Article

A comparative study of Personality traits of the students of Performing Arts and Humanities

Abstract: The paper presents a comparative study of Personality traits of students of Performing Arts and Humanities. The Personality traits have been captured on a sample of 111 females of central India on the standard BFI scale. The data has been analyzed for differences in Personality traits across Performing Arts and Humanities students. The Performing Arts students score significantly higher on Conscientiousness and significantly lower on Neuroticism as compared to the Humanities students. The findings lend support to the philosophy of wholesome education for students i.e., inclusion of Performing Arts with other Academic stream for fostering all round development of Personality.

Keywords— BFI, Performing Arts, Humanities, Personality Traits, Indicators.

INTRODUCTION

Personality is an interesting yet intriguing concept. Concurrently it defines human behavior yet defies it. While personality has always caught the attention of researchers and there is an avalanche of research literature on Personality, yet it is an abysmal paradox that still keeps the researchers engaged in exploring it. An understanding of personality helps in predicting human behavior, attitude and actions. Social researches on personality can help in building a better society. Personality is defined as traits possessed by a person. These traits differ from person to person and makes every individual a unique human being.

Personality alludes to the enduring characteristics and behavior of a person as a result of its unique adjustment to life. It is often expressed as the complex function of five traits (Big Five Indicators, B5), namely- Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, Openness (Often referred with the acronym OCEAN). Extraversion is trait which include, talkativeness, assertiveness and high amounts of emotional expressiveness while agreeableness manifests itself through signs of trust, altruism, kindness, and affection. Conscientiousness is a trait that includes high levels of thoughtfulness, good impulse control, and goal-directed behaviors. Neuroticism is characterized by sadness, moodiness, and emotional instability and Openness is a characteristic that includes imagination and insight.

Though every individual is different yet it is interesting to study people with similar traits and people with opposite traits. On one hand it

differentiates people on the other hand it integrates them. This integration and differentiation of personality traits has always attracted researchers in some way or the other. The various research vertical that has emerged in this area are- defining and modelling personality, developing personality measures and indicators, measuring personality, studying the effects of personality / personality traits on various cross- sections of society- age groups, professional groups, gender, community, educations, vocation etc.

This paper attempts to measure and compare the personality traits of students of humanities & performing Arts. The next section presents a brief review of the literature followed by research methodology, data analysis, findings and conclusion.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Kumaranayake, Ranil. (2017)in the review paper on the current status of the studies on personality traits, aimed at summarizing the theme study areas of personality traits as- basic personality dimensions, broad and narrow personality traits, causal evidences for personality traits, cognitive affective personality systems, comparison of individuals on traits, overlapping of traits, functions of personality traits across lifespan, consistency of behavior, traits-situation interaction, different aspects of personality traits assessment and cross cultural studies on personality traits. The former researchers focused at explanations of the nature of the personality traits, the latter researchers have shifted their interest to the measurement of personality traits. There are different taxonomies developed till date to measure personality yet to the present day, the most widely discussed and the most popular taxonomy is Big Five Personality approach or Five Factor model. The Big Five (B5) traits (openness to experience, agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion and neuroticism) have been identified as trait models after the classifications by Allport, Eyesenck, Cattell and McCrae etc. (Allport, 1937; Cattell et al, 1970; Mccrae et al, 2010). The B5 model has been used by researchers across students from various streams to understand their personality traits and their relationship with other variables like competency, temperament, future job, career etc.

During the past decades, a number of studies have explored personality group differences in the Big Five personality traits among students in different academic majors but the literature that exists has not been reviewed systematically. Vedel (2016) presented systematic review of the various research Articles and identified twelve eligible studies. The study further reported significant group differences in one or multiple Big Five personality traits. Consistent findings across studies were that students of Arts/humanities and psychology scored high on Neuroticism and Openness; students of political science scored high on Openness; students of economics, law, political science., and medicine scored high on Extraversion; students of medicine, psychology, Arts/Humanities, and sciences scored high on Agreeableness; and students of Arts/humanities scored low on Conscientiousness. The results of the review indicated that substantial personality group differences across various academic disciplines.

Kumar (2014) admits that the early researches on the relationship between personality and academic performance have aroused ambiguous conclusions, mainly because of the different theoretical bases and due to the use of variable research methodologies by the researchers. The acceptance of Factorial Models of personality and the new techniques in research has made the exploration of the correlation of personality traits and academic achievement easy. The Five Factor Model brought order to the previous "chaotic plethora" of personality measures. His paper reviews the studies conducted using Five Factor Model of personality and explains the correlation between dimensions of personality and academic performance which in turn would help in selection of suitable candidates for higher studies and decrease "Drop Out" rate in colleges and universities.

Afrin (2019) studies the gender difference across personality traits of secondary school students. The sample comprised of 900 (461 boys and 439 girls) students selected from different secondary schools especially from class IX and X from Giridih District of Jharkhand State. The investigator has used a NEO Five-Factor Inventory in the study which is a standardized inventory. This Inventory has five dimensions which are Neuroticism (N), Extraversion (E), Openness (O), Agreeableness (A), and Conscientiousness(C). In the study all the dimensions are compared separately. Statistical techniques like Mean, SD and t test were used to analyze the data. It was found that Secondary School boys and girls differ significantly only on the openness dimension of Personality Traits and they score same on the other dimensions. This means there is no difference between Secondary School boys and girls on Neuroticism, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness dimensions as well as total of Personality

Nießen et. al. (2020) investigated if Big Five personality traits predict success in the transition from secondary school to vocational education and training (VET). Their results demonstrated that the Big Five traits predict the mastery of the transition from school to VET over and above cognitive ability, parental SES, gender, and migration background. Among the variables in the Big Five, Conscientiousness proved to be the most robust (incremental) predictor of almost all the success indicators. The other Big Five traits had been reported to have less associations with transition

success.

Abood et. al. (2020) investigates the relationship between personality traits as per the big five personality factors model, academic self-efficacy and academic adaptation among Hashemite University students in light of gender and specialization. The sample consisted of 546 under graduated students, 258 males and 306 females. The scale used for the measuring the variables were: the Five Factor Model (FFM), academic self-efficacy and academic adaption. The study reported significant differences in the average of participants' degrees attributed to efficacy and academic adaption in favor of females and scientific specializations. It also suggested that agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness to experience, extroversion and neuroticism are most common among university students, with a statistically significant positive correlation between extroversion, openness to experience, academic self-efficacy and academic adaption and a negative correlation between neuroticism, conscientiousness, academic self-efficacy and academic adaption. No correlation was found between agreeableness and these two variables.

Othan et al (2020) suggested association between personality traits and decision-making styles and highlighted the role of emotional intelligence as a mediator of personality traits (conscientiousness, openness, and extroversion) among medical students in Lebanese Universities

Arts is a form of Arts practice that involves a person or persons undertaking an action or actions within a particular timeframe in a particular space or location for an audience. The knowledge and practice of these Arts forms help in the development of one's personality. It is more essential to make the students society face the real world which they are going to have after completing their degree program. Sheikh (2016) in the study conducted in Tirichapalli amongst the Arts students t shows that there is a significant association between Arts and overall personality of the students. The objective of his study was to analyze the impact of Arts in developing overall personality and the influence of selected socio-demographic variables

Belarie Zatzman (2011) studies Drama education and memory. He suggests that Mapping memory onto the landscape of drama and theatre education can help to illuminate the diverse ways in which practices of memory are made manifest in a multiplicity of aesthetic forms across the discipline(s). The author further adds that drama education has the capacity to situate participants between history and memory, offering a process for constructing and rehearsing their own identities among the narratives of others, present and past.

Fareeth and Raj (2012) conducted a study on Empowering Human Resource through Theatre. The study conducted with the intention to picture out with the selected five major key Competencies that are essentially determining and empowering the individual those who are in theatre activities

It can be concluded that research on personality is not new, a lot of literature is available on personality models, metrics, constructs, indicators and framework yet a lot still needs to be explored especially when it comes to measuring and quantifying personality under different contextual settings. Measuring the personality of college students/ school students/academic majors/ performing Arts has been a fancy amongst the researchers but comparative studies on personality traits across various cross sections of the society still needs to be probed in. The author of this paper proposes to measure personality traits across the learners of Performing Arts and the students of Humanities. The Big five scale has been employed to measure personality.

The objectives of the study are-
1. Measure personality traits of students Performing Arts and those of Humanities using the Big Five Scale
2. Comparative study of the five personality traits across the students of Performing Arts and Humanities.

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive and comparative research methods were used to determine personality traits and to compare Performing Arts and Humanities students according to the aforementioned variables.

The participants of this study consisted of students (female) from various colleges and academies. Though the authors did not start with the idea of confining this study to female responders only, but it was difficult to find many male candidates in Performing Arts. Due to this limitation in data collection, the study has been limited to females responders only.

Big Five Inventory (BFI/B5) (John et. al., 1991) was used to determine personality traits. It is a self-report scale consisting of 44 items that are rated using a five-point Likert type scale (1: strongly disagree to 5: strongly agree). The BFI evaluates personality traits including extraversion (being sociable, assertive, energetic, adventurous, and outgoing), agreeableness (having trust, straightforwardness, warmth, modesty, and sympathetic), conscientiousness (being competent, organized, dutiful, goal driven, and self-disciplined), neuroticism (having anxiety, hostility, depression, timidity, lack of self-confidence), and openness to new experiences (being curious, imaginative, Artistic, excitable, and unconventional). High scores from the sub-scales reflect that the relevant personality trait is more prominent.

The questionnaire consisted of section two section. The first section captured information on

demographic variables like- age, education, financial background etc.   The next section recorded the responses on 44 items of B5. The questionnaire was administered through the google form. Google form was circulated across various target groups using social media platforms. The data collection process was completed in about a week.

Data Analysis
The research data was analyzed using the SPSS 20 software. Before the analyses, data was screened and prepared for the analysis. In the data analyses, the normal distribution of the scores of the personality traits were primarily tested using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test for the related research variables. Since a normal distribution was observed in all the sub-dimensions from the BFI. Therefore, parametric technique, was used for comparing the personality traits of Humanities and Performing Arts students.

The participants of this study consisted of 111 university students (female) including 59 Performing Arts   students (53%) and 52 Humanities students (47%) from central India. The age of participant age was in the range between 18 to 40. The scale was checked for reliability.   The Cronbach alpha consistency reliability coefficients of the subscales in this study's samples were as follows: .69 for openness to new experiences, .63 for extraversion, .60 for conscientiousness, .67 for neuroticism, and .64 for agreeableness. Since the reliability coefficient were above the acceptable value (above .6), the data was subjected to further analysis. The average summated scores were calculated for the Big Five Indicators, namely- Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, Openness. The scale scores were computed by averaging the following items for each B5 domain (where R indicates using the reverse-scored item).
Extraversion: 1, 6R 11, 16, 21R, 26, 31R, 36
Agreeableness: 2R, 7, 12R, 17, 22, 27R, 32, 37R, 42
Conscientiousness: 3, 8R, 13, 18R, 23R, 28, 33, 38, 43R
Neuroticism: 4, 9R, 14, 19, 24R, 29, 34R, 39
Openness: 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35R, 40, 41R, 44

Since the objective of the study was to examine the difference in personality trait indicators across the students of Performing Arts and those of Humanities, t test was applied across the B5 domains taking Humanities and Performing Arts as categorical variables. Table 1 shows the t test results. The means of Conscientiousness and Neuroticism show a significant difference across the two groups (p value- .04 & .039 respectively). Students of Performing Arts show a higher level of Conscientiousness than that shown by students of humanities. Similarly, Students of Performing Arts show a lower level of Neuroticism than that shown by students of humanities.

BFI	t value	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Extraversion	1.436	.154	.152583
Agreeableness	.771	.442	.0697523
Conscientiousness	2.083	.040	.2002390
Neuroticism	-2.087	.039	-.235944
Openness	1.561	.121	.1587353

Table 1: t Test Output

Discussion
Conscientiousness
Conscientiousness is defined by how organised and goal-driven an individual may be. Individuals who are high on conscientiousness are highly organised, dependable, driven, and have a high level of self-discipline. They are likely to thrive on routines and schedules, like making lists, and need their lives to be well-organised. Individuals who score high on conscientiousness tend to be go-getters and strive for excellence, as a result, they are likely well-accomplished. They need to think through every angle before making a decision, tend to be cautious, and have a high level of attention to detail. Individuals who are low on conscientiousness are impulsive, spontaneous, and may be prone to procrastination. They may feel confined by rules and tend to be disorganized. They likely have no trouble starting projects, but often leave them half-finished. Individuals low on conscientiousness often struggle with being places on time. Their friends may describe them as "scatterbrained", but lots of fun on a night out.

The students of Performing Arts by virtue of their vocation have to be self-disciplined and focused. They have to give a high level of attention to minute details of their Arts form. They usually have a rigorous schedule to practice their Arts form. Students who learn any of the performing Arts pursue an academic trajectory also. In order to balance the two, they need to be well organized, time oriented and focused. In contrast the students of Humanities have only academics to focus on, they are relatively relaxed and often a dash board of idea as they have relatively lesser activities to keep their brain occupied.
Neuroticism is defined by how sensitive, emotional and prone to worry an individual may be. Individuals who are high on neuroticism tend to be sensitive, apprehensive and prone to worrying. They may be impulsive, pessimistic, or struggle to cope with stress. Individuals who are high in neuroticism tend to feel emotions intensely and get upset easily. They may be uncomfortable around other people and have their

feelings hurt easily. They may struggle to resist distractions or temptations. Individuals who are low on neuroticism tend to be cool under pressure. They are slow to anger, are not stressed by others' opinions of them, and tend to not sweat the small stuff. They are even-tempered and tend to have good control over their emotions.

Students of Performing Arts have a low score on Neuroticism as they have their Arts to vent out their emotions. The manifest their moods and feelings through their Arts form. Hence, they are more relaxed and stable under pressure. They are used to their Arts in public so more used to public critics. For the students of Humanities, this is not the case, often they are in the rat race for marks and career. If they do not score well or could not make a good career, they often develop neurotic tendencies.

Managerial Implications

The above findings shows that students who learn performing Arts (may be with other stream of academics) are better off than their humanities counterparts. It corroborates the need for Performing Arts as an additional subject along with Humanities. Since the study is confined only to Humanities students it would not be wise to generalize it with other academic majors. However, findings as above paves the need for introducing subjects like dance, music, painting, sculpting etc. along with Science and Humanities, to foster all round development of individuals. Both the domains, Academics and Performing Arts are important to nurture the individuals into strong persons.

Limitations and Conclusion

The study is confined to a city in central India with a very small sample size of 111. Due to convenience in data collection, the data has been collected from female responders only. Getting the response from males in the Arts sample was difficult as not many of them enroll for it. Moreover, the study compares only the Humanities students with the Performing Arts students, similar studies are required across other academic domains like- Engineering, Medicine, Law, Science etc.

Keeping the limitations aside the study still lend itself to emphasize the need to introduce Performing Arts as a subject across all schools/colleges/universities. Academic and Arts are the two domains that concurrently contributes to the development of wholesome human personality. Academics imbibe logic to the individual whereas Arts imbibes resilience in an individual

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