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Navigating University Life: A Qualitative Study of Social and Academic Challenges and Coping Strategies Among Introvert Students in Higher Education

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Abstract

This qualitative study investigated the social and academic challenges encountered by introvert university students, aiming to deepen the understanding of their distinct experiences. Through in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 12 undergraduate students from Foundation University in Rawalpindi, the study identified key challenges faced by introverts. Participants expressed that social anxiety, particularly in group discussions and public speaking, led to discomfort and avoidance of activities that interfered with their academic performance. The findings indicated issues related to academic support and social interactions, often resulting in negative self-perceptions and feelings of isolation. Students reported difficulties in connecting with peers, which impacted their engagement with the learning process. Nonetheless, the results revealed that introvert students employed various coping strategies, such as seeking solitude for reflection, utilizing learning environments effectively, and seeking assistance from peers and instructors. The study underscored the necessity for educational institutions to accommodate the diverse needs of introvert students through integrated teaching methods and tailored support programs.

Keywords: Academic challenges, Coping strategies, Introversion, Qualitative study, Social challenges, University students

Introduction

Introverts, defined as individuals who recharge through solitude, often appear reserved or shy, though this is not always accurate (Carrigan, 1960). Introverts may face inner conflict due to traits like quietness and limited social engagement, especially in college environments where extroversion is typically valued. This contrast can lead to anxiety, isolation, and hindered academic performance. Studies reveal that introverts encounter challenges such as crowding, noise (Laney, 2002), social integration difficulties (Cain, 2012), and communication barriers (Forbes, 2019). Misinterpretations of introvert behavior contribute to negative experiences, underscoring the need for improved support. This study follows Jung's introversion theory (Jung, 1970) and the Myers-Briggs framework (Guettaf, 2019). Introverts are characterized by a preference for solitude, reflective activities like reading and writing, and spiritual meditation, excelling in verbal communication but requiring time for introspection (Uzer, 2017). They may struggle with fast-paced interactions, such as with quick-speaking teachers or group discussions, which can affect memory and engagement. Ideal classroom environments for introverts emphasize independent

tasks and quiet, reflective spaces (Richard & Schmidt, 2002; Laney et al., 2021; Pychyl & Wang, 2022).

Jonathan Cheek's recent study categorized introversion into four types: social, restrained, anxious, and thinking. Social introverts, for instance, favor solitude and smaller groups, emphasizing self-reflection and creativity (Ashesh, 2020). Common traits among introverts include feeling drained by social interactions and needing solitude to recharge (APA, 2022). Unlike introverts, extroverts thrive in social settings, valuing oral communication and flexible relationships (Burruss & Kaenzig, 1999). This distinction affects teamwork dynamics, as introverts often prefer quiet learning environments over group discussions (Varela et al., 2012; Johnson et al., 2010). Recognizing introverts' contributions in educational settings enhances learning and values diverse perspectives (Cain, 2012). Supporting personal development in introvert students requires teachers to create motivating, adaptable learning environments (Cain, 2012; Dack & Tomlinson, 2015). Introverts typically thrive in solitary learning settings with minimal external support (Cain, 2012; Monohan, 2013), yet their unique needs are often overlooked (Sloan, 2019). Social interactions can challenge introverts academically (Salmela et al., 2020). Privacy concerns with social media discourage many educators from using it, emphasizing the need for communication training (Fedock et al., 2019; Bhatnagar & Pry, 2020). Though extroversion is highly valued in U.S. culture, around one-third to one-half of Americans identify as introverts, who often face challenges due to the preference for extroverted traits in various life aspects (Bakse et al., 2023). Introvert students' unique learning styles impact their school performance and well-being, sometimes resulting in misunderstandings about their abilities (Vänskä, 2023; Godfrey & Koutsouris, 2024). Stress also plays a significant role in personal development, with Gallup (2022) reporting high stress levels globally. While extroverts commonly seek social support, introverts prefer minimal interaction, which influences how each manages stress (Sharma et al., 2024).

This study explores the complex social and academic challenges faced by introvert students within higher education settings. Introvert students often experience limited engagement in collaborative activities, as social anxiety can hinder their networking efforts and lead to feelings of isolation, misunderstanding, and reduced self-confidence (Beidel & Turner, 2007; Cain, 2012). The study highlights the need for inclusive learning environments that recognize and accommodate diverse

personality traits, particularly those of introvert students who may struggle with traditional methods like group discussions and public speaking (Nussbaum, 2016). Additionally, it addresses demographic factors such as age, gender, and academic discipline, along with skills vital for success, like career management and help-seeking behaviors (Lloyd, 2021; Laney, 2021). The study also considers how technological and institutional support—such as university policies and digital communication tools—impact introvert students' academic journeys (Pychyl, 2024). Ultimately, this research underscores the significance of creating supportive environments that foster academic and personal growth for introvert students and helps institutions understand the unique behaviors that affect their academic performance and mental well-being (Green, 2018).

Objectives Of The Study

The study sought to develop a comprehensive understanding of the life experiences and challenges faced by young adults, with a particular emphasis on introvert university students. The specific objectives included:

1. Investigating the social challenges that introvert university students encounter, especially regarding social interactions, group work, and campus life.

2. Examining the academic difficulties faced by these students, such as public speaking, class participation, and academic writing.

3. Analyzing how introversion impacts academic performance, including grades, motivation, and learning strategies.

4. Exploring the effects of introversion on the mental health and well-being of university students.

5. Evaluating the effectiveness of university support services in meeting the needs of introvert students and enhancing their overall well-being.

Research Questions

1. What social challenges do introvert students face within a university environment, and how do these challenges affect their overall experience?

2. How do introvert students navigate academic challenges, such as group work and presentations, and what coping strategies do they employ?

3. What narratives and themes influence the experiences of introvert students in a university context?

4. How do introvert students perceive the university environment, and what modifications would they recommend to enhance inclusivity and support?

5. How do introvert students assess the effectiveness of university support services in addressing their unique needs and promoting their overall well-being?

Methodology

The research design was crucial for meeting the study's objectives. This qualitative investigation used thematic analysis to explore the social and academic experiences of introvert undergraduate students. As noted by Denzin and Lincoln (2011) and Creswell (2013), qualitative research interprets phenomena based on individual meanings, allowing students to express their challenges (Green, 2018). A total of twelve Muslim undergraduate students from Rawalpindi participated in the study. Prior to the interviews, informed consent for audio recording was secured from all participants. In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with both male and female students. Participants were intentionally chosen to reflect the difficulties encountered in their social and academic lives while pursuing BSc (Hons) degrees in Punjab province. The participants' ages ranged from 18 to 22 years and were specifically those who identified as introvert or had experienced introversion for six months or longer.

Data collection was performed through face-to-face and online interviews, employing open-ended questions to capture rich, subjective experiences and perspectives. Given the focus on social and academic challenges, thematic analysis was the primary method for analyzing the qualitative data. Semi-structured interview questions were crafted based on the research objectives and existing literature. Ethical considerations included obtaining written consent, formulating open-ended questions to promote honest responses, and ensuring participants' confidentiality and privacy. Eight female and four male students from Okara and Sahiwal participated in the interviews conducted in hostels. The interview data were recorded and transcribed using MS Word, with thematic analysis identifying patterns and themes in the participants' responses. The researcher acknowledged their positionality and reflexivity throughout the research process, emphasizing the importance of critical self-reflection and participant engagement (Gergen, 2009; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Finlay, 2002).
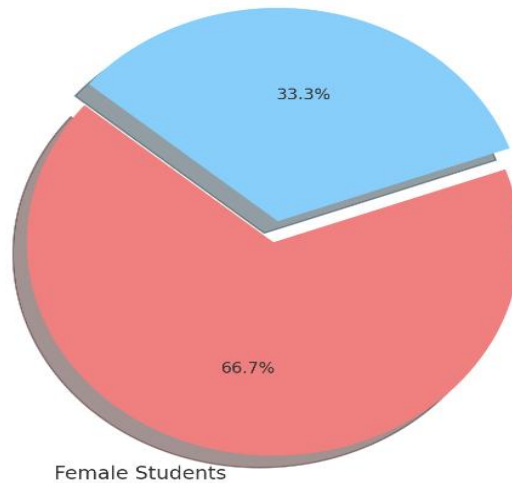
Figure 1: Gender Distribution

Results

The data collected were analyzed separately, presenting findings from thematic analyses of interviews with twelve self-identified introvert participants. Following Braun and Clarke's (2006) methodology, the data were coded into themes that highlighted the underlying factors, perspectives, and challenges experienced by introvert individuals. Transcription was performed using Microsoft Office Word, ensuring accuracy to capture the nuances of participants' responses (Plante, 2019). Coding involved identifying key phrases to label essential information (Koenig, 2018), with themes emerging as interconnected aspects of participant narratives, and superordinate themes representing broader categories (Pargament, 2021).

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Demographic/Variable Participants (N=12) Note; n=No of Participant

	Gender	Age	Profession	Family System	Birth order
1	Female	18	Student	Nuclear	2
2	Female	20	Student	Nuclear	4
3	Male	18	Student	Nuclear	4
4	Female	19	Student	Nuclear	3
5	Female	20	Student	Joint	4
6	Female	21	Student	Joint	2
7	Male	22	Student	Nuclear	3
8	Female	19	Student	Joint	3
9	Female	18	Student	Nuclear	1

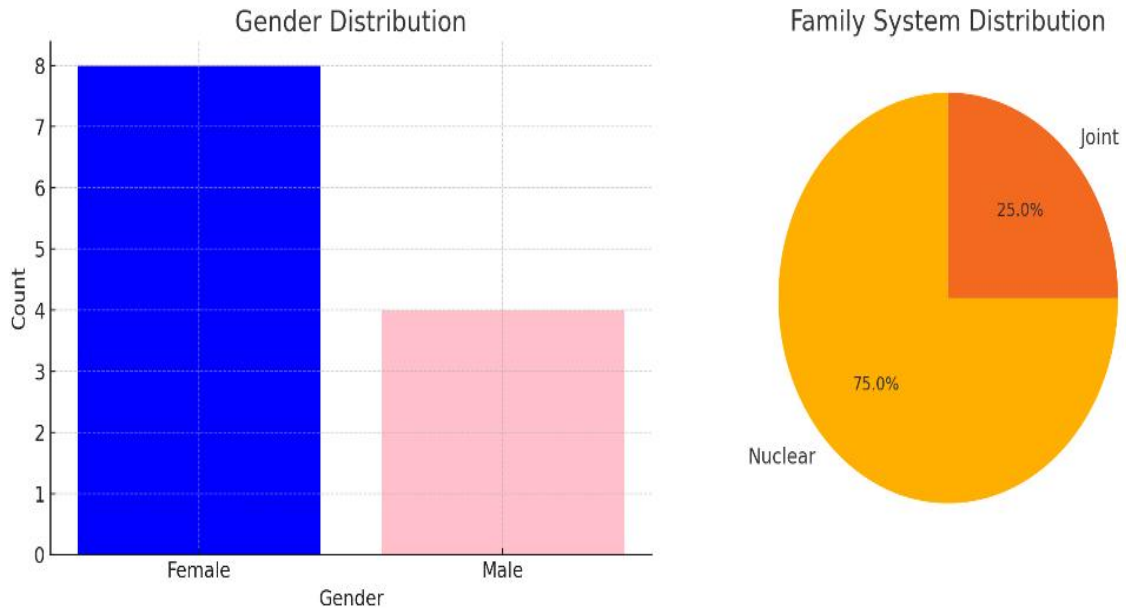| 10 | Male | 22 | Student | Nuclear | 3 |
| 11 | Female | 18 | Student | Nuclear | 2 |
| 12 | Male | 22 | Student | Nuclear | 3 |

Figure 2: Gender Distribution and Family System distribution

Table 2: Thematic analysis of interviews from participants on the study variable:

Codes	Themes	Superordinate Themes
Isolation and Alienation	Feeling of being alone or separated, isolation	Feelings of isolation
	Moments of acceptance	Lack of social contacts, isolated, Acknowledging "unvarnished facts" of ourselves and our situation
	Misunderstanding and Neglect	Misinterpretation, Negligent, disregard
Stress & Expectations	Pressure & stress	Burden, Strength, stress, tension
	Group challenges	Objection, complaint, criticism
Interpersonal	Relationship dynamics	Changing affiliations, adaptive

		partnerships
Relationships	Reactions to criticism	Defensiveness
Coping Mechanisms	Coping strategies	Deal with changes in life
	Support advice	Encouragement, recommendation, suggestion
Educational Impact	Impact on education	Force on education, burden on education, coercion on education, compulsion on education

Theme 1: Isolation and Alienation

The goal of isolation was avoidance and escape, often leaving individuals feeling depleted, numb, and unpleasant. While anyone could experience isolation, introverts particularly struggled to distinguish between authenticity and self-separation. They might have justified their seclusion, believing they were simply maintaining their usual routines. Observing their emotions was crucial; introverts felt fulfilled and rejuvenated when connected but isolated themselves when experiencing feelings of worthlessness, depression, and loneliness. Isolation served as a primary symptom of addiction and frequently coexisted with mental health issues such as anxiety and depression. Consulting a healthcare professional was strongly recommended to bridge the connection gap

Table 3: Thematic analysis of interviews from participants on the study variable:

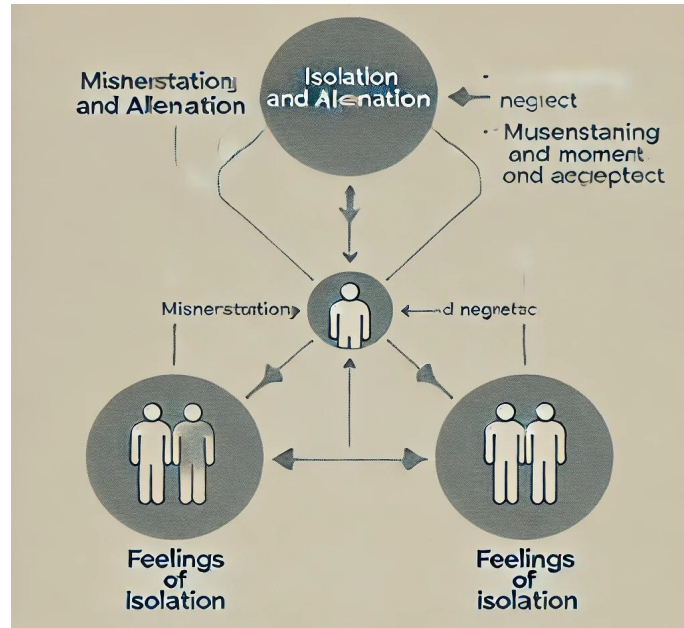| Codes	Themes	Superordinate Themes
Stress and Expectations	Pressure and stress	Burden, Strength, stress, tension
	Group Challenges	Objection, complaint, criticism

Figure 3: Isolation and Alienation of Exploring social and Academic challenges of Introverts

Feelings of Isolation

Introverts, due to their preference for solitude, were found to be more susceptible to feelings of isolation compared to extroverts. Previous studies indicated that introverts experienced heightened loneliness relative to their extroverted counterparts (Participant 1). Individuals who scored higher on introversion scales exhibited greater sensitivity to social disconnection, while extroverted students reported higher social and academic preferences. Introverts, however, expressed a desire for more social interaction, despite their challenges in initiating it (Participant 2). Several participants shared their struggles with confidence, participation, and building friendships. One participant noted, "I lacked the confidence to participate in events," while another added, "I tried to make friends, but my classmates constantly demotivated me" (Participant 4). Some participants, despite registering for events, withdrew due to feeling uncomfortable or strange in social settings (Participant 6). In general, introverts expressed a tendency to avoid social gatherings and preferred solitude or small, intimate groups (Participant 10).

Moments of Acceptance

Introverts often faced challenges and societal expectations that pressured them to act more outgoing than they naturally were. These pressures, whether self-imposed or from others, created a sense of discomfort, as if being reserved was inherently negative (Participant 1). One participant shared the ongoing difficulty of meeting

family expectations even after graduating from university (Participant 1). Another participant adopted a mindset of self-reliance, expressing how doing tasks independently, despite tension, helped them become an expert in their work (Participant 2). Some participants experienced anxiety, such as feeling faint when called upon in class (Participant 3). Moments of acceptance, however, brought relief, as one participant recalled a joyful moment of friendship that developed effortlessly (Participant 5). Additionally, participants found comfort in being accepted as they were by their peers, which made university life easier (Participant 6, Participant 7). Yet, others felt overlooked and unsupported, believing that people only engaged when it was convenient (Participant 8). Participant 9 expressed a clear detachment from social connections. Participant 12 shared a more positive experience, highlighting a moment of genuine acceptance from a close friend.

Misunderstanding and Neglect

Introverts were often misunderstood and neglected in social interactions, particularly in group settings where they spoke less than others. People tended to interpret their silence as unfriendly or antisocial behavior, without recognizing that introverts might be reflecting or simply observing the conversation (Participant 1). Additionally, introverts typically took longer to build relationships and felt uncomfortable socializing with strangers, especially compared to extroverts. Participant 1 expressed frustration at being overlooked despite expecting attention from peers. Participant 2 shared experiences of conflict and being misunderstood by classmates, as their words were often dismissed. Some introverts, like Participant 5, had become accustomed to neglect, feeling indifferent when ignored, while Participant 7 expressed a sense of resignation regarding the lack of understanding in their relationships. Participant 8 added that neglect was common, especially once others had sorted out their own matters, although they were still appreciated by teachers for consistently completing their work on time. Introverts valued their relationships with others and discussed them positively. Many participants reflected on the opportunities they had to engage with those around them, even while maintaining their introvert nature during involvement in social situations.

Theme 2: Stress And Expectations

Introverts often manage stress differently, as they are less likely to seek social support during stressful times. Instead of relying on their social networks for relief, they tend to turn inward, missing the potential stress-relieving benefits of social connections.

Table 4: Thematic analysis of interviews from participants on study variable (n=12)

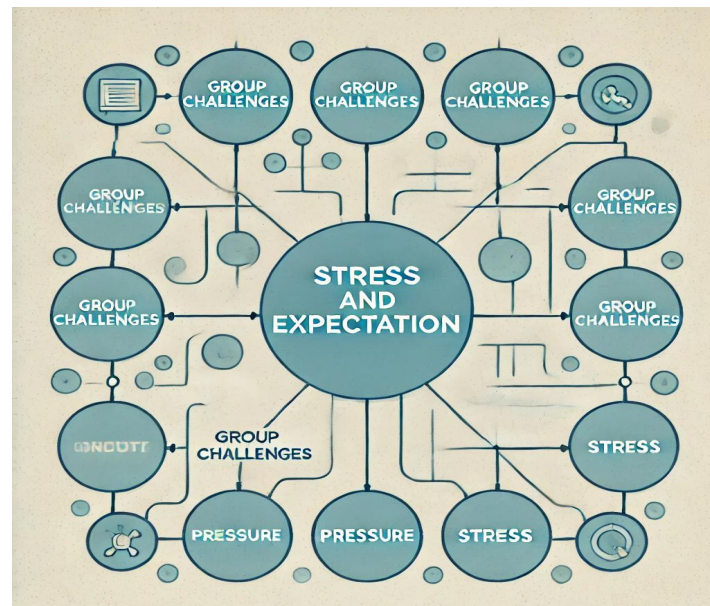| Codes	Themes	Superordinate Themes
Stress and Expectations	Pressure and stress	Burden, strength, stress, tension.
	Group challenges	Objection, complaint, criticism

Figure 4: Stress and Expectations of Exploring social and Academic challenges of Introvert

Pressure and Stress

Introvert students expressed the pressure and stress they faced in academic settings, particularly their struggle to engage in class discussions and active learning. This often resulted in feelings of anxiety, exhaustion, and fear (Green et al., 2019). These emotions took a toll on their energy, leading some to distance themselves from the learning material. Participant 1 mentioned feeling constant stress over completing tasks independently, fearing failure before even arriving at university. Participant 2 shared that, although stressful, they always completed their work without relying on others. Similarly, Participant 3 described facing anxiety when taking initiative, managing tasks independently while experiencing internal turmoil. Participant 5 expressed difficulty in seeking help, despite knowing they needed it. Moreover, participants noted the added stress of co-education and speaking in front of male teachers. Participant 9 highlighted the discomfort of crowded environments, preferring solitude, while Participant 12 emphasized the social and academic

challenges introverts often face.

Group Challenges

Beckerson explored how an active learning environment influenced individual performance based on personality type (Beckerson et al., 2020). Students participated in two active learning sessions with peer assessments, randomly divided into groups with assigned roles. The remaining sessions involved passive learning through video lectures. Participants completed the IPIP Big Five Markers questionnaire to assess personality traits. The findings highlighted that introverts faced difficulties in group learning. Participant 1 stated that any task requiring involvement was challenging, including group activities and presentations. Participant 2 reported feeling nervous during group work, often skipping presentations, leading to group mark deductions. Similarly, Participant 3 struggled with group activities and preferred tasks where they could avoid speaking. Participant 5 shared the stress of co-educational presentations, even fainting during their first one. Participant 6 emphasized that introverts often face challenges in social academic settings, including stage fright and social anxiety, which impact their ability to express thoughts and emotions. Participants frequently highlighted their preference for small group or one-on-one interactions, regardless of whether they identified as shy or outgoing. Many expressed guilt when pressured to engage in larger groups, with both shy and outgoing introverts sharing feelings of discomfort and avoidance tactics in such situations.

Theme 3: Interpersonal Relationships

Poor mental health can adversely affect people's daily lives, interpersonal relationships, jobs, and finances, leading to increased difficulties and discomfort. This can contribute to broader issues such as substance abuse, loneliness, poor physical health, and homelessness (Saunders et al., 2017).

Table 5: Thematic analysis of interviews from participants on study variable (n=12)

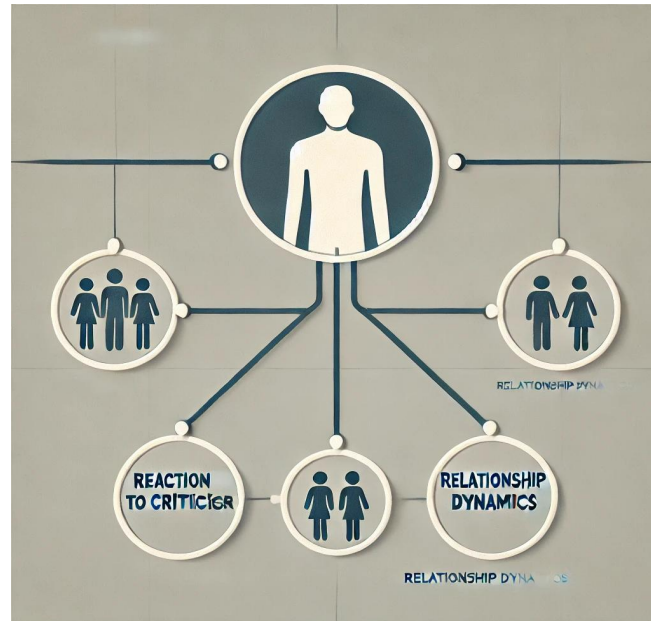| Codes	Themes	Superordinate Themes
Interpersonal Relationship	Relationship dynamics	Changing affiliation, adaptive partnership
	Reactions to criticism	Defensiveness

Figure5: Interpersonal Relationship of Exploring social and Academic challenges of Introverts

Relationship Dynamics

Losch conducted a survey involving 358 eighth-grade students in Germany to gather information on their personality types, academic grades, and peer assessments in social and academic contexts. The researchers analyzed the data to explore the relationships between personality types and their preferences in popular culture, as well as social and academic settings. They defined popularity as the positive evaluation a student received from peers, while preference related to how students viewed their classmates as partners. Most participants faced challenges in their relationships with family, friends, and teachers. For instance, Participant 1 expressed gratitude for a loyal friend who supported her, while Participant 4 described having a negative experience with unsupportive friends and fear of teachers. Similarly, Participant 10 noted that her introvert nature led to difficulties in relationships, highlighting the complexity of social interactions for introvert individuals (Losch & Rentzsch, 2018).

Reactions To Criticism

Reactions to criticism often had significant emotional impacts on introvert individuals, leading to feelings of guilt and self-doubt. Many participants reported experiencing criticism about their personalities. Participant 1 mentioned that initial remarks from friends about her were difficult to handle, while Participant 2 noted that he had learned to disregard others' opinions over time, stating it no longer affected him as it

once had. Participant 4 expressed a preference for silence, allowing others to speak about her without engaging in discussions. Participant 5 shared that she became accustomed to being ignored and felt more comfortable speaking over the phone than in person. Participant 6 described feeling judged during university, leading to depression, but later received support from class leaders. Participant 7 faced criticism regarding participation marks, despite her efforts, while Participant 8 felt hurt when her contributions went unnoticed. Ultimately, Participant 9 expressed indifference to others' remarks, whereas Participant 10 admitted to initially feeling misunderstood (Losch & Rentzsch, 2018).

Theme 4: Coping Mechanisms

Coping mechanisms are strategies used to manage tension or negative emotions, classified as either adaptive or maladaptive. Problem-focused coping aims to address the source of stress, while emotion-focused coping modifies one's response to stressors. Introverts typically favor solitude and intimate settings over large groups, reflecting their preference for inner thoughts.

Table 6: Thematic analysis of interviews from participants on study variable (n=12)

Codes	Themes	Superordinate Themes
Coping Mechanism	Coping Strategies	Deal with changes in life
	Supportive Advice	Encouragement,
		Recommendation,
		Suggestion

Figure6: Coping Mechanism and supportive advice and Academic challenges of Introverts

Coping Strategies

Davidson examined various strategies to enhance medical students' learning in dynamic, cooperative environments (Davidson et al., 2015). They evaluated medical classroom scenarios and student roles, categorizing them as low, medium, or highly congruent with individual personality types using a hypothesized goodness-of-fit model. For instance, they found that a cadaver lab represented a moderate fit for extroverts but a strong fit for introverts who focused on detail. Based on this model, they proposed 22 strategies tailored for introvert students in group settings, such as outlining verbal contribution expectations beforehand and allowing sufficient time for responses. Participants reported various coping strategies. For instance, Participant 1 emphasized the importance of self-reliance and having a supportive friend. Participant 2 preferred solitary study sessions, while Participant 3 highlighted the effort from teachers that fostered his active participation. Additionally, other participants discussed maintaining minimal workloads and avoiding conflicts, demonstrating how they navigated their academic challenges effectively.

Support Advice

Active learning classrooms engaged students in group projects and discussion-based assignments instead of relying solely on traditional lectures. Although biology influenced both reactivity and introversion, Virzi et al. (2018) found that introverts were less distracted by visual stimuli compared to auditory, gustatory, or somatosensory stimuli. Participants shared various support strategies. Participant 1 suggested that teachers involve quiet students in class discussions while respecting their boundaries. Participant 2 emphasized the importance of treating students according to their individual limits and providing support when they sought help. Participant 3 expressed a desire for supportive teachers who would motivate students academically and socially. Moreover, Participant 5 advocated for respecting everyone's boundaries and fostering an inclusive environment, while Participant 6 highlighted the need to understand and support introvert individuals. Lastly, Participants 9 and 10 urged teachers to create a fair classroom atmosphere, appreciate students' efforts, and ensure that all voices were valued and respected. Proposed Enhancements for Supporting Introverts in Engagement: Participants highlighted potential improvements regarding introversion and participation. One participant noted that she would have benefited from attending a college speaker event focused on introversion.

Theme 5: Educational Impact

In the active classroom setting, introverts' tendency to observe before participating and their need for additional time to process information were often overlooked. As a result, these students felt pressured and anxious about their perceived behaviors. Despite these challenges, they employed strengths-based strategies to adapt (Green et al., 2019).

Table 7: Thematic analysis of interviews from participants on study variable (n=12)

Codes	Themes	Superordinate Themes
Educational Impact	Impact on Education	Force on Education, Burden on Education
	Supportive advice	Compulsion on Education

Figure 7: Educational Impact of Exploring social and Academic challenges of Introvert

Impact on Education

Mismatches between personality types and educational environments influenced how students utilized their time, particularly introvert individuals, who often felt they required additional time to reflect on conceptual connections and absorb new information. While students developed various methods to create this reflection time, they consistently noted that post-class reflection was the most effective for processing the day's lessons (Green et al., 2019). Research by Pawlowska (2014) and Persky et al.

(2015) indicated that well-structured active learning tasks did not hinder introvert students; rather, they benefited students of all personality types. Participant 1 mentioned that having a supportive friend helped her navigate educational challenges, minimizing difficulties in her studies. In contrast, Participant 4 described university life as challenging due to personal issues, while Participant 5 acknowledged that education often felt disrupted. However, Participant 8 asserted that her focus on education remained steadfast despite external challenges, highlighting the varying impacts of introversion on academic experiences. Insights from participants highlighted their experiences with passive and active extracurricular activities during their undergraduate studies. Their self-perception of introversion revealed their self-awareness and suggested potential changes to enhance future involvement practices. The thematic analysis of this qualitative study revealed the social and academic challenges faced by introvert undergraduate students at the University. Introverts often experienced feelings of isolation, anxiety in group settings, and strained relationships, yet employed coping strategies to navigate these difficulties. Support from teachers and peers proved crucial in enhancing their academic and social experiences.

Discussion

The study aimed to explore the social and academic challenges faced by introvert individuals through qualitative methods. Data was gathered and analyzed individually, focusing on themes such as homesickness, adjustment issues, and satisfaction with university hostel facilities. The findings highlighted that personality type significantly influenced social and work preferences (Duffy & Chartrand, 2016; Jonason & Sherman, 2020; Wzrus et al., 2016). The first theme revealed that introverts often experienced isolation and difficulty with social interactions. While introverts frequently found social situations demanding, they sometimes reported a boost in positive feelings afterward, although not to the same extent as extroverts (Cain, 2013). Furthermore, introverts preferred smaller discussion settings over large groups (Davis, 2015), reflecting their tendency towards social disengagement (Myers, 1992). Ultimately, the research indicated that introvert students benefited from tailored communication strategies to foster social connections, as introversion was linked to feelings of loneliness and depression (Cheng & Furnham, 2002; Laney, 2002).

Moments of Acceptance

In the sub-theme of acceptance, introverts encountered challenges in accepting their personality traits. Many were critical of themselves, as Laney (2002) noted, leading to

lower self-esteem compared to extroverts (Gudjonsson et al., 2004). When compelled to act against their nature, introverts often felt hopeless and withdrew socially, experiencing heightened self-doubt throughout their lives (Myers & Myers, 1995; Keirsey & Bates, 1984; Yen & Siegler, 2003). This tendency to be more aware of their inner thoughts contributed to their belief that they were more troubled than others, further emphasizing their struggles with acceptance (Laney, 2002). Consequently, introverts were characterized by qualities such as thoughtfulness, control, and caution, placing them at the opposite end of the spectrum from extroverts (Burger, 2000).

Academic Challenges

Introvert students faced significant academic challenges due to their personality traits, particularly in environments requiring impulsive participation, such as group projects or classroom discussions. They often thrived in settings that emphasized independent and self-directed work. Teachers supported these students by offering clear guidelines and preparation opportunities, which helped introverts feel more comfortable expressing their ideas (Flanagan & Addy, 2019). Additionally, technology that enabled asynchronous participation, like discussion boards and collaborative tools, provided introverts a chance to engage at their own pace, thereby reducing the stress associated with real-time interactions (Helzer, 2019). While introverts generally experienced lower social engagement, they demonstrated high levels of involvement when allowed to participate in groups and teamwork, which could enhance their self-esteem. This finding highlighted the importance of encouraging introvert students to engage with peers in the learning process, as low self-esteem adversely affected motivation and academic performance (Baumeister et al., 2003). Educators were reminded to consider students' personalities when promoting peer learning opportunities.

Coping Strategies

Introvert individuals employed various coping strategies, with each person utilizing different mechanisms to handle their situations. According to Jenkins and Cohen (2022), introverts often prioritized alone time and self-care to maintain their energy levels. Engaging in activities like reading, mindfulness, and hobbies helped them recharge and manage stress. While extroverted nursing students predominantly used problem-focused coping strategies, introvert students relied on emotion-focused, problem-focused, and avoidant methods, resulting in higher stress levels (Laney, 2002). Introverts, pressured to conform to extroverted norms, often adopted coping

strategies to navigate their unique challenges (Beutler & Moos, 2003; Beutler et al., 2003). However, introversion was also linked to unhealthy, passive coping strategies, which contributed to a cycle of neuroticism (Baoyong, 2000; Bergsma, 2008).

Recommendations for Educators and Peers

Recommendations for educators and peers highlighted the significant role that teachers and classmates played in supporting introvert individuals. Encouraging introverts led to positive outcomes in their lives. Educators could promote temperament-inclusive education by thoughtfully planning cooperative activities and allowing pauses for introverts to process information. Recognizing the unique strengths of introverts, such as their thoughtful approach to problem-solving, was essential for fostering an inclusive environment (Monahan, 2019). Moreover, instructors needed to consider personality types when designing active learning tasks. Pawlowska et al. (2014) found that aligning student needs with environmental factors predicted achievement. Additionally, introverts often preferred to discuss issues gradually and felt intimidated when presenting in front of the class (Murberg, 2010). Therefore, creating opportunities for small group work and quiet spaces could encourage participation embrace their unique personalities and educating others about introversion (Laney, 2002; Beutler et al., 2003).

Limitation and Implication

The current study had limitations, including a small sample size of 12 undergraduate participants from the Foundation University of Rawalpindi, which restricted the depth of understanding regarding the social and academic challenges faced by introvert individuals. The data collection occurred in only one city, limiting the generalizability of the findings; thus, a larger, more diverse sample across multiple cities is recommended. Future research should explore additional variables such as psychological well-being and life satisfaction. Longitudinal studies are suggested for a comprehensive understanding of changes over time. The implications of this study could enhance interventions aimed at improving the experiences of introvert individuals, contributing to better mental health strategies and helping psychologists develop techniques to mitigate the negative impacts on academic and social performance. Additionally, the research highlighted how different personality types among high school teachers perceive student engagement, emphasizing the need for teachers to recognize diverse forms of classroom participation.

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