

Extraversion and Neuroticism Personality Traits as Predictors of Burnout of Secondary School Teachers in Rivers State

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Abstract

This study sought to investigate extraversion and neuroticism personality traits as predictors of burnout of secondary school teachers in Rivers State. The study was guided by four research questions and two null hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. A correlational survey research design was used for the study. A multi-stage sampling approach was adopted in selecting a sample size of 1,440 public senior secondary school teachers, drawn from a population of 7,707 public secondary school teachers in Rivers State. Personality Traits Assessment Questionnaire (PTAQ) and Teachers Tendency to Burnout Inventory (TTBI) were used to collect data. The questionnaires were administered through a direct delivery approach. Data collected were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Science software. Research questions 1-2 were answered using aggregate scores, while research question 3-4 was answered using linear regression analysis. The null hypotheses were also tested using linear regression analysis. Findings from the study revealed, among others, that secondary school teachers' extraversion personality trait is a significant predictor of their burnout tendency in Rivers state. It also revealed that secondary school teachers' neuroticism personality trait is a significant predictor of their burnout tendency in Rivers state. Based on the findings, it was recommended, among others, that the school counsellor should provide seminars and counselling sessions to help teachers better understand the extent to which personality traits may contribute to the tendency for burnout among school teachers and to help them recognise and get rid of the causes of burnout

Keywords: Burnout, Extraversion, Neuroticism, Personality traits, Predictor, Secondary school, Teachers.

Introduction

It is no longer surprising that many teachers in Nigerian schools seem to contend with enormous class sizes, congested classrooms, and outdated structures bereft of the necessary learning equipment. Yet, in these situations, work life tends to typically takes precedence over personal life. In addition, the teacher will be exposed to a variety of stimuli from both internal and external environments, all of which could have an effect on the teacher in either a favourable or unfavourable way. Favourable stimuli can make someone joyful, whereas unfavourable stimuli might cause tension and burnout.

Burnout is a phenomenon that can affect anybody as a result of doing too much work under stressful circumstances. It is characterised by emotional exhaustion, cynicism, depersonalization in interactions with coworkers, and diminished personal success (Marek, Schaufeli&Maslach, 2017). Burnout, according to Wu, Qi, Yu, and Zang (2016), is the emotional and behavioural tiredness that results from the everyday teaching process' lengthy hours and high level of intensity. In line with the aforementioned viewpoints, burnout is defined in the context of this study as a slow but constant process of development of physical, emotional, and mental tiredness brought on by prolonged engagement in emotionally taxing professional settings.

Due to many stressors in life, particularly at work, burnout has grown to be a serious problem in many professions. However, as noted by Devonport, Biscomb and Lane (2008), how each person responds to both positive and negative stimuli can significantly alter the chance of burnout for that person. Yilmaz (2014) continued by highlighting the significance of how people perceive and react to externally imposed circumstances, noting that different personality attributes have different reactions to work burnout, which promotes compliant behaviour and attitude.

Furthermore, burnout has been studied in conjunction with a wide range of factors and inventories. According to Abbondanzio (2020), common factors observed include social support; stress level, occupational commitment, work satisfaction, attitude, and other relevant issues. Teachers can encounter workplace stress as a result of factors such as technical instability, job overload, a demanding and insensitive supervisor, family issues, personal financial problems, and, of course, personality traits. In certain situations, workplace stress may lead to burnout, resulting in low productivity, frustration and a desire to quit the job.

Individual variations in characteristic habits of thoughts, feelings, and acting could be referred to as personality in general. Furthermore, according to Yilmaz (2014), personality is a set of regularly expressed characteristics that are unique to the individual and distinguishes him/her from other individuals. It can also be described as a set of characteristics that define who a person is. In this respect, some studies have listed individuals' personality classifications as personality traits. The most commonly used classification is the Five Factor Personality Model by McCrae and Costa (2013) which is often labelled as the big five: neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness.

Neuroticism is marked by negative feelings such as depressive behaviours, low self-esteem, intense self-consciousness, anxiety and depression. Neurotics have negative affectivity and a fatalistic outlook on life (Morgan & de Bruin, 2010). Morgan and de Bruin's research discovered a relationship between emotional exhaustion and burnout, which is normally one of the first signs of the condition. Cano-Garcia, Padilla-Munoz and Carrasco-Ortiz (2014) and Prins, et al. (2019), discovered that people with neurotic behaviours such as negative feelings, emotional dysfunction, and stress response had the highest burnout scores among teachers. This shows that there is a possible relationship between neuroticism personality trait and the tendency to burnout.

Extraversion personality trait, on the other hand, is described as gregarious, fun-loving, assertive, sociable, humid and enthusiastic (Alarcon, Eschleman& Bowling, 2009).

Individuals with high levels of extraversion, according to Morgan and de Bruin (2010), are more eager to participate in social activities, have higher levels of enthusiasm, excitement, and positivity, and are more willing to seek help if required. Furthermore, since extraverts are more likely to be optimistic and positive about potential job results, they are less likely to suffer emotional exhaustion. The contribution of neuroticism and extraversion personality traits to the tendency of burnout of teachers teaching in secondary schools will be examined in this study

Burnout tendency has been characterised as a major symptom that might have a detrimental effect on a person, the school as a whole, and those responsible for the person's care at home and at work. Despite the fact that the teaching profession has long been characterised as one in which teachers are more susceptible to stress and burnout, COVID-19's recent trends and challenges to teaching and learning have made it so that stressed or predisposed teachers are more likely to experience burnout as a result of their job responsibilities. This puts them at risk for burnout, as well as that of their coworkers and students. The effects of burnout on teachers necessitate a deeper comprehension of how personality factors and professional stress interact to influence a person's predisposition to burnout, particularly in secondary school teachers.

Although earlier studies found that personality and job stress both contributed to the development of the burnout tendency in Nigeria, not much known to this researchers have been done empirically to determine the contribution of neuroticism and extraversion personality traits to teachers tendency of becoming burnout in secondary schools, in Rivers State. The problem of this study therefore, is to investigate personality traits (neuroticism and extraversion) as predictors of burnout tendency among secondary school teachers in Rivers State. The researchers believes that there is a need to close the existing gap in the literature in order to better understand how some personality traits predict teachers' burnout tendency among secondary school teachers in Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study The main purpose of this study is to investigate extraversion and neuroticism personality traits as predictors of burnout tendency among secondary school teachers in Rivers State. Specifically, the study determined :(a) Neuroticism personality trait scores of secondary school teachers in Rivers State. (b) Extraversion personality trait scores of secondary school teachers in Rivers State. (c) Burnout tendency scores of secondary school teachers in Rivers State. (d) The extent to which neuroticism predict burnout tendency of secondary school teachers in Rivers State. (e) The extent to which extraversion predict burnout tendency of secondary school teachers in Rivers State.

Research Questions The following research questions guided the study: (a) What are the neuroticism personality trait scores of secondary school teachers in Rivers State? (b) What are the extraversion personality trait scores of secondary school teachers in Rivers State? (c) What are the burnout tendency scores of secondary school teachers in Rivers State? (d) To what extent does neuroticism personality trait predict burnout tendency of secondary school teachers in Rivers State. (e) To what extent does extraversion personality trait predict burnout tendency of secondary school teachers in Rivers State.

Hypotheses The following null hypothesis will be tested at 0.05 level of significance: (a) Neuroticism personality trait is not a significant predictor of burnout tendency of

secondary school teachers in Rivers State. (b) Extraversion personality trait is not a significant predictor of burnout tendency of secondary school teachers in Rivers State.

Method

Research Design The research design used for the study was correlational survey. The approach was employed to determine the association between the variables under investigation (neuroticism, extraversion, and burnout) among secondary school teachers in Rivers State.

Population of the Study There are a total of 7,707 secondary school teachers in 245 public secondary schools in Rivers State by 2021 academic year.

Sample and Sampling Technique A sample size of 1,470 representing 19% of the population was selected for the study. A multi-stage sampling procedure was used. At first, six teachers were selected from each of the 245 secondary schools in the state through disproportionate random sampling technique. Secondly accidental sampling was employed to select the actual teachers to represent the schools in their zonal meetings.

Area of the Study This study was conducted in secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. Rivers State is a state in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. Rivers State borders Imo, Abia and Rivers States to the north, AkwaIbom State to the east, and Bayelsa and Delta States to the west. The State capital, Port Harcourt, is a metropolis that is considered the commercial center of the Nigerian oil industry. Rivers State has a total of 23 local government areas. The State is particularly noted for its linguistic diversity, with 28 indigenous languages.

Rivers State has higher literacy rate compared to most states in the South South geopolitical zone. It ranked as 26th most extensive and the 6th most populous of all the states of Nigeria. A 2015 estimate put the number of residents of Rivers State at over 7 million. The State has 245 public secondary schools. Thus, the state has high students' enrolment which has the tendency to pose great challenge to teachers and perhaps likely to contribute to their experience of occupational stress. In view of all these, the researchers consider Rivers State appropriate for the study of this kind.

Instrument for Data Collection The instruments that were used for this study include Personality Traits Assessment Questionnaire (PTAQ) and Teachers Burnout Tendency Inventory (TBTI). The Personality Trait Assessment Questionnaire is a standardized instrument developed by McCrae and Costa (2006) and will be adopted for use in this study. This test uses the Big-Five Factor Markers from the International Personality Item Pool, developed by Goldberg (1992). The instrument consists of 50 statements, ten items for each facet of five dimensions corresponding to the five factors of personality. The factors of personality examined in this study include; extraversion and neuroticism. The item scale is rated on a five-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA); Agree (A); Undecided (UD); Disagree (D); and Strongly Disagree (SD) weighted 5,4,3,2, and 1 respectively.

Additionally, the Teachers Burnout Tendency Inventory (TBTI), which was derived from the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), was used to determine the burnout tendency scores of secondary school teachers. A 24 items standardised instrument called the MBI is used to evaluate three components of burnout syndrome. Internal consistency estimate

was used to determine the instruments' reliability. The internal consistency reliability for Personality Trait Questionnaire includes a coefficient alpha of 0.83 for extraversion and 0.88 for neuroticism. Teachers Tendency to Burnout Inventory (TTBI) has coefficient alpha values of 0.88.

Method of Data Collection A direct distribution approach was used for data collection. Ten research assistants helped the researchers in the distribution and collection of the questionnaires. They visited the teachers in their zonal meetings for the data collection.

Method of Data Analysis The data collected were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) IBM version 21. The research questions 1 to 3 were answered using aggregate scores while research questions 4 and 5 along with the null hypotheses were analysed using linear regression analysis.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the extraversion personality trait scores of teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers state?

Table 1: RANGE OF AGGREGATE SCORES ON SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' EXTRAVERSION PERSONALITY TRAIT

Range of scores	N	%	Remarks
10 – 34	1053	73.4	Introversion
35 – 50	381	26.6	Extraversion

Table 1 shows that with scores ranging from 10 to 34, 1053(73.4%) of secondary school teachers have introversion personality trait, while 381(26.6%) secondary school teachers who scored between 35 and 50 have extraversion personality trait in Rivers state.

Research Question 2 What are the neuroticism personality trait scores of teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers state?

Table 2: RANGE OF AGGREGATE SCORES ON SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' NEUROTICISM PERSONALITY TRAIT

Range of scores	N	%	Remarks
10 – 34	693	48.3	Not neuroticism
35 – 50	741	51.70	Neuroticism

Table 2 indicates that with scores ranging from 10 to 34, 693(48.3%) of secondary school teachers do not have neuroticism personality trait, while 741(51.70%) secondary school teachers who scored between 35 and 50 have neuroticism personality trait in Rivers state.

Research Question 3 What are the burnout tendency scores of secondary school teachers in Rivers State?

Table 3: RANGE OF AGGREGATE SCORES ON BURNOUT TENDENCY OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN RIVERS STATE

Range of scores	N	%	Remarks
24 – 59	782	54.5	No burnout tendency
60 – 96	652	45.5	Burnout tendency

In table 3, it was observed that with scores ranging from 24 to 59, 782(54.5%) of secondary school teachers have no burnout tendency in Rivers state, while 652(45.5%) secondary school teachers who scored between 60 and 96 have burnout tendency in Rivers state.

Research Question 4 To what extent does secondary school teachers’ extraversion personality trait predict their burnout tendency in Rivers State?

Null Hypothesis 1 Secondary school teachers’ extraversion personality trait is not a significant predictor of their burnout tendency in Rivers State.

Table 4: REGRESSION ANALYSIS ON SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS’ EXTRAVERSION PERSONALITY TRAIT AS A PREDICTOR OF THEIR BURNOUT TENDENCY IN RIVERS STATE

N	B	Beta	df	Cal. t	P<0.05	Remark
1434	-0.497	-0.327	1432	12.62	0.000	S

Table 4 reveals that secondary school teachers’ extraversion personality trait had Beta of -0.327. This indicates that secondary school teachers’ extraversion personality trait contributed -32.7 percent of their burnout tendency in Rivers state.

Also at 1df numerator, 1432df denominator and 0.05 level of significant, the calculated t12.62 with P.value 0.000 which is less than the 0.05, the first null hypothesis is not accepted. Therefore, secondary school teachers’ extraversion personality trait is a significant predictor of their burnout tendency in Rivers state.

Research Question 5To what extent does secondary school teachers’ neuroticism personality trait predict their burnout tendency in Rivers State?

Null Hypothesis 2 Secondary school teachers’ neuroticism personality trait is not a significant predictor of their burnout tendency in Rivers State.

Table 5: REGRESSION ANALYSIS ON SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS’ NEUROTICISM PERSONALITY TRAIT AS A PREDICTOR OF THEIR BURNOUT TENDENCY IN RIVERS STATE

N	B	Beta	df	Cal. t	P<0.05	Remark
1434	-0.226	-0.137	1432	5.27	0.000	S

Table 5 indicates that secondary school teacher’s neuroticism personality trait had Beta of -0.137. This indicates that secondary school teachers’ neuroticism personality trait contributed only -13.7 percent of their burnout tendency in Rivers state.

Again, at 1df numerator, 1432df denominator and 0.05 level of significant, the calculated t5.27 with P.value 0.000 which is less than the 0.05, the second null hypothesis is not accepted. Therefore, secondary school teachers’ neuroticism personality trait is a significant predictor of their burnout tendency in Rivers state.

Discussion the Findings

Extraversion personality trait of teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers state The results of this study showed that introversion is a personality trait shared by the majority of secondary school teachers in Rivers State. This indicates that rather than concentrating on what is going on around them, these teachers feel more at ease focused on their own thoughts and ideas. According to this finding, which is in line with Morgan and de Bruin's (2010) findings, the majority of secondary school teachers in Rivers State are contemplative, self-aware, at ease being by themselves, deliberate when making decisions, and have the tendency to utilise their imaginations to solve problems.

Neuroticism personality trait of teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers state The findings from the data analysed in this study showed that over half of secondary school teachers in Rivers State have neuroticism personality trait. This suggests that over half of these secondary school teachers experience sadness, low self-esteem, moodiness, and emotional instability during and outside work hours. In supporting this position, Morgan and de Bruin (2010), observed that those teachers who are high in this trait tend to experience mood swings, anxiety, depression and irritability, but those with low neuroticism personality trait tend to be more stable and emotionally resilient.

The findings also suggested that over half of the secondary school teachers in Rivers State have negative affectivity and a fatalistic outlook on their occupation, which means they are more fearful and often feel anxious, over-thinking their problems and exaggerating their significance. Rather than seeing the positive in a situation, they may dwell on its negative aspects which make them cope less successfully with common stressors in their teaching occupation and day-to-day lives. This is in contrast with teachers with low neuroticism scores who may be less preoccupied by these negative concerns and therefore cope more successfully with common stressors in their teaching occupation.

Extraversion personality trait as predictor of their burnout tendency in Rivers state The findings of this study revealed that secondary school teachers' extraversion personality trait contributed to their burnout tendency in Rivers state. The finding is in agreement with the findings of Divinakumar, Bhat, Prakash and Srivastava (2019) whose study observed that extraversion personality type had low negative correlation with burnout. Similarly, Schwarzkopf et al. (2016) showed that extraversion had a significantly negative correlation with academic burnout.

The findings of this study further showed that secondary school teachers' extraversion personality trait is a significant predictor of their burnout tendency in Rivers state. This implies that there is a great chance that teachers who have extroversion personality trait would experience less burnout. This position corroborated with the findings of Prins, Vendeloo, Brand, Inge, Jong, Heijkant, Van der, and Prins (2019) who observed that extraversion was significantly associated with less burnout in surgical residents. The findings of Mirzabeigi, Hasani, Sheikh-Fathollahi and Mokhtaree (2018) also supported the finding of this study when they observed that less occupational burnout was predictable by the personality dimension of extroversion. However, Abbondanzio (2020) disagreed with the findings of this study and revealed that extraversion is strongly and positively correlated with emotional exhaustion, which the primary factor of burnout.

Extraversion personality trait as predictor of their burnout tendency in Rivers state

The study's results showed that in Rivers state, secondary school teachers' neuroticism personality characteristic only contributed -13.7 percent to their risk to burnout. It has been demonstrated that the personality attribute of neuroticism strongly negatively correlates with the tendency to burnout. It went on to state that in Rivers state, the neuroticism personality characteristic of secondary school teachers is a highly significant predictor of their susceptibility to burnout. Thus, there is a strong likelihood that teachers who exhibit the personality attribute of neuroticism will become burnout. According to Cano-Garcia, Padilla-Munoz, and Carrasco (2014) Ortiz's study, teachers who exhibited neurotic behaviours such negative emotions, emotional dysfunction, and stress reaction had the lowest burnout ratings. This confirms the finding of the present study that neuroticism personality characteristic and tendency to burnout may have a negative association.

Additionally, a research by Abbondanzio (2020) examining the association between personality traits and emotional exhaustion in secondary school athletic trainers in Georgia, USA, revealed that neuroticism was adversely connected with it. The findings of this study were supported by a study by Prins, Van Vendeloo, Brand, Inge, Jong, Heijkant, Van der, Prins (2019), which also found a strong relationship between neuroticism and resident burnout among Dutch residents. Neuroticism was shown in 2011 by Bui, Hodge, Shackelford, and Acsell to be negatively linked with emotional exhaustion. Additionally, Kokkinos (2007) found that neuroticism was a consistent predictor of all burnout aspects.

The findings of this study, however, were contradicted by Pruett's (2018) findings, which showed a positive, substantial association between neuroticism and burnout. Additionally, Schwarzkopf et al (2016) demonstrated a substantial positive association between neuroticism and academic fatigue. Additionally, a favourable correlation between neuroticism and success in life was found.

Conclusion and Recommendations

According to the study's findings, the extraversion personality characteristic of secondary school teachers in Rivers state is a marginally significant predictor of their susceptibility to burnout. In Rivers state, the neuroticism personality characteristic of secondary school teachers is a strong negative significant predictor of their tendency to burnout.

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study. (a) The school counsellors should provide seminars and counselling sessions to help teachers better understand the extent to which personality traits may contribute to the tendency for burnout among school teachers and to help them recognise and get rid of the causes of burnout. (b) The administrators of the school should take the necessary actions to lessen the burden of the teachers and to create an atmosphere that is favourable to strong leadership and the prevention of burnout among secondary school teachers. (c) The school administrators should periodically organise interactive fora to discuss the concerns related to teacher's burnout tendency.

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