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PERSONALITY TRAITS AND JOB PERFORMANCE AMONG LECTURERS IN RIVERS STATE UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

The study investigated personality traits pay satisfaction as predictors on job performance among lecturers in Rivers State University. The study was guided by three research questions and three null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted Cross-sectional design. A sample of 200 lecturers in Rivers State University through census sampling techniques. The instrument for data collection were The big five personality inventory was used for this study, and Job Performance scale (JPS) whose constructs validity were tested using convergent validity process. The reliability coefficient was obtained through Cronbach Alpha. The data collected were analyzed using simple linear regression. While the R values were used in answering the research questions, the ANOVA associated with the regression analysis were used in dealing with the hypotheses. From the findings, it was discovered that the personality traits of neuroticism, openness to experience and agreeableness of lecturers were found to be negatively related to lecturers' job performance in the in Rivers State University. Based on the findings of the study, recommendations were made.

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Introduction

Performance is defined as the degree of task accomplishment that constitutes the lecturers' job (Lloyd and Leslie, 2004). It is the accomplishment of a given task measured against preset known standards of accuracy, completeness, cost, and speed. In a contract, performance is deemed to be the fulfillment of an obligation, in a manner that releases the performer from all liabilities under the contract. Once a task is given, performance is inevitable and cannot be overlooked because it depicts the action that will produce the desired result or outcome as expected by the task-giver. Every existing University expects optimal performance from their lecturers to ensure effectiveness and efficiency for maximum output and realization of University goals respectively. An educational institution such as the Rivers State University has the goal of producing graduates with academic excellence and ability to meet societal demand as far as the world of work is concerned. Therefore, if mediocre are produced, the adverse effect will be highly pronounced on the larger society. So, if lecturers cannot perform at their peaks or optimal level, the set goals of the University may not be achieved. Lecturers who perform at their peaks or optimal level can be said to be satisfied on their jobs and have good personalities which help to sustain their interest in the job they do. In other words, the success of any University depends largely on the lecturers' job satisfaction, and this can be noticed when there is no complaint about the management, salaries and wages or little problems that are associated with carrying out their duty.

Personality is a dynamic organization of all the psychophysical systems which determine the uniqueness in adapting to the environment (Robbins, 2015). Personality characteristics encompass the whole dynamic concept that gives description to the growth and development of the whole psychological system of the person (Indiyati, Yulianti and Ramdhany, 2016). The personality characteristics of the lecturers are keys towards determining their level of performance. This is because for lecturers to have increasing level of performance, there is a need for them to be highly creative, with high intellectual skills, personality, thinking style, motivation, knowledge (Amabile, 2012). It has been established also that lecturers who are creative in the classroom must not only demonstrate creativity in intelligence, work experience or schooling but there must be possession of requisite personality characteristics and capacity (Florida et al., 2008). Studies have found significant relationship between personality traits and job performance. According to Ozer and Benet-Martinez (2006) the big five personality has been related with different forms of behaviors such as job performance, prosperity, leadership, and achievement. Darsana (2013) investigated personality traits and job performance of lecturers and found that a significant and positive relationship exists between personality factors and job performance. This study hinged on Campbell's theory of job performance which states that outcome is the result of a lecturer's job performance (Wei and Yazdanifard, 2014).

According to John Campbell, performance does not have to be actions that can be observed directly, but it is the mental productions of an individual which provides answers to some crucial questions. Therefore, performance must be under the control of an individual, either behavior or mental (Wei and Yazdanifard, 2014). Performance must be therefore relevant to the goal of the organization, and which is driven by several factors such as motivation, job satisfaction, commitment, personality traits, interest, training and so on (Wei and Yazdanifard, 2014).

The personality traits of the lecturers have been found to significantly influence their performance (Indiyati et al., 2016). This implies that poor performance of lecturers may have been caused by their personality traits. In essence, lecturers with good, hardworking, collaborative, and friendly personality would ultimately have good working relations with students and other lecturers which in turn optimize their level of performance. However, those lecturers with faulty and unfriendly personality would negatively affect their level of performance.

Statement of the problem

The ultimate goal of higher education in Rivers State University is for Excellence and Creativity. This goal can be achieved through effective teaching conducted by the university lecturers. However, the teaching method conducted by some of the university lecturers might be less effective due to lack of their job performances. Although, various methods like workshops, promotions and increased salary have been used to increase the

level of job performance of the lecturers but other variables such as the practice of personality traits can be put into consideration, for lecturers in Rivers State University.

There is also a need for the researcher to conduct a further study in order to clarify the real issues regarding job performance and personality traits of Rivers State University lecturers.

The research questions for this study is posed as follows:

1. What is the relationship between lecturers' personality traits and job performance among lecturers in Rivers State University?

Literature Review

Job Performance

Nwachukwu (2006) also referred to job performance as the output resulting from a given resources input at a given time. The job performance of an individual is a function of the personal features of that individual and the environment in which the individual finds himself. Doneedy (2002) regarded job performance as the overall effectiveness and efficiency of getting thing done.

Job performance comprises a set of objectives, observable and measurable actions, under the control of the worker, whose purposes are shared with the demands of the organization (Motowidlo & Kell, 2012). Despite this characteristic of encompassing observable behaviors, studies on the theme rarely include observation methods (Mourão et al., 2016).

Job performance can be operationalized in very different ways depending on our purposes, ranging from broad descriptions of behaviors (e.g., demonstrating effort, industriousness, adaptability) to narrow ones (e.g., written and oral communications, attendance, adherence to rules).

Personality

Personality according to Hogan (1991), a person personality is a relatively stable precursor of behavior; it underlies an enduring style of thinking, feeling, and acting. However, Guthrie et. al (1998) Stated that personality can be defined as a predisposition to act or behave in a characteristic fashion in response to one's environment. Based on Pervin et. al (2005), personality refers to the characteristics of the person that account for consistent patterns of feeling, thinking, and behaving.

Dimensions of Personality

(The Big Five Model) Goldberg (1993) mentioned that FFM has received extensive empirical support and has gained acceptance as the trait personality model that can provide the desired personality variable consistency across samples and context. Mount and Barrick (1995) mentioned that it appears that many personality psychologists have reached a consensus that five personality constructs, referred to as the Big Five, are necessary and sufficient to describe the basic dimensions of normal personality. This study prefers to use the Big Five Model because it widely used to measure personality. According to Paunonen and Ashton (2001), the Big Five personality dimensions of neuroticism, extroversion, agreeableness, openness to experience and conscientious have been studied extensively and have been associated with a variety of work attitudes and behavior. These five personality dimensions are broad dimensions that are theorized to subsume most narrowly focused personality traits. The breadth of these dimensions is a benefit in that it distils many personality traits into a parsimonious set of dimensions for use in research. It means that this model is widely used and suitable to use in any research. As Stated by Harris and Fleming (2005), the Five Factor Model has enjoyed widespread popularity in the field. Five personality traits collectively classify the higher-level dispositions of an individual according to the Five Factor Model.

Extroversion

According to Eysenck (1986), extraverts tend to seek interaction with others, novel experiences and complex, varied, and intense stimuli, extroverts, on the other hand, prefer their own company and prefer the familiar and unfamiliar. While Costa and McCrae (1992) Stated that extroverts are gregarious, assertive, activity and excitement seeking. It similar with Mount and Barrick (1995) which mentioned that extraversion is most often described as the degree to which an individual is sociable, gregarious, talkative, assertive, adventurous, active, energetic, and ambitious. Based on Watson and Clark (1997), extroverts have been found to be socially engaging, gregarious, assertive, expressive, articulate, comfortable in group settings and have a great number of friends. Williams (1997), extraverts also tend to be high in positive affectivity, self-efficacy, and optimism. According to Harris and Fleming (2005), extroversion represents various aspects such as sociable, gregarious, assertive, and talkative. However, Manning et. al (2006) Stated that extroversion is about the extent to which people are comfortable in social relationships, how socially inhibited, and the extrovert who is comfortable in social relationships and socially uninhibited. Tallman and Brunin (2008) Stated that extroverts' need for power and recognition may also cause them to take more risks in the job and they would expect the organization to support their work activities. Besides, Tallman and Bruning (2008) also Stated people high in extroversion tend to be high performers and committed to the organization and their work. They will develop psychological contracts that reflect their hard work, commitment, and willingness to work with others.

Agreeableness

According to Costa and McCrae (1992), agreeableness is associated with “the need for intimacy”, the recurrent preference in thought and behavior for experience of warm, close, and communicative interactions with others. Individuals high in agreeableness are trusting, cooperative, altruistic, compliant and “moved by others”. However, Graziano et. al (1996) mentioned that high agreeable individuals may in their pursuit of harmonious relations generate more positive attributions to otherwise provocative behavior than low agreeable persons would do. Based on Barry and Friedman (1998), agreeableness is related to “pro-social motives”, aimed at seeking good outcomes for oneself as well as for other group members. Judge et. al (2002) Stated that agreeable individuals have greater motivation to achieve interpersonal intimacy. While Harris and Fleming (2005) which mentioned that agreeableness describes the courteous, sympathetic, tender-hearted, and kind characteristics. Dijkstra et. al (2005), those who are low in agreeableness have been described as antagonistic, competitive, cynical, callous, ruthless, and cruel, and they tend to experience and express hostility. According to Manning et. al (2006), agreeableness is about the extent to which people are sensitive and responsive to others, including the extent to which they will defer to them. The two extremes are the tough-minded individual, operating predominantly at a thinking level and lacking sensitivity and responsiveness, and the tender-minded individual, operating predominantly at a feelings level and displaying sensitivity and responsiveness. Bernerth et. al (2007), agreeable individuals are described as good-natured, cheerful, and caring. An individual high in agreeableness is fundamentally altruistic.

Conscientiousness

Barrick and Mount (1991) mentioned that conscientious individuals have been characterized as dependable, responsible, hard-working, self-disciplined, persistent, painful, and organized. Similarly with Costa and McCrae (1992) which mentioned that conscientious people value duty, competence, self-discipline, and achievement. Besides, Costa and McCrae (1992) also mentioned that conscientiousness consist of the specific's traits of competence, order, dutifulness, achievement striving, self-discipline and deliberation. Based on Mount and Barrick (1995), individuals high in conscientiousness are characterized as being responsible, careful, preserving, orderly, cautious, painful, hardworking and achievement oriented. As Stated by Wright (2003), people high in conscientiousness have a sense of duty and obligation to their work and have high job performance, career success, motivation, and job satisfaction. However, Harris and Fleming (2005) Stated that conscientiousness refers to characteristics such as being organized, orderly, precise, and efficient. Manning et. al (2006) Stated that conscientious is about the number of goals that an individual pursues and the extend which they pursue

them in a focused way. The two extremes are spontaneous individual, who pursues many goals but in an unfocused way and the conscientiousness individual, who pursues fewer goals but does so in a more focused, controlled, and structured way.

Neuroticism

Neuroticism is always related to the characteristics of people who have negative affect and low in self-esteem. According to Watson and Clark (1984) negative affect is defined by a propensity to view the world in a negative emotional State. Similarly with Levin and Stokes (1989), which mentioned that individuals high in negative affect tend to focus on the negative aspects of other people and themselves. George (1996) also Stated the same view which individuals high in negative affectivity, a concept related to the neuroticism are likely to be more pessimistic, taking a negative view of themselves and the world around them. While Brockner (1988) mentioned that persons low in self-esteem and self-efficacy look to others for approval. Turban and Dougherty (1994) mentioned that individuals with low self-esteem tend to withdraw from challenging situations, are less confident in their abilities, less likely to seek feedback, and see themselves as less appealing to others. Judge et. al (1998) mentioned that neuroticism has been found to be negatively related to self-esteem, self-efficacy, and locus of control. Both characteristics are supported by Bernerth et. al (2007) as characteristic in neuroticism, which they mentioned that neuroticism is composed of several characteristics including low self-esteem and negative affectivity. However, Costa and McCrae (1992), neuroticism consists of the specific traits of anxiety, angry hostility, depression, self-consciousness, impulsiveness, and vulnerability. Based on Mount and Barrick (1995), neuroticism as “emotional stability” (reverse scale) by some researchers and can be further conceptualized as the extent to which a person is emotional insecure, nervous, fearful, and apprehensive. Some researcher Stated that neuroticism persons also limited in social skills, and they are not interest in any long-term relationship. As Stated by Judge et. al (1997), research has shown neurotic individuals are severely limited in their social skills. Raja et. al (2004) mentioned that the neurotic individuals are not likely to establish long-term relationships that demand commitments, social skills, and trust in others.

Openness

According to Costa and McCrae (1992), openness to experience is related to active imagination, aesthetic sensitivity, attentiveness to feelings, preference for variety, intellectual curiosity, and independence of judgment. Costa and McCrae (1992) also Stated that high openness employees seek challenging and interesting work and would expect the organization to satisfy this need. People who are open have a high need for autonomy and tend to be creative, adaptive, and accepting of change. Similar with Judge and Bono (2000) which mentioned that open individuals are also at time better able to understand and adapt to new perspectives. Based on Bozionelos (2004), individuals who score high on openness should be more likely to report involvement in their work, as their work can serve as the arena to entertain their curiosity, their appetite for exploring new perspectives, and their tendency to develop genuine interests for any activities they are involved in. While Harris and Fleming (2005) mentioned that openness to experience or creativity refers to personal characteristics such as being imaginative, original, and curious. However, most of the researchers mentioned that openness is more on openness to the new experience or change. Manning et. al (2006) also Stated the same perspective where they mentioned that openness is about a person’s openness to new experience and is manifested in such things as an individual’s breadth of interests, level of creativity and intellectual qualities. At two extremes are the conventional individual, who is relatively closed to new experiences and open individual, who is relatively open to such experiences.

Research Method

The research design for this study was cross-sectional survey. A survey design was appropriate for this study because it allowed for the collection of data from a large sample size and provides a comprehensive overview of the study population. This study investigated the personality traits and pay satisfaction as predictors of job performance among lecturers in Rivers State University. The cross-sectional survey design enables the researchers to collect data from a representative sample of lecturers in Rivers State University, and this data is

analyzed to determine the relationship between pay satisfaction and job performance. The population chosen for this study was lecturers in Rivers State University, Nigeria. The target participants for this study were two hundred (200) participants. Data for this study were collected using structured questionnaires. The questionnaires consist of likert scale. agreed, strongly agreed, disagreed, strongly disagreed, and was administered in English language.

Instruments

A questionnaire comprising of demographic information and two instruments were used for data collection. The instruments are; Big five personality invented by Fiske (1949) and Job Performance Scale (JPS) by (Goodman & Svyantek, 1999).

The big five personality inventory was used for this study. The scale was developed in 1949 by D. W. Fiske (1949) and later expanded upon by other researchers including Norman (1967), Smith (1967), Goldberg (1981), and McCrae & Costa (1987). To ensure reliability of the instrument, the Cronbach alpha statistics was utilized, and only the item that returns an alpha value of 0.7 and above was considered adequate for the study. The 5-Point Likert Scale was used in rating the responses. The scale includes: Strongly Agree (SA) = 5, Agree (A) = 4, Undecided (U) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1.

Whereas Job Performance Scale (JPS) was adopted from (Goodman & Svyantek, 1999). Seven points Likert scale ranging from 1. Strongly Disagree to 7. Strongly Agree was used to collect respondents' point of view on different constructs by survey method. The content and face validity (Content & face) was guaranteed by senior colleagues and academicians and Cronbach's Alpha coefficient administered to measure the reliability that was > 0.7 (Chin, 1998, Nunnally, 1978).

Validity and Reliability of The Instrument

The Personality Traits (PT) has been correlated with a number of psychological and physiological scales, and it is the most commonly used psychological tool for assessing perceptions of stress (Chang, 1998; Cohen, 1988; Cohen, Kamarck & Mermelstein, 1983; Ebrecht et al., 2004; Hall, Chipperfield, Perry, Ruthig & Goetz, 2006; Otto et al., 1997). It is a self-reported questionnaire created to gauge how stressful one perceives particular life circumstances to be. The PT-10 gauges how chaotic, out of control, and overburdened people feel their lives to be. All 12 of the studies that employed the PSS-10's Cronbach's alpha graded it at $>.70$. The PT-10's test-retest reliability was evaluated in four investigations, and it consistently met the $>.70$ threshold. The Medical Outcomes Study - Short Form 36, which assesses the mental component of health status, was used to test the criterion validity of the PT-10 (Ware, Snow, Kosinski, & Grandek, 1993).

Results

The socio-demographics of the participants revealed that (7.1%) were in faculty of agriculture, (4.1%) were in faculty of BMS, (5.1%) were in faculty of education, (13.3%) were in faculty of engineering, (2.0%) were in faculty of environmental science, (9.2%) were in faculty of humanities, (2.0%) were in faculty of law, (16.3%) were in faculty of management science, (16.3%) were in faculty of science while (24.5%) were in faculty of social science. Based on age (46.9%) were 35-45 years of age, (42.9%) were 46-55 years of age while (10.2%) were 56-65 years of age. In terms of gender (58.2%) were male while (41.8%) were female. (20.4%) were single, (73.5%) were married, (3.1%) were single parent while (3.1%) were divorced. Based on educational attainment (41.8%) bagged a doctoral degree, (37.8%) possess a master's degree, (18.4%) acquired a bachelor's degree, (1.0%) had OND while (1.0%) had HND. Larger percentage (99.0%) were employed while (1.0%) were unemployed. Based on years of experience (58.2%) had 1-10 years of experience, (35.7%) had 11-20 years of experience while (6.1%) had 21-30 years of experience (**Table 1**).

Table 1: Respondents' Socio-demographics

Category	Level	N (%)
Faculty	Agriculture	7(7.1)
	Basic medical science	4(4.1)
	Education	5(5.1)
	Engineering	13(13.3)
	Environmental science	2(2.0)
	Humanities	9(9.2)
	Law	2(2.0)
	Management science	16(16.3)
	Science	16(16.3)
	Social science	24(24.5)
Age	35-45 years	46(46.9)
	46-55 years	42(42.9)
	56-65 years	10(10.2)
Gender	Male	57(58.2)
	Female	41(41.8)
Marital status	Single	20(20.4)
	Married	72(73.5)
	Single parent	3(3.1)
	Divorced	3(3.1)
Educational Attainment	PHD	41(41.8)
	MSC	37(37.8)
	BSC	18(18.4)
	OND	1(1.0)
	HND	1(1.0)
Job status	Employed	97(99.0)
	Unemployed	1(1.0)
Years of experience	1-10 years	57(58.2)
	11-20 years	35(35.7)
	21-30 years	6(6.1)

The result shows that there was a significant positive relationship between extraversion ($r = .22, p < .05$), this means that respondents high on extraversion tends to have high job performance. There was also significant positive relationship between agreeableness and job performance ($r = .24, p < .05$), this means that high agreeableness tends to high job performance, also openness to experience have negative relationship with job performance ($r = -.21, p < .05$) and job performance among lectures in River State University, this means that respondents who reported high openness to experience tends to low job performance. Also, conscientiousness ($r = -.03, p > .05$) and neuroticism ($r = -.05, p > .05$) did not have significant relationship on job performance among lecturers in River State University. The hypothesis which Stated that there will be significant relationship between personality traits on job performance was accepted.

Hypothesis One: There will be significant relationship between personality traits on job performance among lecturers in River State University.

(Table 2).

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) showing the relationship between Personality traits and job performance

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
Extraversion	7.53	3.37	1					
Agreeableness	7.93	2.09	.30**	1				
Conscientiousness	7.54	3.02	.30**	.12	1			
Neuroticism	11.29	3.98	.11	.07	.45**	1		
Openness	6.53	3.12	.02	-.17	.71**	.38**	1	
Job performance	23.05	5.05	.22*	.24*	-.03	-.05	.21*	1

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Discussion

Based on results from analysis, there was a significant positive relationship between extraversion; this means that respondents high on extraversion tends to have high job performance. There was also significant positive relationship between agreeableness and job performance. Also, conscientiousness and neuroticism did not have significant relationship on job performance among lecturers in River State University. This finding corresponds with findings from Azlina and Sew (2008) which revealed that personality traits of Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism are significantly associated with job performance. On the contrary, there was no correlation found between personality traits of Conscientiousness and Extraversion with job performance. This indicates that by having personality trait of Openness to Experience, it will lead lecturers to have an intellectual curiosity and be creative in performing their teaching process to ensure that they achieve the quality of interaction with students (Kevin, 2007). In addition, personality trait of Agreeableness will lead teachers to establish a caring atmosphere and take a personal interest in each student' needs (Laura, 2008).

On the other hand, the negative correlation which found between traits of Neuroticism indicates that when traits of Neuroticism increase, teachers' job performance will decrease. Personality trait of Neuroticism may affect teachers to perform their teaching well when they are unable to control their stress and transfer their stress to students (Constantinos, 2007). It further explains that Neuroticism will lead teachers to inability to cope with

stress which indirectly hampering teachers to maximize their potential in teaching (Azlina& Sew Lee, 2008). This finding proves that traits of Neuroticism emerged as having the strongest unique contribution on teachers' job performance. This finding is in contrast with a study done by Andreas (2012) who found trait of Conscientiousness as the strongest predictor of job performance. It explains that individuals who are persistent, dependable, organized, and goal directed tend to be higher performers, specifically in the occupation of sales. This suggests that trait of Conscientiousness gives greater emphasis in respect to job performance in the context of sales related job, but not in teaching profession as referred to our findings.

It can be deduce from this study that teachers' differences or individualities may not necessarily have influence on their job performance.

Limitations of the study

In the process of carrying out this study, the researcher experience challenges in finance, extended the survey of this magnitude down to other area at the empirical level, but limitation as included cost of transportation to the source of material and the cost of time setting of the already completed work.

Conclusion

This study discovered that there exists a significant relationship between personality trait and the job performance of lecturers in Rivers State University.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions reached in the study. The Rivers State Government should put into cognizance the employees' personality traits during recruitment into the University.

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