

Stars, Self, Control: A Comparative Study on Astrological Beliefs, Personality Traits and Locus of Control Among Millennials and Centennials

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ABSTRACT

The present study compared astrological belief, personality traits, and locus of control between Millennials and Centennials. Astrological belief has resurged recently, especially among younger people, influenced by digital platforms and social media. This research investigated how different generations vary in their beliefs about astrology, Big Five personality traits, and locus of control, aiming to understand the influence of cultural and technological evolution on psychological concepts. A comparative cross-sectional approach was employed, involving 108 participants where 54 Millennials and 54 Centennials were chosen through stratified random sampling. Information was gathered using the Belief in Astrology Inventory, the short form of the Big Five Inventory-2, and the Locus of Control Scale. Independent t-tests were used to assess differences between generations and across genders. The findings revealed that among the two generations, millennials scored higher in astrological belief, while centennials scored higher in openness and locus of control. No significant differences were observed in personality traits between the two groups. In the context of genders, no significant difference was found in astrological belief and locus of control, but women scored higher in the traits like conscientiousness and agreeableness.

Keywords: Millennials, Centennials, Astrological belief, personality traits, locus of control

Astrology is a belief system proposing that the positions and movements of celestial bodies have an impact on human behaviour and natural occurrences (Campion, 2009). Historically, it has been integral to various civilizations, including Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Greek, and Indian traditions, where it was used for divination and decision-making (Barton, 1994). Despite advancements in science, astrology continues to be a widely followed practice, with studies indicating that a significant portion of the population still believes in its relevance. A survey by the Pew Research Center (2018) found that nearly 29% of American adults believe in astrology, illustrating its enduring cultural presence. The rise of digital platforms has further popularized astrology, particularly among

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younger generations, who engage with it for self-exploration and psychological insight (Littman, 2021).

Personality, defined as stable patterns of thoughts, emotions, and behaviours that influence individual interactions, is fundamental to understanding differences in astrological belief (McCrae & Costa, 1997). The Five-Factor Model (FFM) of personality, which includes Openness to Experience (O), Conscientiousness (C), Extraversion (E), Agreeableness (A), and Neuroticism (N), serves as a widely recognized framework for understanding individual personality differences (Goldberg, 1990). Research shows that traits such as Openness to experiences and Neuroticism tend to be positively correlated with belief in astrology, as these traits foster curiosity, acceptance of unconventional ideas, and reliance on astrology for emotional support (Peters, 2020). In contrast, Conscientiousness is linked to skepticism toward astrology due to its association with rational thinking and preference for evidence-based reasoning (Hartman, 2019). Extraversion and Agreeableness influence social engagement with astrology, often affecting how individuals discuss and accept astrological beliefs in social contexts (Littman, 2021).

Generational differences further shape how astrology is perceived and integrated into personal identity. Millennials (born 1981-1996) experienced the rise of the internet and early social media, which allowed for more reflective and spiritually oriented engagement with astrology, often related to wellness and self-care (Pew Research Center, 2019). They tend to seek in-depth astrological interpretations and use astrology as a tool for self-exploration during periods of uncertainty, reflecting a trend toward “spiritual but not religious” identification (Sancton, 2021). In contrast, Centennials or Generation Z (born 1997-2012) are the digital natives who are likely to engage with astrology primarily through fast-paced, meme-based, and entertainment-focused content on platforms like Instagram (Dimock, 2019). Their interaction with astrology is often passive, shaped by AI-driven algorithms that compile the content for rapid consumption, emphasizing social and humorous elements over deep introspection (Sancton, 2021).

This study investigates how these two generational groups differ in their astrological beliefs, personality traits, and locus of control, considering the socio-technological context that influence their worldviews. By integrating personality theory and generational analysis, the research contributes to a deeper understanding of modern belief systems and its psychological base.

METHODOLOGY

Statement of the problem:

This study aims to compare astrological belief, personality traits, and locus of control between Millennials and Centennials.

Objectives:

The objectives of this study are outlined below:

1. To explore the difference in the astrological beliefs among millennials and centennials.
2. To explore the differences in the personality traits among millennials and centennials.
3. To explore the difference in the locus of control among millennials and centennials.
4. To assess the significant difference in astrological belief, personality traits, and locus of control among millennials and centennials across both genders.

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Hypotheses:

- H1: There will be a significant difference in astrological beliefs between millennials and centennials.
- H2: Millennials and centennials will significantly differ in personality traits.
- H3: Millennials and centennials significantly differ in locus of control.
- H4: There will be a significant difference in astrological belief, personality traits, and locus of control among millennials and centennials on basis of genders.

Tools used:

In order to test the hypotheses, three standardized questionnaires were used to assess the Astrological Belief, Personality Traits and Locus of Control. The following questionnaires were used in the study and their personal details were also collected to explore the demographic variables of the participants.

- **Belief in Astrology Inventory (BAI):** The Belief in Astrology Inventory (Chico & Lorenzo-Seva, 2006) is a psychological questionnaire designed to measure an individual's belief level in astrology. It is a twenty-four items questionnaire where the items are rated on a 5-point likert scale: 1-Completely disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neutral, 4-Agree, 5-Completely agree. The scoring ranges from 24-120. The instrument demonstrates high reliability, with a reported Cronbach's alpha of 0.92.
- **Big Five Inventory-2 Short Form (BFI-2-S):** The BFI-2-S, developed by Soto and John (2017), is a brief version of the Big Five Inventory designed to evaluate five core personality dimensions: Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Negative Emotionality, and Open-Mindedness. It contains 30 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale: 1 (Disagree strongly), 2 (Disagree a little), 3 (Neutral; no opinion), 4 (Agree a little), and 5 (Agree strongly). Scores can range from 30 to 150, with higher scores in any domain reflecting a greater expression of that trait. The scale has demonstrated acceptable reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.75.
- **Locus of Control Scale:** This scale was originally developed by Rotter in the year 1966, this scale measures an individual's belief about the extent to which they can control events in their life. It consists of 23 pairs of statements, with respondents choosing the one statement in each pair that they agree with most. Each pair includes one item reflecting internal control and another reflecting external control. To reduce response bias, six additional filler items are included. Total scores range from 0 to 23. A score of 12 or lower suggests an internal locus of control, while a score of 13 or higher indicates an external locus of control. The scale's reliability is supported by a Cronbach's alpha of 0.70.

Sample:

The sample consists of 108 participants (54 participants from millennials and 54 participants from centennials). The participants ranged in age from 13 to 44 years. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to select the sample for the study. The data was collected either in paper format or via an online survey platform through google forms, depending on participant preference.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 4.1: showing the Mean, SD and t-value for the astrological belief among millennials and centennials

Variable	Generation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value
Astrological Belief	Centennials	54	62.11	16.28	2.22*
	Millennials	54	68.92	15.51	

**Significant at 0.05 level*

- **Hypothesis 1:** There will be significant difference in astrological belief in millennials and centennials.

Table 4.1 shows the independent sample t-test to explore whether there is any significant difference in the astrological belief among millennials and centennials. The results indicate that millennials with a mean value of 68.92 and with a standard deviation score of 15.51, reported higher levels of astrological belief compared to centennials who had a mean score of 62.11 and a standard deviation score of 16.28. The observed t-value is 2.22, which indicates that the difference in astrological belief between millennial and centennials is significant at 0.05 level and compared to centennials, millennials are more like to believe in astrology. This supports the findings of Harris Poll (2024) who reported through a survey that 83% of millennials in U.S. consider themselves as believers in astrology, compared to 62% of Gen Z respondents. Thus, the first hypothesis stating that ‘There is a significant difference in astrological belief in millennials and centennials’ is accepted.

Table 4.2: showing the Mean, SD, and t-value for the personality traits among millennials and centennials

Variable	Generation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-Value
O	Centennials	54	20.64	3.68	2.23*
	Millennials	54	19.27	2.59	
C	Centennials	54	19.88	4.25	1.95 NS
	Millennials	54	21.55	4.60	
E	Centennials	54	19.31	4.29	0.10 NS
	Millennials	54	19.24	3.19	
A	Centennials	54	21.98	4.02	0.30 NS
	Millennials	54	21.75	3.58	
N	Centennials	54	17.18	4.82	0.38NS
	Millennials	54	17.51	4.07	

*NS- Not Significant, * Significant at 0.05 level*

- **Hypothesis 2:** There will be significant difference in personality traits in millennials and centennials.

Table 4.2 shows the independent sample t-test to explore whether there is any significant difference in the Big Five personality traits including Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism among millennials and centennials. The results indicate that centennials with a mean value of 20.64 and a standard deviation score of 3.68, reported higher levels of openness when compared to millennials who had a mean value of 19.27 and a standard deviation score of 2.59. The observed t-value is 2.23, which shows that the difference in openness between millennials and centennials is significant at

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0.05 level and compared to millennials, centennials are more likely to be open to new experiences. This supports the findings of Brandt et al. (2022), who reported that later-born cohorts, including centennials, exhibited higher levels of openness compared to early born cohorts like millennials.

For conscientiousness, the millennials with a mean value of 21.55 and a standard deviation score of 4.60, reported higher levels compared to centennials who had a mean score of 19.88 and a standard deviation score of 4.25. The observed t-value is 1.90, which shows that the difference in conscientiousness between millennials and centennials is not significant at any level and compared to centennials, millennials are more likely to be organized and responsible. This supports the findings of Soto and Jackson (2017), centennials scored low in conscientiousness than millennials and also said that conscientiousness increases with age.

In the context of Extraversion, both millennials and centennials showed very similar scores with a mean value of 19.24 and 19.31 with a standard deviation score of 3.19 and 4.29 respectively. The observed t-value is 0.10 which indicates that the difference in extraversion between millennials and centennials are not significant at any level where both are similar their sociability and outgoingness. This supports the findings of Roberts et al. (2006), who found that personality traits such as extraversion tend to remain relatively stable across different age cohorts, with minimal generational variation in sociability and outgoingness.

For agreeableness, centennials reported a mean score of 21.98 with a standard deviation of 4.02, while millennials had a mean score of 21.75 with a standard deviation score of 3.58. The observed t-value is 0.30 which indicates that the difference in extraversion between millennials and centennials are not significant at any level where both are similar in their level of trust, compassion and cooperation. This supports the findings of Soto (2017), who reported that agreeableness remains a stable personality dimension across generations, with little difference in some of the traits.

Finally, for Neuroticism, Millennials with a mean value of 17.51 and a standard deviation score of 4.07, reported higher level of neuroticism when compared to centennials who had a mean value of 17.18 and a standard deviation of 4.82. The observed t-value is 0.38, which shows that the difference in neuroticism between millennials and centennials are not significant at any level where both have similar level of emotional stability. This supports the findings of Brandt et al. (2023) who reported that mean-level differences in extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism between late millennials and early centennials (Gen Z) were minimal and not statistically significant, indicating high similarity in sociability, cooperation, and emotional stability. Thus, the second hypothesis stating that ‘Millennials and centennials will significantly differ in personality traits’ is rejected.

Table 4.3: showing the Mean, SD, and t-value for the locus of control among millennials and centennials

Variable	Generation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value
Locus of Control	Centennials	54	12.00	3.56	3.34**
	Millennials	54	9.87	3.03	

***Significant at 0.01 level*

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- **Hypothesis 3:** There will be significant difference in locus of control between millennials and centennials.

Table 4.3 shows the independent sample t-test to explore whether there is any significant difference in the locus of control among millennials and centennials. The results indicate that centennials with a mean value of 12.00 and standard deviation of 3.56, reported high levels of external locus of control compared to millennials who had a mean value of 9.87 and a standard deviation of 3.03. The observed t-value is 3.34, which indicates that the difference in the locus of control among millennials and centennials are significant at 0.01 level and compared to millennials, centennials are more likely to perceive external forces as influencing life events, whereas millennials are more likely to believe that outcomes are determined by their own actions and personal control. This supports the findings of Sunil (2017), who reported that millennial females showed higher internal locus of control where he concluded that millennial females believe they can effectively control most situations on their own. Similarly, Ruhiat et al. (2022), found that millennials had higher internal locus of control where they are more likely to engage in responsible financial behaviour, suggesting they believed more in their personal control over life situations. Thus, the third hypothesis stating that ‘Millennials and centennials will significantly differ in locus of control’ is accepted.

Table 4.5: showing the Mean, SD and t-value for the astrological belief among millennials and centennials across both genders.

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t
Astrological Belief	Female	74	65.66	16.15	0.13 NS
	Male	34	65.20	16.51	

NS- Not Significant

- **H4:** There will be significant difference in astrological belief, personality traits and locus of control among millennials and centennials across both genders.

Table 4.5 shows the independent sample t-test to explore whether there is significant difference in the astrological belief among millennials and centennials across both genders. The results indicate that females with a mean value of 65.66 and a standard deviation score of 16.15, reported slightly higher levels of astrological belief compared to male, who had a mean score of 65.20 and a standard deviation score of 16.51. The observed t-value is 0.13, which indicates that the difference in astrological belief between male and females among millennials and centennials is not significant at any level which suggests that both the genders exhibit similar level of belief in astrology. This supports the findings of Tobacyk and Milford (1983), who found that women sometimes scored slightly higher on paranormal and astrology related belief scales but the differences were generally small and often not statistically significant.

Table 4.6: showing the Mean, SD and t-value for the personality traits among millennials and centennials across both genders.

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t
O	Female	74	19.91	3.04	0.20 NS
	Male	34	20.05	3.68	
C	Female	74	21.45	4.35	2.58 *

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Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t
E	Male	34	19.11	4.42	0.24 NS
	Female	74	19.21	3.86	
A	Male	34	19.41	3.61	2.67*
	Female	74	22.51	3.64	
N	Male	34	20.47	3.77	1.69 NS
	Female	74	17.83	4.63	
	Male	34	16.29	3.87	

NS- Not Significant, * Significant at 0.05 level.

Table 4.6 shows the independent sample t-test to explore whether there is any significant difference in the Big Five Personality Traits including Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism among millennials and centennials across both genders.

For Openness, male with a mean value of 20.05 and a standard deviation score of 3.68 reported higher levels of openness compared to females, who had a mean value of 19.91 and a standard deviation score of 3.04. The observed t-value is 0.02, which indicates that the difference in openness between males and females is not significant at any level, suggesting that both genders are equally likely to be imaginative, curious and open to new ideas. This supports the findings of Costa, Terracciano, and McCrae (2001), who found minimal gender differences in openness across 26 cultures through their comprehensive cross-cultural study.

For conscientiousness, female with a mean value of 21.45 and a standard deviation score of 4.35 reported higher levels of conscientiousness compared to males, who had a mean value of 19.11 and a standard deviation score of 4.42. The observed t-value is 2.58, which shows that the difference in conscientiousness between the males and females is significant at 0.05 level, suggesting that females tend to be more diligent, organized and dependable on their actions. This supports the findings of Feingold (1994), who found that women scored somewhat higher than men on certain facets of conscientiousness, particularly in their orderliness and dutifulness.

In the context of extraversion, both male and female showed very similar scores, with female having a mean value of 19.21 and a standard deviation score of 3.86 and males with a mean value of 19.41 and a standard deviation score of 3.61. the observed t-value is 0.24, which indicates that the difference in extraversion between male and females is not significant at any level, which means that both genders are comparably outgoing, energetic and comfortable in social situations. This supports the findings of Schmitt et al. (2008) who found that gender differences in extraversion were small and not consistent across fifty-five nations.

For agreeableness, females with a mean score of 22.51 and a standard deviation score of 3.64 reported higher levels of agreeableness compared to males, who had a mean value of 20.47 and a standard deviation score of 3.77. The observed t-value is 2.67, which indicates that the differences in agreeableness between males and females are significant at 0.05 level. This reflect that females are generally more cooperative, empathetic and considering towards others. This supports the findings of Costa and McCrae (1992), who consistently found higher agreeableness scores among women across different cultures and age groups.

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Finally, for neuroticism, females with the mean value of 17.83 and a standard deviation score of 4.63 reported higher levels of neuroticism compared to males, who had a mean value of 16.29 and a standard deviation score of 3.87. The observed t-value is 1.69, which shows that the difference in neuroticism between males and females is not significant at any level, which suggests that both genders experience similar levels of emotional sensitivity and vulnerability to stress. This supports the findings of Weisberg, DeYoung, and Hirsh (2011), who found that while women often score higher in neuroticism and can vary in their magnitude depending on some external factors.

Table 4.7 showing the Mean, SD and t-value for the locus of control among millennials and centennials across both genders.

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t
Locus of Control	Female	74	11.28	3.57	1.55 NS
	Male	34	10.17	3.10	

NS- Not Significant

Table 4.7 shows the independent sample t-test to explore whether there is any significant difference in locus of control across gender. The results indicate that females, with a mean value of 11.28 and a standard deviation of 3.57, reported higher levels of locus of control compared to males, who had a mean value of 10.17 and a standard deviation of 3.10. The observed t-value is 1.55, which indicates that the difference in locus of control between males and females is not significant at any level. This suggests that both genders have a similar tendency to believe that life outcomes are influenced by their own actions and personal control, rather than by external forces. This supports the findings of Chubb, N. H., Fertman, C. I., & Ross, J. L. (1997) who found that females reported slightly higher internal locus of control than men, but the differences were not statistically significant which suggests that both males and females generally view themselves as having a similar level of influence over the outcomes in their lives. Thus, the fourth hypothesis stating that ‘There will be a significant difference in astrological belief, personality traits, and locus of control among millennials and centennials on basis of genders.’ is partially accepted.

CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that Millennials demonstrated significantly higher levels of astrological belief than Centennials, indicating a generational difference in how astrology is used and interpreted. However, Centennials scored higher in the personality trait of openness and in locus of control, suggesting a stronger cognitive flexibility and tendency to view life events as influenced by external forces. Gender analysis revealed no significant difference in astrological belief or locus of control, but females scored significantly higher in conscientiousness and agreeableness where these two traits are linked to social responsibility and cooperation. These findings offer meaningful insights for psychologists, educators, and social researchers where understanding the psychological and generational roots of astrological belief allows for the development of more targeted mental health interventions, educational strategies, and workplace frameworks that account for individual differences in cognition, personality, and belief systems.

Suggestions for Further Research:

This study included 108 participants, a sample size that may be insufficient to generalize the results to the entire population. Analysing these variables with a larger sample could provide more precise and representative findings.

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Future studies can also examine how constant exposure to astrological content on social media platforms influences users' belief systems, especially among Centennials. This includes understanding the role of algorithms in reinforcing these beliefs and their impact on psychological well-being and life satisfaction.

Mental health professionals and educators could develop interventions that address the influence of belief systems, particularly in individuals with a high external locus of control or elevated neuroticism. Programs that promote self-awareness, cognitive flexibility, and media literacy may help individuals make more informed decisions and reduce the dependence on external belief systems. Such efforts could empower individuals to reflect more thoughtfully and make choices that align with their personal values, rather than being overly influenced by external beliefs.

It would be interesting if we investigate how belief in astrology influences real-life behaviours such as career choices, relationship decisions, health practices, and financial planning. This would provide a practical framework for evaluating the functional role of astrological belief in everyday life.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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