

# Impact of Personality on Style of Clothing among College Students

## Abstract

Personality is the individual's characteristic reactions to social stimuli and the quality of its adaptation to the social feature of his environment (Allport). And of course there is probably no sphere of human activity in which our personality is reflected more vividly than they are in the clothes. Keeping in view, these two socio-cultural correlates of today's society; present study is framed as, "Impact Of Personality On Style Of Clothing Among College Students".

Participants of the study were taken from Bhopal. For this study, the participants include population of the college going students, residing in Bhopal city. In the present study stratified random sampling was used to draw a representative sample. The students residing in Bhopal belonging to parents of the middle income group (MIG) were selected as a sample unit. The sample size was N=200, with technical category of college students (N=100) and non-technical category of college students (N=100). Age of the participants ranged from 18 years to 25 years respectively.

The assessment measures taken for the study were Maudsley Personality Inventory and the second assessment measure taken for the study is research tool specially designed for this study. Correlation technique was applied for the analysis of the data. Results of study show a significant correlation of personality type and dress/clothing style.

**Keywords:** Personality, adolescent, clothing styles, socio-psychology.

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## Introduction

**"Man is a social animal"**

Aristotle

This *Aristotlean* philosophy is not an age old saying, rather an umbrella concept in itself. It means that humans are not only biological entities, rather bio-social species. It says all about human race, and their socio-cultural aspects. Personality is the individual's characteristic reactions to social stimuli and the quality of its adaptation to the social feature of his environment (Allport). And of course there is probably no sphere of human activity in which our personality is reflected more vividly than they are in the clothes. The dressing of an individual is a kind of "sign language" that communicates a complex set of information and is usually the basis on which immediate impressions are formed. Throughout recorded history of mankind, clothing has been recognised as one of the primary needs of mankind.

## Personality

Personality is the mirror of ourselves, our own fashion style, a fashion statement rely on our taste in every fashion apparel (Ralph Lawren, 2007). If one has good taste on fashion or in studying or in styling, it means s/he possess a nice personality as well. Personality is a particular combination of emotional, attitudinal, and behavioural response patterns of an individual. It may be classified into the following types:

- **Extraversion:** extraversion is "the act, state, or habit of being predominantly concerned with and obtaining gratification from what is outside the self". Extraverts tend to enjoy human interactions and to be enthusiastic, talkative, assertive, and gregarious. They take pleasure in activities that involve large social gatherings, such as parties, community activities, public demonstrations, and business or political groups. Politics, teaching, sales, managing and brokering are fields that favor extraversion. An extraverted person is likely to enjoy time spent with people and find less reward in time spent alone. They tend to be energized when around other people, and they are more prone to boredom when they are by themselves.

- **Introversion:** introversion is "the state of or tendency toward being wholly or predominantly concerned with and interested in one's own mental life". Introverts are people whose energy tends to expand through

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reflection and dwindle during interaction. Introverts tend to be more reserved and less outspoken in groups. They often take pleasure in solitary activities such as reading, writing, using computers, hiking and fishing.

The archetypal artist, writer, sculptor, engineer, composer, and inventor are all highly introverted. An introvert is likely to enjoy time spent alone and find less reward in time spent with large groups of people, though he or she may enjoy interactions with close friends. Trust is usually an issue of significance: a virtue of utmost importance to an introvert choosing a worthy companion. They prefer to concentrate on a single activity at a time and like to observe situations before they participate. This personality is especially observed in developing children and adolescents. Introverts are easily overwhelmed by too much stimulation from social gatherings and engagement. They are more analytical before speaking.

Introversion is not the same as being shy or being a social outcast. Introverts prefer solitary activities over social ones, whereas shy people (who may be extraverts at heart) avoid social encounters out of fear, and the social outcast has little choice in the matter of his or her solitude.

- **Ambiversion:** ambiversion is a term used to describe people who fall more or less directly in the middle and exhibit tendencies of both groups. An ambivert is normally comfortable with groups and enjoys social interaction, but also relishes time alone and away from the crowd.

## Clothing

Clothing is a symbol of social status, occupation, role, self-confidence and other personality characteristics. It is tangible and observable phenomena that is important to the concept of self and development of personality. Research shows that the way we dress is a symptom of suppressed needs and desires and the analysis of dress can lead to insight to a number of hidden psychic processes. Much of the clothing behaviour is psychological by nature. Psychology is field of science concerned with organism's responses to specific stimuli. It is centered on basic concepts of motivation, learning, and perception. Thus we may interpret clothing in psychological terms too.

Clothes reflect our personality. They are the best indicators of our socio-cultural correlates. A specialised branch of Psychology, namely *Social Psychology* studies this aspect in an analytical manner. Social Psychology is the scientific study of how people's thoughts, feelings, and behaviours are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied presence of others. Social psychology is an interdisciplinary domain that bridges the gap between psychology and sociology. It examines social influence even when no other people are present, such as when watching television or following internalised cultural norms. Social influence refers to the way people affect the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of others.

## Clothing and Personality

Personality traits of people are influenced by clothes they wear. People agree on the symbolic meanings that are conveyed through dressing. Congruent style of clothing is wearing straight unbroken lines with few details, pattern that are large in scale, color that are bold and in striking contrast, and textures that are heavy, rough, and stiff. Clothing representing other qualities includes softly curved in-silhouette with broken lines that produce dainty, small details. Patterns are in scales, colors light with limited contrasts and textures that are soft, pliable or sheer.

Hence, we may conclude that, clothing and dressing are vital in assessment of personality. And in the so called present day modern world, its significant role cannot be ignored, especially when we talk about the young blood, the youths of today, who are both trend-setters as-well-as followers of fashion. Thus, keeping in view, the need of the hour, present investigation has been formulated as, "*Impact of personality on style of clothing among college students*".

## Objective of proposed study

To assess the impact of personality on clothing of college going students.

## Hypothesis

H: There will be an influence of Personality type on clothing style among college going students.

## Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design.

## Participants of the study

The participants of the study were drawn from Bhopal, the capital of Madhya Pradesh. For this study, the participants include population of the college going students, residing in Bhopal city. In the present study *stratified random sampling* was used to draw a representative sample. For the purpose of randomization, the list of all colleges from each stratum was selected randomly, by lottery method (or by chit system). Strata included male and female students of various technical and non-technical recognised and renowned colleges of Bhopal. In this way the colleges from all the strata were selected.

For the present investigation, the students residing in Bhopal belonging to parents of the middle income group (MIG) were selected as a sample unit. The sample size was N=200, with technical category of college students (N=100) and non-technical category of college students (N=100). Age of the participants ranged from 18 years to 25 years.

## Assessment Measure (s)

1. The first assessment measure taken for the study is *Maudsley Personality Inventory* (MPI). It is a brief but standard, and easily administered and scored inventory, which is designed for assessing dimensions of personality. It is suitable for adolescents, and can be used as a group or an individual test for persons of ages fifteen (15) and above. In the present study, the personality of college going students were tested with the help of Maudsley Inventory, prepared by Dr. S Jalota and Dr. SD Kapoor was used.

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2. The second assessment measure taken for the study is research tool specially designed for this study. Till today very few researchers have conducted study to measure the mode of clothing of college going students, so no scale was available for this purpose. Hence, the investigator felt the need to develop the scale for measuring the clothing psychology of students. The measuring scale used was developed using a systematic research process. For standardization of the tool, eminent jury of ten members was made. According to the expert suggestions, necessary changes were made, thus the strenuous process of perfecting the items to match the target group was carefully built with content validity of the tool. After checking the validity of the tool, it was pretested. The reliability of the scale for the mode of clothing was established by using test-retest method and split half method.

**Procedure**

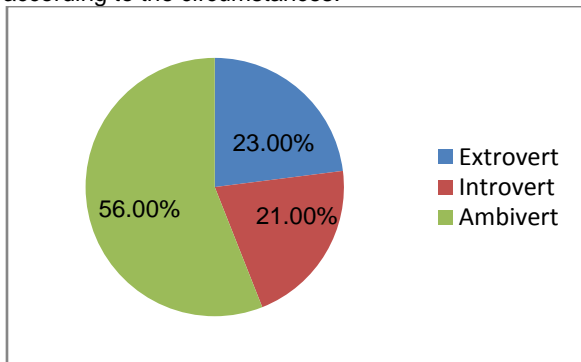
After finalizing the schedule for the study, actual data was collected from the students of different colleges selected as sample respondents. The scales were distributed and administered on various participants, individually. Each respondent was approached personally and was requested to fill up the questionnaires. Respondents were given the liberty to take their time for completing their questionnaires. Data collection was made possible with the help of concerned Professors in the class rooms. The visits to the colleges were made in consultation with the Professors of the said departments keeping in view the availability of the respondents. The confidentiality of their responses was assured.

**Statistical techniques used**

Statistical tool of correlation was applied to assess the relationship between the variables of study.

**Main Findings**

After the analysis of data, it was found out that, nearly 23% students were extrovert; 21% of them introvert and 56% possessed ambivert personality (which has both the characteristic of extraversion and introversion). This indicates that the students are capable of adjusting themselves according to the circumstances.



The Pearson's correlation is used to find a correlation between at least two continuous variables. The value

for a Pearson's can fall between 0.00 (no correlation) and 1.00 (perfect correlation). Other factors such as group size will determine if the correlation is significant. Generally, correlations above 0.80 are considered pretty high.

Finding the correlation between personality and clothing:

Based on the objective of the present investigation, attempt has been made to know the level to which the personality type affects the mode of clothing of college going students. The findings of the study are present under following heads:

**Table 1:**

Showing correlation of part A of the Self made tool with Extraversion

Extraversion	Style	Desi gn	Text ure	Dsig n1	Desi gn2	Patte rn	Fashi on1	Object ive
	0.99	0.62	0.27	0.47	0.17	0.97	0.06	0.07

The result table indicates that style is significantly correlated with extraversion (r = 0.99). It indicated that extrovert students liked western style clothes. In the tool by style the investigator meant western style clothes. The design was obtained correlated with extraversion significantly (r = 0.62). It indicated that extrovert students comparatively preferred designer clothes. In the tool by design the investigator meant designer clothes. Texture was not obtained correlated with extraversion (r = 0.27). It indicated that the texture of clothes that college going students wear have no connection with them being extrovert otherwise. In this part by texture the investigator meant bright and shiny textured clothes which were not preferred by the respondents. By design1, the investigator meant clothes which have prints on them. The design1 parameter was not obtained highly correlated with extraversion (r = 0.47). It indicated that the factors associated with the design1 parameter of clothes that college going students wear have low connection with them being extrovert otherwise. By design 2 the investigator meant clothes which have a stylish look associated with them. The design 2 parameter was not obtained lowly correlated with extraversion (r = 0.47). It indicated that the factors associated with the design 2 parameter of clothes that college going students wear have less connection with them being extrovert otherwise.

By pattern the investigator meant attractive patterns. The pattern was obtained correlated with extraversion significantly (r = 0.97). It indicated that extrovert students liked well patterned (attractive) clothes. By fashion1 the investigator meant clothes having style which is accepted by a large group of people. The fashion1 parameter was not obtained correlated with extraversion (r = 0.06). It indicated that

the factors associated with the fashion 1 parameter of clothes that college going students wear have no connection with them being extrovert otherwise. By objectivity, the investigator meant decorative clothes. The objective was not obtained correlated with extraversion ( $r = 0.07$ ). It indicated that the objective of clothes that college going students wear have no connection with them being extrovert otherwise.

## Correlation of Variables with Personality

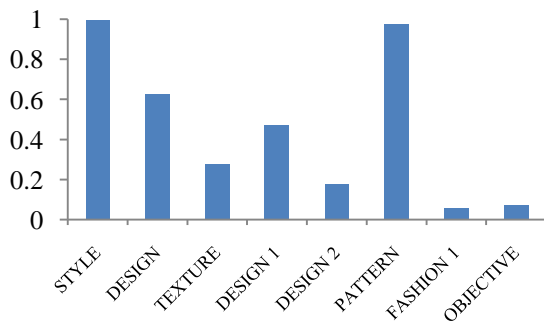


Figure i showing correlation of Part A of the self made tool with extraversion.

**Table 2:**

Showing correlation of part A of the Self made tool with Extraversion

Extraversion	Colour	Looks	Cost	Fitting	Aim	Dress	Stitching
	0.00	0.12	0.94	0.04	0.04	0.22	0.85

Table 2 is showing correlation of Part A of the self made tool with extraversion. The colour (bright) was not obtained correlated with extraversion ( $r = 0.00$ ). It indicated that the colour of clothes that college going students wear have no connection with them being extrovert otherwise. By looks the investigator meant formal wear cloths. The looks of clothes was not obtained correlated with extraversion ( $r = 0.12$ ). It indicated that the looks of clothes that college going students wear have no connection with them being extrovert otherwise. The cost of the cloth was obtained correlated with extraversion significantly ( $r = 0.94$ ). It indicated that extrovert students liked well patterned clothes. It can be inferred that extrovert college going students prefer costly cloths outfits. By fitting the investigator meant tight fitting clothes. The fitting of clothes was not obtained correlated with extraversion ( $r = 0.04$ ). It indicated that the fitting of clothes that college going students wear have no connection with them being extrovert otherwise. They preferred comfortable clothes. The aim of clothing was not obtained correlated with extraversion ( $r = 0.04$ ). It indicated that the aim of clothing that college going students wear have no connection with them being extrovert otherwise. By dress the investigator meant, unusually designed clothes. The dress parameter was not obtained correlated with extraversion ( $r = 0.22$ ). It indicated that the dress parameter of clothing that college going students wear have no connection with them being extrovert otherwise. By stitching the investigator meant branded clothes. The stitching of the cloth was obtained correlated with extraversion significantly ( $r = 0.85$ ). It indicated that extrovert students liked branded clothes.

## Correlation of Variables with Personality

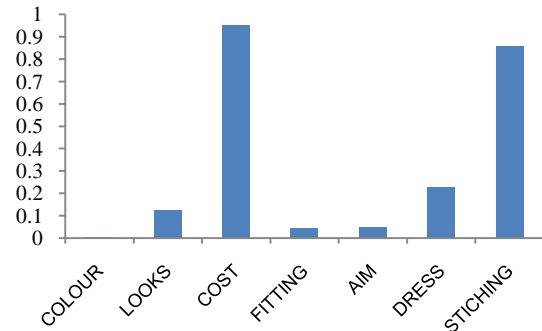


Figure ii showing correlation of Part A of the self made tool with extraversion.

### Conclusion

After going through the tables and figures, it is may be concluded that personality type influences clothing style among college going students. Hence, the Hypothesis formulated for empirical verification is accepted.

The study concluded that the dressing style of the college going student would be in accordance to their personalities which means to say that an introvert personality type will prefer simple design and light coloured dresses, where as an extrovert personality type person will prefer colourful and attractive outfits.

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