impact on one personality trait. i.e. Factor C “(affected by feelings, emotionally less stable, easily upset vs. Emotionally stable, faces reality, calm, mature)”. Female students are found to be more emotionally stable, mature, calm and comfortable in facing reality.

**Implications of the Present Study:** This study indicates that there is one personality trait on which gender has a significant influence. From the result of this study we can conclude that it will be better to study the various traits of personality and from among them identify strong traits in both the genders of any group at the time of admission or selection for any job. The findings of this study can also be implemented to identify the jobs which should be executed by any specific gender based on the personality characteristics of that particular gender. It will also be better to guide students from their high school so that they could choose the discipline of their interest according to their personality traits and attain confidence.

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