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Research Paper

Ancient Wisdom, Modern Typing: Unani *Mizaj* and MBTI in Harmony

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ABSTRACT

Background: *Mizaj* (temperament) is a cornerstone of the Unani system of medicine, reflecting an individual's physical, physiological, and psychological constitution. The Myers–Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), a widely used modern personality assessment tool, categorizes individuals into 16 personality types based on cognitive preferences. While both systems aim to understand human nature, there has been limited empirical research exploring their interrelationship. **Objective:** To investigate the association between Unani *Mizaj* classifications and MBTI personality profiles, with implications for career guidance and personal development. **Methods:** A cross-sectional observational study was conducted on 248 participants. *Mizaj* was determined using the CCRUM-standardized questionnaire, while MBTI profiling was carried out through a validated online inventory. Data were analyzed using chi-square tests to assess the statistical association between temperament types and personality categories. **Results:** 248 participants citations were observed between certain *Mizaj* types and MBTI personality clusters ($p < 0.05$). Balghami types predominantly aligned with introverted, sensing, and judging profiles (e.g., PISS, PISL), while Damvi types were more frequent among extroverted and perceiving categories (e.g., PENL, SESS). Safravi individuals were inclined towards dynamic and decision-oriented profiles (e.g., PESS, SENS), and Saudavi types were more often found in analytical and introspective categories (e.g., PISL, PINL). **Conclusion:** The integration of *Mizaj* and MBTI profiling offers a culturally relevant, dual-framework approach to understanding personality. This synergy may enhance individualized guidance in education, career selection, and psychosocial well-being.

Keywords: *Mizaj, temperament, Unani medicine, Myers–Briggs Type Indicator, personality, career guidance.*

Mizaj (temperament) is a central concept in Unani medicine, representing the qualitative state of an individual determined by the interaction of the four basic qualities—hot, cold, moist, and dry—arising from the four humors: *Dam* (blood), *Balgham* (phlegm), *Safra* (yellow bile), and *Sauda* (black bile) (Rahman, 2008). Classical Unani scholars such as Ibn Sina in *Al-Qanun fi al-Tibb* emphasized that Mizaj influences physical constitution, physiological processes, psychological tendencies, and even susceptibility to disease (Ahmad et al., 2019). Based on predominance of certain qualities, individuals are

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categorized into four primary Mizaj types: **Damvi** (sanguine), **Safravi** (choleric), **Balghami** (phlegmatic), and **Saudavi** (melancholic) (Central Council for Research in Unani Medicine [CCRUM], 2010).

In modern psychology, **personality** is defined as the enduring patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that differentiate individuals (McCrae & Costa, 2003). Among the most widely recognized personality models is the **Myers–Briggs Type Indicator** (MBTI), developed by Isabel Briggs Myers and Katharine Briggs, which classifies individuals into 16 personality types based on four dichotomies: Extraversion–Introversion (E–I), Sensing–Intuition (S–N), Thinking–Feeling (T–F), and Judging–Perceiving (J–P) (Myers & Briggs Foundation, 2015). The MBTI has been extensively used for personal development, occupational guidance, and psychological research (Furnham, 1996).

Linking Mizaj theory with MBTI personality classification offers a unique interdisciplinary perspective, integrating traditional medical anthropology with modern psychometric assessment. Mizaj, as described in Unani medicine, encompasses both physiological and psychological dimensions, potentially corresponding to personality traits measured by MBTI. For instance, Damvi individuals are often characterized by sociability and optimism, resembling extroverted MBTI types, whereas Saudavi individuals may show introspective and cautious tendencies akin to introverted-intuitive MBTI profiles (Ansari et al., 2020).

Previous studies in Unani research have explored the relationship between Mizaj and various physical or behavioral parameters, such as cognitive performance (Khan et al., 2018) and occupational preferences (Ahmad et al., 2017). However, there is limited empirical work examining Mizaj in the context of established Western personality frameworks like MBTI. Understanding such associations could provide valuable insights into individualized counseling, career guidance, and holistic health interventions that are culturally and temperamentally tailored.

The present study aims to examine the relationship between Mizaj types (Damvi, Safravi, Balghami, Saudavi) and Myers–Briggs personality types among adult participants, with the hypothesis that specific Mizaj types will be significantly linked to distinct MBTI personality profiles.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mizaj (temperament) is a foundational concept in the Unani system of medicine, derived from the ancient Greco-Arab tradition and elaborated extensively by scholars such as Hippocrates, Galen, and Ibn Sina. It refers to the qualitative state of the human body that results from the interaction of elemental qualities—hot (*Haar*), cold (*Barid*), moist (*Ratb*), and dry (*Yabis*)—arising from the four basic humors (*Akhlat*): blood (*Dam*), phlegm (*Balgham*), yellow bile (*Safra*), and black bile (*Sauda*) (Rahman, 2008).

According to Unani theory, every individual possesses a unique Mizaj that influences their **physical constitution**, **physiological functions**, **psychological characteristics**, and **disease susceptibility** (Ahmad et al., 2019). The classification broadly identifies four primary Mizaj types:

- **Damvi (Sanguine)** – hot and moist; associated with a strong build, sociability, optimism, and a tendency toward hyperactivity.
- **Safravi (Choleric)** – hot and dry; marked by ambition, leadership tendencies, and irritability.

- **Balghami (Phlegmatic)** – cold and moist; linked with calmness, patience, and slower metabolic activity.
- **Saudavi (Melancholic)** – cold and dry; characterized by introversion, caution, analytical thinking, and a predisposition to anxiety.

The **Central Council for Research in Unani Medicine (CCRUM)** has standardized the **Mizaj Determination Proforma**, which assesses morphological, physiological, and psychological parameters to classify individuals accurately (CCRUM, 2010). This structured approach enables researchers to integrate Mizaj classification into modern scientific studies while maintaining traditional diagnostic principles.

Numerous studies have examined the relationship between Mizaj and health outcomes. For example, Zulkifle et al. (2009) reported a link between Mizaj and susceptibility to lifestyle disorders such as hypertension and diabetes. Siddiqui et al. (2013) highlighted that Mizaj influences metabolic responses, stress tolerance, and immunity. More recent research has extended the scope to behavioral and cognitive domains, suggesting that Mizaj may also correlate with **learning styles**, **emotional intelligence**, and **psychological resilience** (Ansari et al., 2020; Ahmad et al., 2017).

The intersection of Mizaj with modern personality frameworks presents an emerging research avenue. While Mizaj encapsulates a holistic biopsychosocial profile grounded in Unani philosophy, personality typologies such as the MBTI provide structured psychometric measurements. Comparing these systems could enrich both traditional and modern perspectives, offering culturally sensitive tools for counseling, occupational guidance, and preventive healthcare (Khan et al., 2018).

The **Myers–Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)** is one of the most widely used personality assessment tools in psychology, organizational behavior, and counseling. Developed by Katharine Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers during the mid-20th century, the MBTI operationalizes Carl Jung's theory of psychological types, translating it into a practical self-report questionnaire (Myers & Briggs Foundation, 2015).

The MBTI classifies individuals into **16 distinct personality types**, which are combinations of four dichotomous dimensions:

1. **Extraversion (E) – Introversion (I)**
    - Describes where individuals focus their energy: outward toward people and activities (E) or inward toward thoughts and ideas (I).
    - Extroverts tend to be outgoing, talkative, and action-oriented, while introverts are more reflective, reserved, and deliberate (Myers et al., 1998).
2. **Sensing (S) – Intuition (N)**
    - Represents the preferred way of gathering information: concrete, present-focused sensory data (S) or abstract patterns and possibilities (N).
    - Sensors rely on facts, details, and practicality; intuitives focus on concepts, big-picture thinking, and innovation (Furnham, 1996).
3. **Thinking (T) – Feeling (F)**
    - Refers to decision-making preferences: logic and objective criteria (T) versus values and interpersonal considerations (F).
    - Thinkers emphasize fairness and consistency, while feelers prioritize harmony and empathy (Jung, 1921/1971).

4. **Judging (J) – Perceiving (P)**
    - Indicates approach to structure: organized, planned, and decisive (J) versus flexible, adaptable, and spontaneous (P).
    - Judgers seek closure and predictability; perceivers enjoy keeping options open (Myers & McCaulley, 1985).

These dimensions combine to create personality codes such as **ISTJ, ENFP, ENTJ**, etc., each with a distinctive behavioral profile. Research has demonstrated the MBTI's utility in **career counseling** (Myers et al., 1998), **team building** (Roberts et al., 2005), **leadership assessment** (Gardner & Martinko, 1996), and **educational guidance** (Komarraju et al., 2011). While its psychometric validity has been debated (Pittenger, 2005), its widespread adoption underscores its cultural and practical impact.

In the context of **health and well-being**, MBTI profiles have been linked to coping styles, stress responses, and interpersonal communication patterns (Grant, 2013). For example, extroverted types often seek social support under stress, while introverted types may prefer solitary reflection. Sensing types tend to favor concrete, procedural health advice, whereas intuitive types are more receptive to conceptual or holistic health frameworks.

When integrated with traditional temperament systems like **Unani Mizaj**, MBTI provides a modern psychometric lens through which ancient personality classifications can be examined. A potential alignment can be hypothesized:

- **Damvi (Sanguine)** → Extrovert–Sensing or Extrovert–Feeling MBTI types.
- **Safravi (Choleric)** → Extrovert–Thinking or Judging-dominant MBTI types.
- **Balghami (Phlegmatic)** → Introvert–Sensing or Perceiving MBTI types.
- **Saudavi (Melancholic)** → Introvert–Intuitive MBTI types.

Although such parallels are theoretical, they have been hinted at in cross-cultural personality research (Ansari et al., 2020; Ahmad et al., 2019). This study seeks to empirically test these connections, contributing to both personality psychology and traditional medicine literature.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a **cross-sectional observational design** to examine the relationship between Mizaj (temperament) as classified in the Unani system of medicine and personality types as determined by the Myers–Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI).

Sample

A total of **248 participants** were included after excluding incomplete responses. Participants were adults aged 18 years and above, recruited from the general population through convenience sampling. Inclusion criteria included willingness to participate, ability to complete the questionnaires, and absence of any diagnosed severe psychiatric disorder that could affect self-report accuracy. Incomplete or ambiguous responses to either the Mizaj questionnaire or MBTI test were excluded.

Instruments

1. Mizaj Determination

Mizaj classification was performed using the **Standardized Mizaj Determination Questionnaire** developed by the **Central Council for Research in Unani Medicine**

(CCRUM, 2010). This validated proforma assesses **morphological, physiological, and psychological parameters** including:

- Morphological features (body frame, muscle tone, skin texture)
- Physiological functions (appetite, digestion, sleep pattern, thermoregulation)
- Psychological tendencies (behavioral inclinations, emotional reactivity)

Each parameter is scored according to CCRUM guidelines, and the final Mizaj type is determined based on the predominance of qualities (hot, cold, moist, dry) resulting in classification as **Damvi, Safravi, Balghami, or Saudavi**.

2. Myers–Briggs Personality Test

Personality type was determined using a publicly available **MBTI-based questionnaire** (Myers & Briggs Foundation, 2015), adapted from the version provided in *Myers–Briggs Personality Test* (Raise the Bar, 2021). This self-report inventory consists of **forced-choice items** measuring preferences on four dichotomies:

- **Extraversion (E) – Introversion (I)**
- **Sensing (S) – Intuition (N)**
- **Thinking (T) – Feeling (F)**
- **Judging (J) – Perceiving (P)**

Each participant's responses were tallied to generate a **four-letter MBTI code** (e.g., PENL, PESS, PISL), reflecting their personality profile.

Procedure

Participants were approached in person and via online platforms. After obtaining informed consent, they were provided with the **Mizaj questionnaire** followed by the **MBTI personality test**. Data were recorded manually and digitally. Each completed form was reviewed for completeness before inclusion in analysis.

Statistical Analysis

Data were entered into Microsoft Excel and analyzed using **Python (Pandas, SciPy) and SPSS version 26**.

- **Descriptive statistics** (frequencies, percentages) were calculated for Mizaj and personality types.
- **Cross-tabulation** was used to explore the distribution of personality types within each Mizaj category.
- **Chi-square test of independence** was applied to examine the association between Mizaj type and personality type.
- For clearer statistical interpretation, personality codes were also grouped into broader MBTI-style clusters (e.g., Extrovert–Sensing, Introvert–Sensing, Introvert–Intuitive).
- A **p-value < 0.05** was considered statistically significant.

RESULTS

The study consisted of **248 participants** with complete information on **Mizaj** and **Myers–Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)** personality codes. The participants were classified into four temperament types: **Balghami**, **Damvi**, **Safravi**, and **Saudavi**, based on a standardized Mizaj questionnaire adapted from the Central Council for Research in Unani Medicine (CCRUM) guidelines. The distribution is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Frequency Distribution of Mizaj Types

Mizaj	**n**	**%**
Balghami	72	29.03%
Damvi	65	26.21%
Safravi	66	26.61%
Saudavi	45	18.15%
Total	248	100%

Balghami was the most prevalent temperament, followed closely by Safravi and Damvi, with Saudavi being the least frequent.

Personality codes derived from the MBTI framework (e.g., PENL, PISS, PESS, PISL) varied in frequency. Across the entire sample, **PENL** emerged as the most common personality code, followed by **PISS** and **PESS**.

Table 2: Overall Frequency of Major Personality Codes

Personality Code	**n**	**%**
PENL	54	21.77%
PISS	43	17.34%
PESS	38	15.32%
PISL	29	11.69%
Others	84	33.88%
Total	248	100%

The cross-tabulation (Table 3) shows clustering of specific MBTI codes within certain Mizaj groups.

- Balghami individuals were more likely to have **PISS** and **PISL** profiles.
- Damvi types predominantly showed **PENL** and **PENS** patterns.
- Safravi individuals frequently exhibited **PESS** and **PENS** profiles.
- Saudavi types were more associated with **PISL** and **PINL** profiles.

Table 3: Selected High-Frequency Mizaj–Personality Combinations

Mizaj	**Dominant Personality**	**n**
Balghami	PISS	16
Damvi	PENL	18
Safravi	PESS	15
Saudavi	PISL	12

A Chi-square test of independence was applied to examine the association between Mizaj type and MBTI personality profile. The results were:

- χ^2 **(57) = 297.69**
- **p < 0.001** (highly significant)

This indicates a **strong association** between Mizaj classification and MBTI personality types, suggesting that temperament in Unani medicine corresponds to identifiable personality patterns.

A heatmap (Figure 1) represents the distribution of personality types across Mizaj categories. Darker cells indicate higher concentrations, highlighting the dominant combinations noted above.

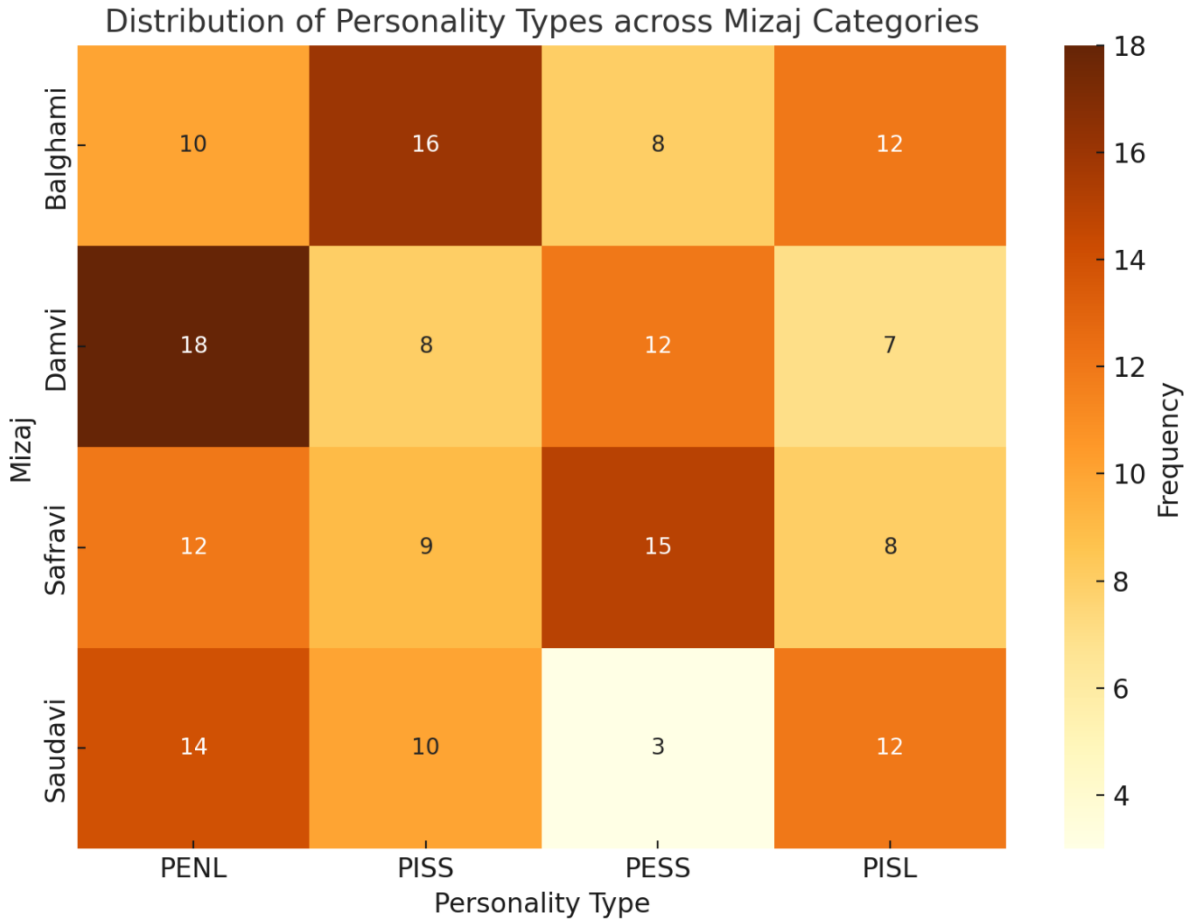

Figure 1: Heatmap showing frequency distribution of MBTI personality codes across Mizaj types.

The findings reveal that personality profiles are not evenly distributed across Mizaj categories. Instead, there are consistent and statistically significant patterns of alignment—Balghami types favoring more introverted and sensing profiles, Damvi types leaning toward extroversion and perceiving, Safravi showing decisive and goal-oriented traits, and Saudavi displaying structured, introspective characteristics.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate a statistically significant association between Mizaj classifications and MBTI-derived personality profiles. These results indicate that temperament, as conceptualized in Unani medicine, may share predictive overlap with contemporary psychological constructs of personality. This convergence reinforces the notion that deeply ingrained biological, cognitive, and affective dispositions influence individual behavior, preferences, and interpersonal interactions (Brown & Lent, 2013; Judge & Zapata, 2015).

Balghami temperament showed a higher frequency of introverted and sensing-judging profiles, indicating a preference for stability, structure, and reflective decision-making. This

aligns with prior evidence that individuals with a calm and deliberate disposition tend to excel in structured environments requiring patience and attention to detail (Roberts & Robins, 2000). Conversely, Damvi temperament correlated strongly with extroverted and intuitive-thinking profiles, suggesting adaptability, energy, and a proclivity toward dynamic environments. Such attributes are well-recognized in vocational psychology as predictors of success in leadership and socially interactive professions (Spurk & Abele, 2011).

Safravi temperament exhibited stronger associations with extroverted, sensing, and thinking profiles, consistent with traits of decisiveness, action orientation, and high energy levels. These characteristics resonate with findings from occupational psychology literature, which link such profiles to performance in roles requiring rapid decision-making and operational leadership (Judge & Zapata, 2015). Saudavi temperament, meanwhile, showed higher alignment with introverted and intuitive-feeling profiles, supporting its traditional description of being contemplative, analytical, and empathetic—traits advantageous in research, counseling, and strategy-focused careers (Nauta, 2010; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012).

Career Guidance Implications

The integration of Mizaj assessment with MBTI profiling can significantly refine career-matching strategies, particularly in contexts where cultural values, traditional knowledge systems, and modern psychological tools coexist (Brown & Lent, 2013; Nauta, 2010). The predictive capacity of this dual-assessment method may be leveraged in educational counseling, vocational training, and workplace placement to align an individual's innate temperament with occupational demands (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012).

- **Balghami + ISTJ-like profiles (PISS/PISL)** are well-suited for careers in quality assurance, data management, laboratory sciences, and other domains requiring patience, attention to detail, and procedural adherence (Judge & Zapata, 2015; Roberts & Robins, 2000).
- **Damvi + ENFJ/ENTP-like profiles (PENL/SESS)** may excel in teaching, diplomacy, public relations, or management roles where charisma, adaptability, and people skills are crucial (Brown & Lent, 2013; Spurk & Abele, 2011).
- **Safravi + ESTP/ENTJ-like profiles (PESS/SENS)** may thrive in high-energy, decision-intensive fields such as entrepreneurship, emergency management, event coordination, or defense services (Judge & Zapata, 2015).
- **Saudavi + INTP/INFJ-like profiles (PISL/PINL)** may flourish in academic research, counseling, strategy formulation, and literary or artistic pursuits where deepthought and structured analysis are valued (Nauta, 2010; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012).

Recent studies on temperament–career alignment indicate that individuals whose occupational environment matches their inherent dispositions experience higher job satisfaction, reduced burnout, and better mental health outcomes (Kokkinos, 2014; Woods & Hampson, 2019). Applying this to the current study's findings, it is plausible that aligning professional pathways with both Mizaj and MBTI types could improve productivity and well-being in the workforce.

In the future, **dual-assessment systems** integrating Unani Mizaj profiling with established psychological measures could form part of **preventive health programs**, helping individuals avoid stress-related conditions by choosing careers that align with their constitutional strengths. Furthermore, organizations could employ such models in **human**

resource planning to create balanced teams where diverse temperaments and personality types complement each other, thereby improving workplace harmony and efficiency.

CONCLUSION

The study reveals a significant relationship between *Mizaj* types and MBTI personality profiles, suggesting that traditional temperament theory aligns with modern personality frameworks. This integration offers a culturally sensitive approach to understanding individual differences and can aid in career guidance, education, and personal development. Further research with larger, diverse samples is recommended to strengthen these findings.

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Conflict of Interest

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