



Influence Of Intro-Extrovert Personality Types On Learned Helplessness: Exploring Gender Differences

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Abstract: This study has been undertaken to investigate the impact of extroversion on learned helplessness among young-adults (18 - 26 years). A non-probability sampling technique was used to collect a sample of 202 young-adults. The Learned Helplessness Scale by Frances Ward (1988) and The Introversion - Extroversion Scale by Greg A. Grove (2001) were administered through a google form and offline mode. The data was analysed quantitatively using correlation and regression using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Findings suggest that there is a significant difference in the thinking introversion with a mean score of females being higher than males. A significant difference was observed in the emotional introversion of males and females with the scores of males being higher than females. The association of learned helplessness with thinking extroversion was significant and positive. Stepwise linear regression suggested that thinking extroversion explains 6.9% of positive variance in learned helplessness. Thinking extroverts may be more prone to stress and arousal-seeking behaviour, which can lead them to engage in risky or impulsive behaviours that could exacerbate the effects of learned helplessness.

Index Terms: Introversion, Extroversion, Learned Helplessness, Personality

I. INTRODUCTION

According to Jung, there are two main personality categories based on attitudes: introversion and extraversion. Introverts prefer solitude or small groups, enjoy thinking and introspection, and tend to be idealistic and less sociable. They engage less in social activities and prefer interior pursuits. Introversion is not the same as shyness or a lack of social skills. Extroverts are outgoing, practical, talkative, energetic, and enjoy a variety of social and private activities. They take initiative, are effective group leaders, and focus on ongoing activities in the present. Extraversion is characterized by a preference for social engagement and communication, and extroverted individuals may seek out novel challenges and stimulating situations. The Thinking Introvert prefers intellectual activities, seeks out ideas and meanings, is critical and inquisitive, and has a rich imagination. The Thinking Extrovert prefers physical and overt activities, focuses on the application of theories and principles, relies on gathering and organizing facts, and finds it difficult to develop something new. The Emotional Introvert restrains outward expression of emotions, tends to worry and brood, is patient, does not respond easily to emotional appeals, and has a complex emotional life. The Emotional Extrovert expresses feelings and sensations directly, forgets unpleasantness easily, communicates emotions with little residue, and responds predictably to direct emotional appeals.

Learned helplessness is a psychological phenomenon where individuals believe they have no control over a situation, even when opportunities for change exist. It develops after repeated experiences of negative events that the person feels powerless to escape. This can lead to feelings of depression, low self-esteem, and hopelessness. Researchers discovered learned helplessness while studying animal behavior, finding that animals and humans alike stop trying to avoid negative stimuli when they believe they have no control. People who experience chronic adversity may internalize a sense of helplessness and lose belief in their ability to change their circumstances. Overcoming learned helplessness involves challenging negative thoughts, seeking new opportunities, and building self-efficacy through small achievements. Psychotherapy and support can be helpful in addressing learned helplessness.

Learned helplessness refers to a state where individuals feel powerless in every aspect of their lives, believing they have no control and that their actions won't make a difference. Contextual helplessness occurs when people feel powerless in specific areas while maintaining competence in others. They may overemphasize the importance of their problems and struggle to find solutions in those specific contexts. In terms of learned helplessness and personality traits, extroverted individuals may have better abilities to cope with and overcome learned helplessness. Their outgoing nature provides more opportunities for social support and constructive feedback. They are more likely to seek new challenges, promoting self-reliance and resilience. Introverted individuals, on the other hand, may be more susceptible to learned helplessness as they may be less inclined to seek social support or engage in novel experiences. They may ruminate on negative emotions, intensifying feelings of hopelessness and helplessness. The relationship between personality traits and learned helplessness is complex, with various factors influencing individual responses to adversity. The impact of learned helplessness on extroversion (or any personality trait) is likely to vary based on the individual and the specific circumstances they face.

Learned helplessness is a psychological condition that can affect individuals regardless of their personality type. However, extroverted individuals may have better coping mechanisms to deal with learned helplessness. Extroverts are more outgoing and social, which provides them with opportunities for support and constructive feedback. Their inclination to seek new experiences and challenges can foster self-reliance and resilience. Conversely, introverted individuals may be more vulnerable to learned helplessness as they may be less inclined to seek social support or new experiences. They may dwell on negative emotions, reinforcing feelings of hopelessness and helplessness. The relationship between personality and learned helplessness is complex, and various factors can influence how individuals respond to adversity. It is important to acknowledge that the impact of learned helplessness on extroversion (or any personality trait) can vary depending on the individual and the specific circumstances they face.

II. NEED OF THE STUDY

Learned helplessness helps understand how repeated exposure to circumstances that people believe are beyond their control can change people's ideas about themselves and their surroundings. It can help identify at-risk people and provide them with support by better understanding learned helplessness. They may also encourage civic engagement and societal change. It is essential to understanding human behaviour and raising both the standard of living for individuals and societies. In order to understand diverse social, emotional, and cognitive tendencies, such as a preference for social engagement, a response to stimulation, and information processing, it is crucial to study introversion and extroversion. Understanding how introversion, extroversion, and learned helplessness interact is crucial because it can shed light on how these traits affect the emergence of unfavourable attitudes and behaviours. It can pinpoint the elements that increase a person's risk of experiencing learned helplessness and create plans to cure or prevent it. Additionally, knowing how extroversion and introversion connect to learned helplessness might aid with mental health interventions for conditions like depression and anxiety, which are frequently linked to these characteristics and this phenomenon. Understanding how introvert and extrovert personality types affect learned helplessness and examining gender differences are the goals of this study.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A quantitative, cross-sectional study approach was adapted. The study's goal was to investigate the impact of extroversion on learned helplessness and exploring the gender differences between introversion and extroversion and the development of learned helplessness in young-adults (18 - 26 years). The samples included both males and females. Random sampling was used to choose the samples. The independent variable was Introversion-Extroversion and the dependent variable was Learned Helplessness. Before moving on to the main research study, a pilot study with N=10 participants was done. The hypotheses were determined using qualitative analysis in this study. To comprehend the research gaps in the previous and current literature, an exhaustive literature assessment was conducted.

3.1 Population and Sample

The sample for the current study included 202 participants, of whom 103 were female and 99 were male. Utilising non-probability (purposive, convenience, and snowball) sampling strategies, the data for the current study was gathered. The sample for this study consisted of young individuals (18 to 26 years old) from

India. The study was voluntary, and participants were free to withdraw at any time. They received assurances that the responses would be recorded in confidence and that they would remain anonymous.

3.2 Data and Sources of Data

For this study, data has been collected through both online and offline survey method. The sample for the current study included 202 participants, of whom 103 were female and 99 were male.

3.3 Theoretical framework

Variables of the study contain dependent and independent variable. The study used pre-specified method for the selection of variables. The study used the introvert-extrovert personality type as dependent variable and learned helplessness as independent variable.

Fan, Chatterjee & Kim (2022) explored whether there were any differences in these correlations between genders, the relationship between personality factors and young adults' subjective well-being (SWB), and the mediation function of perceived money management competency (PMMC). Extraversion, conscientiousness, and neuroticism all had connections with SWB that were positively correlated with PMMC, which also served as a partial mediating factor. The connections between personality factors and SWB revealed gender disparities. While openness, one of the five personality qualities, was consistently associated with SWB for young men and women, there were gender disparities in the associations between personality traits and PMMC. Additionally, gender affected how the PMMC acted as a mediator.

Ghasemi (2021) investigated the learned helplessness (LH) that junior secondary students in public school English language learning classes experienced. 126 students were given the Learned Helplessness Scale (LHS) and the Student Behaviour Checklist (SBC), which helped identify 44 kids who had LH traits. The experimental and control groups were assigned to the sample at random. Using Dörnyei's motivational techniques and encouraging feedback while teaching English for a semester, effective outcomes were observed in reducing LH symptoms and improving the academic performance of the experimental group. It became obvious that teachers and their methods play a significant role in either encouraging or reducing LH symptoms and behaviour.

Rizvi & Sikand (2020) aimed to examine how learned helplessness affects work engagement. 300 of the 324 bank employees in Delhi who provided information were taken into consideration for study. Software such as SPSS and AMOS were used for the analysis. It was done using hierarchical multiple regression and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). According to the study, participation at work is adversely correlated with learned helplessness. Managers and supervisors must recognise the problem of learned helplessness since it has a detrimental impact on how involved people are in their work. Human resources (HR) professionals should concentrate on creating strategies that attempt to transform the negative mental processes of employees into positive ones and support the transformation of learned helplessness into learned optimism.

Amadi, Chizoma, Nwoke & Linus (2020) studied the correlations between psychosocial variables and learned helplessness in maths among senior secondary school students. The study was conducted using a correlational research design. The extent of the association between anxiety, self-efficacy, locus of control, and learned helplessness was examined in 395 respondents using the "Psychological Factors Scale (PFS) and Learned Helplessness Scale (LHS)". At a significance level of 0.05, correlation was employed to test the formulated null hypotheses. The study's findings demonstrated a substantial positive association between anxiety, self-efficacy, and locus of control and learned helplessness in mathematics among senior secondary school students. It was determined that among senior secondary school students, anxiety, self-efficacy, and locus of control are related to learned helplessness in mathematics.

Adeoye, Fasanmi & Igo (2020) studied the impact of self-concept clarity, learned helplessness, and degree of weariness on undergraduates' use and misuse of psychoactive drugs. The study's design was a cross-sectional survey. A total of 400 individuals were used, including 240 (60.0%) men and 160 (40.0%) women. Data were gathered using a battery of standardised measures, including the learned helplessness scale, the self-concept scale, the exhaustion severity scale, and the substance scale. The results showed that among undergraduates, there was a substantial combined association between self-concept clarity, acquired helplessness, fatigue severity and the use and abuse of psychoactive drugs. It was determined that self-concept clarity, acquired helplessness, and degree of weariness have a strong association to the use and misuse of psychoactive drugs. Pupils shouldn't be forced into situations that could teach them helplessness, and at the same time, there shouldn't be too much tension among pupils in order to prevent them from turning to drugs out of exhaustion.

Filippello, Buzzai, Costa, Orecchio & Sorrenti (2020) aimed to confirm the relationships between academic accomplishment and the perception of the students' teachers' psychological control and support of their autonomy by analysing the mediating roles of school LH and MO, Sorrenti. The findings showed that perceptions of teacher psychological control and support for autonomy can both influence school LH and MO, respectively. Additionally, school MO predicted academic success favourably whereas school LH predicted it unfavourably. Last but not least, studies have demonstrated that school LH and MO mediate the association between academic achievement and perceived teacher autonomy support and psychological control.

3.4 Descriptive Tool

The Introversion - Extroversion Scale by Greg A. Grove (2001) is a scale that measures introversion and extraversion. It is a self-report questionnaire consisting of 20 items, and respondents rate each item on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The items on the scale are designed to assess different aspects of introversion and extraversion, such as social behaviour, preference for solitary activities, and sensitivity to external stimuli. The reliability of the Introversion-Extroversion Scale developed by Greg A. Grove depends on various factors, such as the sample size, the type of population being tested, and the administration and scoring procedures. The original study conducted by Grove in 1991 reported a high level of internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha of 0.88) and test-retest reliability ($r=0.91$) for the scale. These results suggest that the scale has good reliability and can provide consistent and stable measurements over time.

The Learned Helplessness Scale by Frances Ward (1988) is a 20-item, self-report questionnaire that uses a four-point Likert scale to assess learned helplessness ideation. The scores, which range from 20 to 80, reflect varying degrees of learned helplessness. The Learned Helplessness Scale's internal consistency has received extensive validation in healthy groups ($\alpha = 0.8521$ and $\alpha = 0.9227$).

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Independent Sample t test

Table 1: Independent sample t-test of males and females across sub-scales of Introversion -Extroversion and Learned Helplessness.

| | Gender | N | Mean | SD | | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|-------------------------------|--------|-----|---------|---------|--------|-----------------|
| Thinking introversion | Male | 98 | 8.5510 | 3.56998 | -3.938 | 0.000 |
| | Female | 103 | 10.2136 | 2.31216 | | |
| Thinking extroversion | Male | 98 | 9.0204 | 3.06621 | 1.408 | 0.161 |
| | Female | 103 | 8.4563 | 2.57734 | | |
| Emotional introversion | Male | 98 | 10.377 | 2.84121 | 2.693 | 0.008 |
| | Female | 103 | 9.3495 | 2.55415 | | |
| Emotional extroversion | Male | 98 | 8.2041 | 2.59643 | -1.636 | 0.103 |
| | Female | 103 | 8.7670 | 2.25877 | | |
| Learned helplessness | Male | 98 | 46.0510 | 9.54790 | 0.200 | 0.842 |
| | Female | 103 | 45.8252 | 5.95642 | | |

Table 1 shows the t statistics for males and females across the study variables. Findings suggest that there is a significant difference in the thinking introversion with a mean score of females being higher than males. Furthermore, a significant difference was observed in the emotional introversion of males and females with the scores of males being higher than females. No significant difference was there in other study variables.

4.2 Pearson's Correlation

Table 2: Pearson's correlation across the study variables.

| | Learned helplessness |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Thinking extroversion | 0.26 3** |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 presents Pearson's correlation between the study variables. The association of learned helplessness with thinking extroversion was significant and positive. There was no significant association between other study variables.

4.3 Regression

Table 3: Linear regression with thinking extroversion as a predictor of learned helplessness.

| | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | F | Si g. |
|-----------------------|------|----------|-------------------|-------|-------|
| Thinking extroversion | 0.26 | 0.06 | 0.06 | 14.84 | 0.00 |

a. Dependent Variable: Learned helplessness.

Table 3 shows the stepwise linear regression for predicting learned helplessness using thinking extroversion and the model presented best fit while excluding other study variables of personality. Findings suggest that thinking extroversion explains 6.9% of positive variance in learned helplessness.

The aim of the present study was to study the impact of extroversion on learned helplessness among young-adults. (18 - 26 years). Introversion is a personality trait characterised by a predisposition for alone pursuits and a propensity for reserve or introspection. Extraversion is a personality trait characterised by a preference for engaging in social activities as well as a propensity to be outgoing and communicative. Learned helplessness is a psychological phenomenon that occurs when an individual learns to believe that they have no control over a situation or outcome, even when there may be opportunities to change or improve it.

A sample of 202 young adults was assembled using a non-probability sampling technique. (18 - 26 years). The nature and goal of the study were explained to participants, and their informed consent was sought from those who expressed interest. Participants were assured that their identities and the answers to their questions would remain confidential. The consent was completed online by the remaining participants, whereas the majority of participants signed the consent form on paper. They were told that all information provided by them, including personal information, would be treated in complete confidence and that the study's findings would only be disclosed to participants at their express request. Participation was entirely optional and retracted at any time. The Introversion - Extroversion Scale by Greg A. Grove (2001) and The Learned Helplessness Scale by Frances Ward (1988) were administered in offline mode and through a google form. The respondents filled out these questionnaires in roughly 15 minutes. Quantitative analysis of the data was done utilising correlation and regression. The association between the variables was described using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Hypothesis 1 states that there will be a significant difference in the thinking introversion and emotional introversion between males and females. Findings suggest that there is a significant difference in the thinking introversion ($t = -3.898$, $sig = .000$) with a mean score of females being higher than males. Furthermore, a significant difference was observed in the emotional introversion ($t = 2.693$, $sig = .008$) of males and females, with the scores of males being higher than females. Weisberg, Deyoung & Hirsh (2011) found that women tended to score higher than men on warmth, gregariousness and positive emotions in terms of extraversion.

Hypothesis 2 states that there will be a significant difference in the thinking extroversion and emotional extroversion between males and females. Findings suggest that there is no significant difference in the thinking extroversion and emotional extroversion of males and females. And therefore hypothesis 2 has been rejected. Boswell (2010) revealed that there is little or no difference in degree of introversion and extroversion between sexes of the same ages.

Hypothesis 3 indicates that there will be a significant relationship between introversion and learned helplessness in both genders. There was no significant association between thinking and emotional introversion and learned helplessness. Thus, hypothesis 4 has been rejected. This can be so because people who are more introverted might be less susceptible to have learned helplessness because they could dwell on pleasant memories and emotions more frequently, which can decrease feelings of hopelessness and helplessness.

Hypothesis 4 indicates that there will be a significant relationship between extroversion and learned helplessness in both genders. The association of learned helplessness with thinking extroversion was significant and positive (.263). Extroverted people have a tendency to be more gregarious and outgoing, which may give them more opportunity for social support and constructive criticism. Additionally, they can be more inclined to seek out new opportunities and difficulties, which might promote self-reliance and resilience. Ekeh & Chinenye (2015) investigated the connection between personality characteristics and learnt helplessness among maths students with low achievement. The results of the data analysis showed that extraversion demonstrated significant relationships with learned helplessness.

Hypothesis 5 indicates that thinking extroversion will be a significant predictor of learned helplessness. The stepwise linear regression for predicting learned helplessness using thinking extroversion and the model presented best fit while excluding other study variables of personality. Findings suggest that thinking extroversion explains 6.9% of positive variance in learned helplessness. Thinking Extrovert prefers manual, physical, and other overt activities; is primarily interested in applying theories and principles; tends to restrict himself to the gathering and organisation of facts; finds it difficult to move beyond concrete reality to develop something new; tends to accept experiences and the opinions of others without question; and enjoys quick, decisive action. They may also be more likely to seek out new challenges and possibilities, which may encourage resilience and self-reliance. Extroverts who are unable to take action to change their situation or who perceive that their actions have no effect on the outcome may become resigned and helpless. Moreover, extroverts may also be more prone to stress and arousal-seeking behavior, which can lead them to engage in risky or impulsive behaviors that could exacerbate the effects of learned helplessness.

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