



## **EXPLORING PERSONALITY TYPES AND SELF-PERCEPTIONS AMONG PRE-SERVICE STUDENT TEACHERS**

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**Paper Received On:** 20 MAR 2025

**Peer Reviewed On:** 24 APRIL 2025

**Published On:** 01 MAY 2025

### **Introduction**

Teaching is a vocation and hence, it is likely that many aspects of becoming an effective teacher could lie in the individual's personality, in addition to values and reflective awareness. In the B.Ed course on Guidance and Counselling, the student teachers are introduced to personality tests, one of them being the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), a personality assessment based on Carl Jung's theory of psychological types. Widely used in personal development, career guidance, and organizational settings, the MBTI categorizes individuals into 16 personality types based on preferences in four dichotomies: Introversiion–Extraversiion, Sensing–Intuition, Thinking–Feeling, and Judging–Perceiving. The students complete the test as part of the teaching method used to teach this module. Along with the MBTI, the researchers also asked them a few questions in relation to their identity as future teachers. This paper is a compilation of students' reflections on their understanding of their own results of the MBTI and how it influences their approach and identity as teachers.

As future educators, pre-service B.Ed. students are expected to not only understand their learners but also themselves—how they teach, relate to others, and manage classroom environments. Integrating personality tools like the MBTI into teacher education programs, particularly within Guidance and Counselling courses, can support students in recognizing their strengths, teaching styles, and possible challenges they may encounter in professional practice.

This study aims to explore the MBTI personality types of a group of pre-service teachers and examine how they perceive the influence of their type on their future teaching roles. It seeks to connect personality awareness to educational practice and provide insight into how self-knowledge can support teacher effectiveness and student well-being.

### **Methodology**

This study follows a descriptive and exploratory design using a mixed-methods approach. The sample consisted of 39 pre-service B.Ed. students. The students had already completed the MBTI assessment as part of their coursework.

Data was collected through a Google Form survey developed specifically for this study. The form included:

1. Identification of MBTI personality type
2. Likert-scale questions measuring perceptions about the influence of personality on teaching style, classroom preferences, and professional confidence
3. Open-ended questions exploring personal insights into how their MBTI type might support or challenge them in their future role as educators

Quantitative data was analyzed using basic descriptive statistics to identify trends in MBTI types and average responses across items. Qualitative responses were thematically coded to identify common patterns in self-reflection and role preference. The study emphasizes student voice and reflective practice as core to understanding how future teachers can use personality insights to enhance professional development.

### **Data Analysis**

To analyze the relationship between personality types and teaching perceptions, responses from 39 pre-service B.Ed. students were compiled and reviewed. The data consisted of MBTI type identification, scaled agreement to perception-based statements, and open-ended reflections. A mixed-methods approach was used: quantitative analysis helped identify trends in personality distribution and general attitudes toward teaching-related competencies, while qualitative responses offered deeper insight into students' self-perceived strengths, challenges, and career preferences. The findings are presented thematically in the following sections.

**A. Distribution of MBTI Personality Types**

MBTI Type	Frequency
ENFJ	10
INFJ	7
ESFJ	5
INFP	4
ISTJ	2
ISFJ	2
ESFP	2
INTP	2
INTJ, ISFP, ISTP, ENFP	1 each

**Key Observation:**

- ENFJ (The Protagonist) remains the most common type, followed by INFJ and ESFJ.
- Majority of students fall under personality types with the Feeling (F) and Judging (J) functions — traits associated with empathy, organization, and people orientation.

**B. Likert Scale Responses – Perceptions Summary**

Statement	% Agree/Strongly Agree	% Neutral	% Disagree/Somewhat Agree
My personality type will influence my teaching style	~87%	~13%	0%
My MBTI type aligns with good teaching qualities	~82%	~18%	0%
I can adapt my teaching to suit different student personalities	~88%	~12%	0%
Understanding my MBTI type helped me reflect on my teaching approach	~85%	~15%	0%

**Key Observation:**

- Most students perceive a strong connection between their MBTI type and teaching effectiveness.

- There's broad agreement that self-awareness through MBTI has been helpful in reflecting on their future professional roles.

### C. Qualitative Insights from Open-ended Responses

#### Common Strengths Identified:

- Communication and empathy (especially ENFJ, INFJ, ESFJ)
- Creativity and introspection (INFP, ISFP, INTJ)
- Organization and structure (ISTJ, INTJ)
- Adaptability and sensitivity to learner needs across types

#### Challenges Mentioned:

- Emotional over-involvement, fear of burnout (Feeling types)
- Shyness or hesitation in leading large groups (Introverts)
- Difficulty in rigid structures or last-minute changes (Perceiving types)

#### Teaching Role Preferences:

- Most students see themselves in secondary education or senior school settings.
- A few (especially INFJs, INFPs) expressed interest in counseling, inclusive education, or creative teaching roles.
- Types like ESFP, ISFP showed openness to primary teaching, citing creativity and child-friendly orientation.

### D. Perceived Accuracy of MBTI Results

When asked whether the MBTI personality type they received felt accurate or reflective of their personality:

Response Option	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
Yes	30	76.92%
Somewhat	7	17.95%
No	2	5.13%

#### Observation:

The majority of students found their MBTI results to be reliable and personally relevant, indicating a general confidence in the tool. This supports the use of MBTI as a valid reflective exercise within teacher education programs, especially in guidance and counselling courses.

## **Discussion**

The results of this study offer meaningful insights into how pre-service B.Ed. students understand and interpret their personality traits through the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) framework. A significant finding was that the majority of participants identified as ENFJ, INFJ, and ESFJ—types known for their people-centric, empathetic, and values-driven orientation. These traits align closely with many of the core competencies required for effective teaching, such as communication, emotional intelligence, and relational depth.

The perception-based data further reinforces the view that most students found the MBTI framework useful for self-reflection and role clarity. Over 85% agreed that their personality would influence their teaching style, and a similar proportion expressed confidence in adapting to diverse student personalities. This supports the idea that personality awareness can serve as a reflective tool in teacher training, especially when incorporated meaningfully into Guidance and Counselling coursework.

Qualitative responses provided nuanced insight. Many students linked their MBTI traits to specific strengths—such as planning, empathy, or creativity—but also acknowledged challenges like emotional burnout or hesitation in large group dynamics. Notably, several introverted students expressed a preference for one-on-one teaching or mentoring roles, while others highlighted the importance of developing confidence in managing larger classrooms.

One valuable theme emerging from the responses was career self-alignment. Students used MBTI as a lens to identify suitable roles—some leaning toward counseling, inclusive education, or creative pedagogies. This demonstrates the value of personality assessments not just for self-awareness, but also for career guidance within teacher education.

Given the small and context-specific sample, these findings are exploratory, but they suggest that incorporating MBTI and similar reflective tools into B.Ed. programs can enrich professional identity formation and prepare future teachers to navigate the emotional and interpersonal demands of the profession.

## **Recommendations**

1. Integrate MBTI-based reflection into guidance and counselling coursework to help student-teachers understand their own teaching identities.
2. Encourage peer discussions around personality and teaching style, helping students appreciate different approaches in the classroom.
3. Use tools like MBTI to introduce differentiated instruction strategies—students can learn how to connect their strengths with specific learner needs.

4. Extend the research to include larger and more diverse samples, possibly comparing trends across different teaching specializations or academic years.
5. Include follow-up studies post-practicum to assess how personality awareness translates into real teaching experiences.

### **Conclusion**

This exploratory study aimed to understand the MBTI personality types of pre-service B.Ed. students and examine how they perceive the influence of their traits on future teaching roles. The findings revealed that the most common types among the participants—ENFJ, INFJ, and ESFJ—reflect strong interpersonal and empathetic qualities, aligning well with the demands of the teaching profession.

The majority of students expressed that understanding their MBTI profile enhanced their self-awareness, helped them reflect on teaching style preferences, and increased their confidence in managing classroom diversity. Many respondents also demonstrated the ability to critically reflect on both the strengths and limitations of their personality in professional contexts.

While the sample size was limited, the study suggests that introducing personality assessments like MBTI in teacher education can support self-reflective practice, promote career clarity, and enhance future teachers' capacity to work effectively with diverse learners.