



Predictive Effects of Personality Traits on Job Stress among Secretaries in Olabisi Onabanjo University.

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Abstract. The study examined the predictive effect of Personality traits (Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, Neuroticism and openness to experience) on Job Stress of Secretaries in Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ogun State. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The sample for this study comprised One hundred (100) Secretaries and Assistant secretaries in State-owned universities of Ogun state. The data was collected using Job Stress Scale ($r = 0.96$) and Big Five Personality Scale ($r = 0.80$). Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Multiple Regression Analysis was used to analyse the three research questions raised at 0.05 level of significance. The result revealed that there are positive relationship between Extraversion and job stress of Secretaries, Agreeableness and job stress of secretaries, Conscientiousness and job stress of secretaries and Neuroticism and job stress of secretaries. Also there was a composite effect of Personality traits (Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience) on job stress of secretaries. And Agreeableness was the most potent out of the predictor variables, followed by Conscientiousness. It was recommended among others that the management should have closer look at these factors as an initiative action to prevent high turnover in the organisation. Administrators should then design programs and trainings to help secretaries increase their level of satisfaction with personal learning and growth

opportunities at work, job security, and compensation.

Keywords: Predictive, Personality, Traits, Stress and Secretaries

1. Introduction

Today, job stress is becoming a major issue of increasing concern to employees and organizations. The working environment is significantly changing, longer hours, frequent changes in culture and structure, as well as new and expanded roles that demands new knowledge and skills all of which leads to greater levels of stress (Fotinos-Ventouratos & Cooper, 2005; Christopher & Libert, 2010). Robbins (2001) as cited in Srivastava (2009) defines stress as a dynamic condition in which the individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraint, or demand related to what he or she desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important. Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn (2005) as cited in Popoola and Ilugbo (2010) defined stress as a state of tension experienced by individuals facing extraordinary demands, constraints or opportunities.

Various attempts have been made to identify factors that predispose people to stress. Some researchers (Srivastava, 2009; Lamb, 2009) have suggested that, personality may greatly predict employees stress in workplace, as some personality traits have been found to be strongly associated with satisfaction, dissatisfaction and stress. According to Couper

(2005) personality types are important determinants of stress, as some people can continue functioning for years while handling enormous amounts of stress, while others might cave in within a few months after handling the same amount of stress. Torgersen (2008) and Malt, Retterstol and Dahl (2003) defines Personality traits as stable characteristics of the individual's personality, making up patterns of thinking, sensing and conduct. Theron (2005) also states that the most interesting contributor to developing stress is an individual's personality. The importance of considering the interactions among personality traits has been increasingly acknowledged in stress research. For instance, Akinboye and Adeyemo (2002) as cited in Popoola and Ilugbo (2010) found that some people are generally more stress prone while others are generally less stress prone depending on their personality traits. Also, Lamb (2009) reported that there was a linear relationship between personality traits and job stress of employees of a call centre. The predictive effect of the personality traits should therefore be examined to get a better picture of secretaries' response to stressful conditions. For more empirical studies to determine the nature of stress experienced by secretaries as well as identify specific personality traits which are predictors of stress among them. To do this, the present study intends to investigate the predictive effect of personality traits on job stress among secretaries in Olabisi Onabanjo University.

2. Purposes of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the predictive effects of personality traits on job stress among secretaries in Olabisi Onabanjo University. This study will provides some bases on which recommendations can be made for improving job performance.

3. Research Questions

- Will there be a significant positive correlation between the personality traits and secretaries job stress?
- To what extent will personality traits (Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness to experience) jointly significantly predict Secretaries Job Stress?

- What is the relative effects of personality traits (Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness to experience) on secretaries job stress?

4. Research Methods

Research Design

For the purpose of this research work, descriptive research design of ex-post facto type is adopted. This is appropriate because all the variables will not be manipulated but will be described as they exist.

Population

The population of this study comprised of all secretaries in Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ogun State.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample for this study comprises of One hundred (100) respondents that is randomly selected from five (05) Departments and five (05) Faculties in Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ogun State. From each of the Departments and Faculties, Ten (10) secretaries (comprising of Personal secretaries and Confidential secretaries) are randomly selected, to make a total of 100 respondents.

Research Instrument

The following two instruments are used in this study: The instruments are:

Job Stress Scale (JSS): Job satisfaction is measured using Job Stress scale (JSS) developed by Spector, (1997) which was designed to assess Job stress of secretaries. This scale is a 36-item scale measured along 6 point likert scaling method with sample items including "I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do". The scale has been used in various studies in human services organisations, public and private sectors having an internal consistency of .96 and .91 to provide the scale reliable. A higher score indicate high Job stress of the respondents.

Personality type scale: Big five Inventory (BFI) was used to measure the personality

traits of the Secretaries. It was developed by John & Srivastava (1999). It consist of 44-item inventory that measures an individual on the Big Five Factors (dimensions) of personality (Goldberg, 1993). Each of the factors is then further divided into personality facets. The essence of this perspective is that personality characteristics can be resolved into five broad dimensions, which are distinct from one another:

Extraversion: high energy and activity level, dominance, sociability, expressiveness, and positive emotion.

Agreeableness: pro-social orientation, altruism, tender mindedness, trust and modesty.

Conscientiousness: impulse control, task orientation, goal directedness.

Neuroticism: anxiety, sadness, irritability, and nervous tension.

Openness to experience: it exemplifies the breadth, depth and complexity of an individual's mental and experiential life.

The author reported a Cronbach Alpha of 0.80 and a 3-month test-retest reliability coefficient of 0.85. BFI has mean convergent validity coefficient of .75 and .85 with Big-Five authored by Costa & McCae and Umeh, (2004) obtained a divergent validity.

Method of Data Analysis

The statistical methods that were used in analyzing the hypotheses in this study are Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Multiple Regression Analysis.

5. Results

Question One: Will there be significant positive correlation between the personality traits (Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, Neuroticism and openness to experience) and secretaries Job Stress?

Table 1: Correlation between the Personality traits and Secretaries' Job Stress

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Extraversion	1					
2. Agreeableness:	.399**	1				
3. Conscientiousness	-.031	-.103	1			
4. Neuroticism	.249*	.247*	-.289**	1		
5. Openness to experience	.279**	.241*	-.010	-.039	1	
6. Job Stress	.360**	.563**	.303**	.199**	.081	1

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

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

The results in Table 1 above revealed that there are positive relationship between Extraversion and Job Stress of Secretaries ($r_{(99)} = .360$; $P < 0.01$); Agreeableness and Job Stress of Secretaries ($r_{(99)} = .563$; $P < 0.01$); Conscientiousness and Job Stress of Secretaries ($r_{(99)} = .303$; $P < 0.01$) and Neuroticism and Job Stress of Secretaries ($r_{(99)} = .199$; $P < 0.01$) while no correlation existed between Openness to experience and Job Stress of Secretaries ($r_{(99)} = .081$; $P > 0.01$).

Question Two: To what extent will personality traits (Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, Neuroticism and openness to experience) significantly predict Secretaries Job Stress?

Table 2: Multiple Regression Analyses of Personality traits (Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness to experience) and Job stress

REGRESSION		ANOVA				
Model	Source	Sum Of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
R = .704 ^a	Regression	438.729	5	87.746	18.497	.000 ^a
R ² = .496	Residual	445.911	94	4.744		
Adj. R ² = .469	Total	884.640	99			

The result in Table 2 indicated that Personality traits (Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience) predicted on Job stress of Secretaries ($R = .704$; $R^2 = .496$; $F_{(5,99)} = 18.497$; $P < .05$). This showed that Personality traits (Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience) accounted for 49.6 % of the variance in Job stress. This implies that there was a composite effect of Personality traits (Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness to experience) on Job stress of Secretaries.

Question Three: What are the relative effects of personality traits (Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience) on Secretaries Job Stress

Table 3: Beta coefficients and t Ratio for relative effect of Personality traits (Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience) on Job stress

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-6.588	2.802		-2.351	.021
	extraversion	.149	.085	.147	1.764	.081
	agreeableness	.609	.095	.530	6.439	.000
	conscientiousness	.730	.139	.403	5.255	.000
	Neuroticism	.045	.025	.145	1.794	.076
	openness to experience	-.087	.087	-.078	-1.007	.316

a. Dependent Variable: Job Stress

The results in Table 3 above revealed that two out of the Personality traits (Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience) were good predictor of Job Stress. Agreeableness was the most potent out of the predictor variables ($\beta = .609$; $t = 6.439$; $P < .05$), followed by Conscientiousness ($\beta = .730$; $t = 5.255$; $P < .05$) while Extraversion ($\beta = .149$; $t = 1.764$; $P > .05$), Neuroticism ($\beta = .045$; $t = 1.794$; $P > .05$) and Openness to experience ($\beta = .087$; $t = 1.007$; $P > .05$) were not good predictors of Job Stress of Secretaries.

6. Discussion of the Findings

The first research question stated that will there be significant positive correlation between the personality traits (Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience) and secretaries job stress? The result in Table 1 revealed that there are positive relationship between Extraversion and job stress of secretaries, Agreeableness and job stress of secretaries, Conscientiousness and job stress of secretaries and Neuroticism and job stress of secretaries. This corroborated the findings of Storm and Rothmann (2003) which showed that extroversion and conscientiousness are also associated with positively reinterpreting stressful situations and acceptance of stressors. Kim, Shin and Umbreit (2000) found that personality traits could render an individual more susceptible to the effects of stress; these

include extraversion, conscientiousness, and neuroticism.

The second research question stated that to what extent will personality traits (Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience) jointly significantly predict secretaries' job stress. The result in Table 2 revealed that Personality traits (Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience) predicted on job stress of secretaries. It also showed that Personality traits (Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience) accounted for 49.6 % of the variance in Job stress. This finding corroborated the findings of Akinboye and Adeyemo (2002) also found that some people are generally more stress prone while others are generally less stress prone depending on their personality traits. In the same vein, Riulli and Savicki (2003) and Van-Dierendonck (2005) reported that personality characteristics of employees have the tendency to moderate the effect of stressful situations on employees such that certain traits may buffer or enhance more negative outcomes than others. The findings are consistent with those of Kokkinos (2007) who reported that personality characteristics were associated with stress or burnout dimensions.

The third research question stated that what is the relative effects of personality traits (Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness

to experience) on secretaries' job stress. The result in Table 3 showed that two out of the Personality traits (Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience) were good predictors of job stress. Agreeableness was the most potent out of the predictor variables, followed by Conscientiousness. Research conducted in South Africa by Swanepoel and Oudtshoorn (1988) also found that conscientiousness is associated with lower levels of stress. Ghazinour, Richter, Emami and Eisemann (2003) agree with this, stating that personality traits such as introversion and neuroticism have a significant impact on the development of job stress (Jaffe-Gill et al., 2007).

7. Conclusion

Personality variables have always predicted important behaviours and outcomes in industrial, work, and organizational psychology. The results obtained from this study revealed that all the five personality traits namely: Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and Neuroticism had positive relationship with job stress. Also there was a composite effect of Personality traits (Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience) on Job stress of Secretaries. It further indicated that Agreeableness was the most potent out of the predictor variables, followed by Conscientiousness.

8. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study it was recommended that the management should have closer look at these factors as an initiative action to prevent high turnover in the organisation. Administrators should then design programs and trainings to help secretaries increase their level of satisfaction with personal learning and growth opportunities at work, job security, and compensation. Since stress is higher in specific personality traits, and high conscientiousness may aggravate stress, preventive efforts such as career counselling and stress management techniques may help those prone to adverse effects.

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