



# Effect of General Difference in Personality Traits and Attitude among Male and Female Students: A Review

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## ABSTRACT

This review explores the variations in personality traits and attitudes between male and female students. Personality traits are described as distinctive characteristics that make each person unique, while attitudes are seen as a complex blend of emotions, beliefs, and thought patterns. The discussion centers on the “Big Five” personality traits—extraversion, agreeableness, openness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism—and how they shape individuals’ thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. The review emphasizes the significance of these traits and attitudes in forecasting life outcomes, such as career success and overall well-being. Additionally, it explores the connection between these traits and attitudes with entrepreneurship and self-employment, noting that males generally display higher levels of assertiveness, aggression, and lower anxiety compared to females. These insights offer valuable perspectives for personal and professional growth and support a comprehensive approach to social and psychological research.

## Introduction

The concepts of “attitude” and “personality traits” are closely related but distinct. Personality traits are the inherent qualities or characteristics that shape an individual’s behavior and identity, while attitudes represent a person’s emotional responses, beliefs, and thought patterns (Pandya, 2017). Attitudes influence how a person perceives and reacts to various stimuli, encompassing their emotional and cognitive framework (Richard, 2017). Observations of people reveal variations in these traits and attitudes—

some individuals are outgoing while others are reserved, some are highly intelligent while others are not, and some are anxious while others remain calm. These variations are central to the study of personality psychology (Matthews et al., 2003).

Theoretical frameworks, such as those proposed by Gordon Allport, suggest that understanding personality traits and attitudes can help distinguish individuals from one another. Diener and Lucas (2019) argue that personality traits significantly shape an individual’s thoughts, attitudes, speech, and emotions. Stieger et al. (2021) also point

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out that these traits and attitudes are predictive of various life outcomes, including professional success, mental and physical health, and overall well-being.

Recent research has demonstrated that personality traits and attitudes influence transitions into self-employment, covering a spectrum from small-scale enterprises to large-scale entrepreneurial ventures. As research on entrepreneurship advances, understanding the traits linked to entrepreneurial success becomes increasingly important (Kerr et al., 2018). Despite the challenges of controlling for these variables in experimental settings, attitudes influenced by transient factors are a key focus in psychology (Buss, 1989).

The “Big Five” personality traits—extraversion, agreeableness, openness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism—are central to this field. For over fifty years, these traits have been extensively studied and have shaped how people describe themselves and others (Cherry, 2019). The five-factor model, or Big Five, impacts both personality theory and assessment, though there is ongoing debate about the interpretation of these dimensions (Tsaousis & Kerpelis, 2004).

Kerr et al. (2018) emphasize the growing importance of attitude measurement in social psychology, with some researchers like Gawronski (2007) considering it one of the field’s most crucial concepts. Despite often being quantitatively different, personality traits and attitudes play a significant role in practical life and the development of personality assessments (Allport & Allport, 1921).

Calabresi and Cohen (1968) found correlations between time perception, imagery, achievement motives, and aesthetic preferences using factor analysis. Young (2000) explored how experience shapes positive attitudes, while Mishra et al. (2010) investigated how positive attitudes toward risk influence personality traits beyond the Big Five.

Recent studies have increasingly focused on the interplay between temporal experience and personality, suggesting that time management is closely related to personality structure. Shchebetenko (2014) describes social attitudes as evaluations of social objects, often categorized by positive or negative valence. Research into bipolar attitudes and metacognition has gained interest, and there have been ongoing concerns about the underrepresentation of women in computer technology fields (Young et al., 2000). This research aims to delve into the general differences in personality traits and attitudes.

## Personality Traits and Their Impact on Attitudes

Gender differences might help account for varying individual interests in topics like climate change. Earlier research proposed that, among the Big Five personality traits, Openness would be most strongly associated with positive attitudes toward climate change (H1). This hypothesis was validated by findings indicating that people with higher Openness scores were more inclined to recognize climate change as a genuine and personal threat (Lucas et al., 2000).

Research by McCrae and Sutin (2018) highlighted that controlled administration of psilocybin (a hallucinogenic substance) significantly increased Openness in participants, particularly those who experienced mystical phenomena. This increase was approximately half a standard deviation and lasted for up to a year, affecting five of the six Openness facets.

Gender differences in Openness have also been noted. Rahmani & Lavasani (2012) found that females generally scored higher in Openness to Experience compared to males. Additionally, it has been suggested that greater emotional sensitivity among women, particularly in Openness to Feelings, might explain gender differences in depression and other negative emotions (Costa Jr. et al., 2001).

Extraversion, another trait within the Big Five, indicates how sociable and outgoing an individual is. Those with high Extraversion scores are energetic and enjoy social interactions, while those with lower scores are more reserved and prefer solitude (Cherry, 2019).

Personality psychology often considers broader traits like Extraversion as underlying causes of narrower traits. For instance, traits such as warmth and cheerfulness are thought to be linked by Extraversion, and Positive Emotions may connect traits like optimism and joy (McCrae & Sutin, 2018).

Studies have shown gender differences in various personality traits. For example, women typically score higher on Neuroticism, Agreeableness, and Openness to Experience compared to men, with no significant gender differences observed in Extraversion and Conscientiousness (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975; Demetriou, 1986; Costa & McCrae, 1992b; Holden & Fekken, 1994; Pavonen & Aston, 2002; Tsaousis, 2002 and Tsaousis & Kerpelis, 2004;). These findings suggest that certain traits, particularly Openness and Neuroticism, may directly affect attitudes and behaviors, with some gender-related variations.

**Table 1:** Studies with cross-sectional design

Study	Aim	Findings	Techniques(s)Used	Reference
1	Secondary analyses of Revised NEO Personality	Women reported higher levels of Neuroticism, Agreeableness, Warmth, and Openness to Feelings, while men exhibited higher levels of Assertiveness and Openness to Ideas.	Personality Inventory Factors like Neuroticism, Agreeableness, Extraversion/Introversion, and Openness/Closedness are analyzed alongside gender stereotypes using paired t-tests and z-scores.	Costa et al., (2001)
2	This study examines how brand personality indirectly influences the relationship between social media and students' intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies.	The results also show that attitude has a significant direct effect on brand personality, accounting for 17.2% of the influence.	Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure to assess sampling adequacy, employed an explanatory research design with a quantitative approach, and applied simple random sampling. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data.	Simiyu et al., (2019)
3	To examine gender differences in personality	Females were higher than males in extraversion, anxiety, trust, and, especially, tender-mindedness (e.g., nurturance).	Empirical criterion keying, factor-analytic strategies, and the theory-guided rational method	Feingold, (1994)
4	Explores how personality traits and attitudinal factors influence individuals' aspirations for employment in the hospitality industry.	he personality trait of extroversion has a significant impact on students' attitudes toward and aspirations for careers in the hospitality industry.	Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), Survey method, questionnaire design, attitudinal factors,	Teng, (2008)
5	The relationships identified between self-report, stereotype, and attitude measures highlight the value of using a multidimensional approach to understanding gender	Gender differences in self-reports were observed for all the Extraversion (E) items, but only 41% of the Introversion (I) items, supporting our hypothesis that societal changes have contributed to women developing more agentive self-conceptions.	Multiple factors, sensitive assessment method, Stereotype Scores, adopted an alternate approach	Spence& Buckner, (2000)
6	To determine gender differences in five factor model of personality and sensation seeking.	Girls showed higher scores on openness to experience, and agreeableness compared with boys.	Non-experimental method and a causal-comparative research. multivariate tests, analysis of variance	Rahman & Lavasani, (2000)
7	To examined the relationship between gambling tendencies and personality traits associated with risk, behavioral measures of risk, and attitudes toward risk.	Personality traits linked to risk showed that only 11% were associated with low self-control as an individual predictor, while risk-accepting attitudes accounted for 9%.	Confirmatory factor analyses	Mishra et al., (2010)
8	Aims to explore the relationship between variables like anxiety and attitudes toward climate change.	Analysis found that Openness, Perspective Taking, sex, and age are all correlated with attitudes toward climate change.	Exploratory	Rothermicha et al., (2001)
9	Study investigates gender differences in both implicit and explicit measures of the Big Five personality traits.	Research indicates that women report higher levels of Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, and Neuroticism. Men, on the other hand, showed slightly higher levels of implicit Extraversion and Openness. No gender difference was observed in implicit Conscientiousness.	Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA),	Vianello et al., (2013)

10	The study examined attitudes toward female authority and their relationship to gender beliefs, utilizing both implicit and explicit measures.	Women exhibited less explicit prejudice than men, their implicit attitudes were similarly negative.	Experimenter ,variance for analyses, mixed-model ANOVA w	Rudman& Kilians, (2000)
11	Investigates attitudes toward women, exploring how these perspectives are shaped and expressed.	In this study, attitudes among Arab men and women ranged from 0.7 to 1.4, indicating that Qatari and Kuwaiti professionals, college students, and their parents generally hold very conservative views regarding women's roles, rights, and responsibilities in society.	Analysis of variance	Abdalla, (1996)
12	Study examines changes in Attitudes Toward Women	Gender differences steadily increased from 1970 to 1985, then decreased from 1986 to 1995. These shifts reflect the impact of maternal employment on attitudes and the individual's experience of cultural change.	Meta-analysis, Analysis of variance	Twenge, (1997)
13	The study aims to determine whether the expression of extraversion in everyday behavior—such as acting and being extraverted—can be explained by intentional (functional) constructs, specifically focusing on goals.	The 18 selected goals predicted 74% of the variance in state extraversion. Both within-person and between-person fluctuations in state extraversion were closely linked to changes in momentary goal pursuit.	Experience-sampling, Factor analysis, explanatory	McCabe& Fleeson, (2012)
14	Study examined affective traits, positing that emotional regulation would be less stressful for individuals who were asked to perform personality congruent emotions	Extraversion and emotional performance were decreased for the two types of emotional regulation (anger and enthusiasm). Neuroticism was associated with increased heart rate and poor performance and data provide partial support for our personality congruency hypotheses.	Experimental design	Bono & Vey, (2007)
15	This investigation explores the relationship between attitudes toward time and personality factors, as well as how these factors relate to diagnostic and demographic variables.	The results bring empirical support to the long-held conjecture that attitudes toward time reflect basic features of the individual personality.	Analyses of variance	Calabres & Cohen, (1968)
16	Examined which specific Big Five personality traits and learning styles explained significant variation in GPA	The Big Five personality traits accounted for 14% of the variance in grade point average (GPA), with learning styles contributing an additional 3%. This suggests that both personality traits and learning styles play a role in academic performance.	Synthesis analysis, methodical study	Komarraju et al., (2011)
17	This study reports the deterrent of a student computer attitude survey	Male students reported high levels of negative interactions with teachers, though this did not affect their confidence or skill level	Principal components analysis, survey	Young, (2000)
18	The hypothesis suggests that differences in individuals' attitudes and personality traits influence the varying importance they place on environmental considerations, safety, comfort, convenience, and flexibility.	The majority of respondents (66%) do not need to change modes, indicating that future mode choice could be more effectively predicted by accounting for individuals' attitudes and personality traits.	Explanatory and confirmatory factor analytic,	Johansson Et al., (2006)

## Implicit and Explicit Measures of Personality Traits

The observed data may be explained by the “social artifact” hypothesis, which suggests that gender differences are more pronounced in self-report measures due to the influence of personal experiences and subjective interpretations of social norms. These norms shape how individuals perceive themselves, potentially leading to implicit gender differences. Implicit measures, which are influenced by daily experiences and social norms, may reveal weaker gender differences as these experiences are less variable across genders. To test this hypothesis, researchers could investigate whether implicit or explicit measures better predict gender differences in attitudes. If implicit measures show weaker predictive power, it would suggest that gender differences in attitudes are less pronounced. Conversely, if explicit measures are more predictive, it would indicate stronger gender differences (Vianello et al., 2013).

## Gender Differences in Attitudes

Cialdini et al. (1981) proposed three approaches to measuring attitudes through physiological responses, which can uncover subtle cognitive or affective reactions that individuals may not explicitly report:

1. **Emotional Response Approach:** This method observes natural physiological responses to gauge the intensity and direction of emotional or attitudinal reactions.
2. **Classical Conditioning Approach:** This technique measures physiological responses induced by conditioning to assess attitudinal reactions.
3. **Cognitive Response Approach:** This approach examines natural physiological responses to understand the cognitive processes underlying attitude changes.

Research indicates that personality traits are more effective predictors of aggregated behaviors than specific actions. For example, McCrae et al. (2018) found that broad traits like Extraversion are linked to narrower traits such as warmth and cheerfulness.

Mishra et al. (2010) investigated the role of attitudes in gambling, emphasizing that attitudes can have a primary causal influence across various domains. This significant causal role makes attitudes a key focus in social psychology (Hatemi & McDermott, 2016).

Studies have also explored how time-related attitudes are affected by personality traits. Calabresi and

Cohen (1968) identified correlations between time imagery, achievement motives, and attitudes toward time and aesthetics, suggesting that traits like Neuroticism and Openness might influence these attitudes.

Trait psychologists generally agree that personality consists of various traits that vary among individuals and are often organized hierarchically (Tokar et al., 1998). The Big Five traits—Extraversion, Openness, Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism—are widely accepted as a comprehensive framework for understanding personality across cultures (Teng, 2008). While research has examined how these traits affect career choices, fewer studies have looked at how personality traits and attitudes together influence career decisions.

Attitude changes resulting from different psychological processes can have distinct long-term effects. Social psychologists are particularly interested in these changes, as they often involve temporary rather than permanent shifts in attitudes (Cialdini et al., 1981).

Gender differences in attitudes, especially regarding women’s roles, have been influenced by various factors, with gender remaining a strong predictor. Research using the Attitudes toward Women Scale (AWS) has shown that attitudes towards women’s rights have become more liberal over time, although regional differences persist, with more conservative views reported in the South compared to other regions (Twenge, 1997).

This chapter explores gender differences in attitude change through various motivational factors and psychological processes, as outlined by Briñol and Petty (2005). These factors include:

- **Knowledge Seeking:** The pursuit of information can influence how gender affects attitude change.
- **Consistency:** Gender can impact the desire for consistency in attitudes.
- **Self-Worth:** Gender differences may affect how self-worth influences attitude changes.
- **Social Approval:** The pursuit of social approval can shape attitude changes differently based on gender.

These factors influence how attitudes are formed or changed through information processing, thought biasing, confidence in thoughts, argument selection, and cue and heuristic use. By categorizing these processes, the chapter offers a structured approach to understanding gender’s role in attitude change.

Additionally, the chapter addresses how social networks influence attitudes, with Pandya and Saxena (2017)



discussing the role of network nodes in shaping attitudes and opinions.

The chapter also examines the impact of teacher attitudes on students, particularly regarding encouragement and confidence in fields like computer technology. Despite efforts to support girls, the nature of encouragement may not always be effective, with some research suggesting that girls might receive encouragement that fails to challenge them (Young, 2000). This highlights the need for more effective strategies to address gender disparities in technology-related fields.

Overall, this chapter underscores the complexity of gender differences in attitude change, emphasizing the need for a nuanced understanding of the motivational factors, psychological processes, and social contexts that influence these differences.

## **Conclusion**

This review provides an in-depth analysis of the complex interplay between personality traits and attitudes in both

male and female students. It centers on the “Big Five” personality traits—extraversion, agreeableness, openness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism—and emphasizes their profound influence on shaping individuals’ thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. The study also highlights the crucial role these traits play in forecasting a range of life outcomes, such as career achievements and general well-being.

The review extends to the fields of entrepreneurship and self-employment, where personality traits and attitudes play a crucial role. It also reveals gender differences, noting that males often exhibit greater assertiveness and aggression, with lower levels of anxiety compared to females. Understanding these gender differences is essential for fostering personal and professional development.

In conclusion, the findings advocate for a more inclusive approach to social and psychological research, encouraging researchers to embrace individual differences and deepen our understanding of human nature. The review serves as a foundation for future research into the complex interplay of personality traits and attitudes and their profound effects on human experiences.