

Relationship Between Personality Traits And Disruptive Behaviour Among Secondary School Students In Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.

by

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between personality traits and students' disruptive behaviour in Obio-Akpor Local Government area in Rivers State. Two research questions and the null hypotheses guided the conduct of the study. Correlational research design was used for the study. The population of the study is 6342 senior secondary school students. A sample of 420 students in government schools in Obio Akpor was drawn from the population using single simple random sampling technique. Two instruments named Big five Personality Assessment Scale (BFPAS) and Disruptive Behaviour Assessment Scale (DBS) were used for data collection. Multiple regression associated with t-test and Analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses respectively. The analyses of hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study found that personality traits such as Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to experience, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness (NEOAC) when taken together are related to students' disruptive behaviour. When the personality traits were considered independently, only the personality traits of agreeableness and conscientiousness are significantly related to students' disruptive behaviour. Based on the findings, appropriate recommendations were made. The government should as a matter of urgency, engage the services of guidance counsellors in the secondary schools to assist students with personality traits that are vulnerable to disruptive tendencies.

Introduction

We live in a complex and dynamic society made up of different parts, groups, individuals and institutions. The school environment, which is an academic institution, is part of the society. Secondary schools are mostly made up of staff (academic and non-academic) and students, who are mostly adolescents. Nwankwo (2003), states that adolescence is derived from the latin word "adolescere" meaning to grow. Eriega (2001), defined adolescence as the span of years between childhood and adulthood that begins at about 12 and 13 years, and ends either in the late teens or by early twenties. Adolescents are those groups of young boys and girls between the ages of eleven to eighteen years of age and by their nature, believe in having things done their own way. The adolescents represent the bulk of the students at the senior secondary level of education, and are characterized by various forms of behaviour (desirable i.e. in conformity with school rules and regulations, and undesirable, i.e. not in conformity with school rules and regulations).

The researcher is greatly concerned on disruptive behavior which is a form of an undesirable behavior, usually exhibited by students especially among secondary school students in Obio/Akpor L.G.A. of Rivers State, Nigeria. To the academic community disruptive behavior is detrimental. This is because, it interferes with the learning process, inhibits the ability of

teachers to teach effectively, diverts school energy and resources away from the educational mission and may indicate a significant level of personal problems or distress on the part of the disrupter.

Disruptive behavior, according to the report released by the Dean, Arizona University (Kathleen 2012) is the behaviour of the student in your class who is persistently tardy or leaves early, the behaviour of the student who loudly and frequently interrupts the flow of class with questions or interjections, the behaviour of the student who becomes belligerent when you confront his or her inappropriate behaviour in class, cell phones ringing in a classroom, text messaging, chatting on line, persistent and unreasonable demands for time and attention both in and out of the classroom, among others.

To the Honolulu Community College Arizona, United States (2012), disruptive behaviour is regarded as speech or action which is disrespectful, offensive and/or threatening, interferes with the learning activities of other students, impedes the delivery of school services and; or has a negative impact in any learning environment - including staff, offices, library, laboratories among others. Disruptive behaviour includes physically, verbally or psychologically harassing, threatening or acting abusively towards a teacher, other staff member, or towards other students in any activity authorized by the school. It may also include speech or action that is not part of the learning process but is perceived to create an atmosphere of hostility, intimidation, ridicule or anxiety among other students and staff. The student may be verbally harassing the teacher/students/other staff, or making unreasonable demands for attention or special treatment to the detriment of other students in or out of the classroom or engaging in other behaviours covered by the school rules and regulations.

Porter (2000), defined disruptive behavior as “inappropriate behavior that interferes with the functioning and flow of the workplace”. From this definition, it is obvious that, for an act to be classified as disruptive, the interface must pose a hindrance to the flow of the workplace – the school classroom inclusive.

However, these disruptive behaviours such as note passing, calling out, off task, clowning around, sleeping in class and rudeness are exhibited among students, who are from different home background, having different personality, influenced by peers among others. Among all, the study will consider only how disruptive behaviours are associated with their different personality traits.

Personality traits, according to Oliver, Guerin & Coffman (2009) are stable features of the behaviour of the individual recurring in different situations. Personality states on the other hand, are results of the combination of traits and situations. Thus, traits are described as dispositions to states (Humphreys & Revelle, 2004). Personality traits, therefore, refer to those enduring characteristics in an individual which makes him/her unique and are not subject to change in varying situations and with passage to time.

In this study, the personality traits to be investigated in relation to students disruptive behaviour are the “Big Five” personality structure of McCrae and Costa (2006). These are; - neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness (NEOAC). Each is unique and influences the possessor either positively or negatively. For instance, neuroticism – represents the tendency to exhibit poor emotional adjustment and experience, negative effects such as anxiety, insecurity and hostility; extraversion represents

the tendency to be sociable, assertive and experience positive effect such as energy, zeal, and excitement; openness to experience, to be imaginative, unconventional and autonomous; agreeableness is the tendency to be trusting, complaint, caring and gentle; conscientiousness comprises of two related facets – achievement and dependability and has been found to be the major component of integrity (McCrae & Costa 2006). The reason for using the "Big Five" personality structure is to find out, if any relationship exists between them and the high rate of students disruptive behaviour as witnessed among secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. It is against this background that the researcher found it very pertinent to embark on this study.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study emerges from the fact that various acts of disruptive behaviour such as talkativeness, constant irrelevant questioning, verbal abuse, talking when the instructor or others are speaking, use of cell phones or other electronic devices in the classroom, clowning, loitering, bully, vandalism, flouting of school rules and regulations, to mention but a few among secondary school students are on the rise in the school system.

Disruptive behaviours may retard the development of self and society. This is because development is enhanced when desirable behaviours are effected in the lives of individuals, and it is the development of selves that will make up a developed society. This means that if disruptive behaviours are not checked, the future hope will be shattered. In order to check it, the correlates must be discovered.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to identify the relationship between personality traits and disruptive behaviour among secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions.

1. To what extent is personality traits of (neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness conscientiousness) jointly relate to student's disruptive behavior?
2. To what extent is the personality trait of neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, conscientiousness independently related to student's disruptive behavior?
3. To what extent is a personality trait of neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, conscientiousness related to student's disruptive behavior?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses are formulated and tested at 0.05 levels of significance.

1. There is no significant relationship between the joint personality traits (neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, conscientiousness) and disruptive behavior.
2. There is no significant relationship between the independent personality traits neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness and students disruptive behaviour.
3. Neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness do not relate with student's disruptive behaviour.

Method

Correlational design was considered appropriate because it is meant to determine the relationship between two or more variables and the direction and magnitude of the relationship if any. The target population for the study consists of all the senior secondary school students in the LGA which is 6,342 (males - 2,447 and females - 3,895) as at the time of the study. (The source of the population size is the Zonal Office Obio/Akpor 2013).

A sample of 420 senior secondary school students was used for the study. This sample size was achieved via multi-stage sampling technique which involves first, the simple random technique, in this technique 7 schools from the 14 senior secondary schools that are owned by the Government in the LGA was randomly selected using balloting by replacement. Secondly, simple random sampling technique was used to randomly select 20 students from each of the stream SS1, SS2 and SS3 of each school. This gave a total of 420 students.

Two instruments were used for this study. They are the "Big Five" Personality Assessment Scale (BFPAS) adapted from the work of Oliver (2000) and Disruptive Behaviour Scale (DBS) which is a researcher's made instrument. The Big Five Personality Assessment Scale (BFPAS) is divided into five sections (A, B, C, D, E) of nine items each. while the Disruptive Behaviour Scale (DBS) consists of 15 items covering two major aspects of disruptive behaviours in schools namely; Schoolmates disruption and School Authority disruption.

Furthermore, both instruments were designed along the likert type response of Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). Copies of the two instruments (Big Five Personality Assessment Scale and Disruptive Behaviour Scale) was administered directly to the respondents. Also the two instruments were retrieved immediately to avoid instrument mortality.

For the analysis of the data collected for this study, all research questions were answered using multiple regression, while, ANOVA and t-test associated with multiple regressions were used in testing the null hypotheses. The face and content validities of the instruments (BFPAS and DBS) were done as follows; first, the Big Five Personality Assessment Scale (BFPAS) is an instrument that already exists, it is only adapted and modified in terms of response format to suit the respondents. Furthermore the instruments were presented to two experts in Measurement and Evaluation in the department of Psychology, University of Port Harcourt for vetting.

The reliability coefficients of the instruments were determined through pilot testing using a sample of thirty (30) students randomly drawn from the population. The reliability coefficient of the Big Five Personality Assessment Scale was determined at 0.64, 0.70, 0.70, 0.69 and 0.69 respectively for neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness. While the mean of the reliability coefficient was obtained at 0.68 which confirmed that the instrument was reliable for this study. For the fact that the Disruptive Behaviour Scale (DBS) is a non-compound instrument, the reliability coefficient of the entire instrument was determined and found to be 0.71. This coefficient value is high enough to permit the use of the instrument for this study. The results were presented in line with the research questions and their corresponding hypothesis.

Results:

Research Question 1:

To what extent does personality trait of (neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, conscientiousness) jointly relate to student disruptive behaviour?

Hypothesis 1:

There is no significant relationship between the joint personality traits of (neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness) and students' disruptive behaviour.

Table 1 Model summary of the multiple regression analysis of the relationship between joint personality traits and students' disruptive behaviour.

Variables	Mean	SD	R	R Square	Adjusted R ²
Disruptive behaviour	25.74	10.79			
Neuroticism	26.78	4.07			
Extraversion	24.61	3.61	0.316	0.100	0.088
Openness to experience	24.33	4.30			
Agreeableness	27.71	4.01			
Conscientiousness	26.73	3.81			

predictors: (constant), neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, conscientiousness, agreeableness.

The results in table 4.1 revealed that the mean scores of the students are 25.74, 26.78, 24.61, 24.33, 27.71 and 26.73 respectively for disruptive behaviour scale, neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness personality traits.

The table also shows that the multiple regression coefficient obtained is 0.316 while the R² is 0.100. This means that the five personality traits jointly had a low relationship with disruptive behaviour.

To determine if the relationship is a significant one or not analysis of variance (ANOVA) associated with multiple regression was employed. The result obtained are as shown in table below.

Table 2 Summary of analysis of variance table showing the relationship of the five personality traits on students' disruptive behaviour.

Model	Sum of squares	Df	Mean squares	F	Sig
Regression	4640.59	5	928.12	8.74	0.000
Residual	41825.33	394	106.16		
Total	46465.91	399			

predictors: (constant) neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness.
dependable variable: disruptive behaviour

Table 2 shows that the calculated F-value of (8.74) was significant at 0.000 level which is lower than our chosen 0.05 level of probability, hence the five personality traits (neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness) jointly have a significant relationship with disruptive behaviour. To this end, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Research Question 2:

To what extent is the personality traits of neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness independently relate to students' disruptive behaviour?

Hypothesis 2:

There is no significant relationship between the independent personality traits (neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness) and students' disruptive behaviour.

Table 3 Summary of multiple regression analysis of the relative contributions of each of the personality traits on students' disruptive behaviour.

Model	Under standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig
	B	Std. error	Beta		
Constant	51.794	5.391		9.608	.000
Neuroticism	.119	.137	-.045	-.868	.386
Extraversion	.105	.151	.035	.693	.489
Openness	.066	.130	.026	.509	.611
Agreeableness	-.656	.152	-.244	-4.307	.000
Conscientiousness	-.333	.154	-.117	-2.163	.031

dependent variable: disruptive behaviour.

The results in table 3 revealed that the beta value for the five personality traits are 0.045, 0.035, 0.026, 0.244 and 0.117 respectively for neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness. Based on their beta values, there is every indication that agreeableness had the greatest influence or the highest contribution in their relationship followed by conscientiousness, neuroticism, extraversion and openness to experience.

To determine if their contributions are significant or not the t-values associated with the beta value were used. The results in table revealed that their t-values are 0.868, 0.693, 0.509, 0.431 and 2.16 respectively for neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness.

A critical look at the table 4.3 also revealed that their t-values were significant at 0.386, 0.489, 0.610, 0.000 and 0.031 respectively for neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness. Hence, it is only the contributions of agreeableness and conscientiousness that are significant while the contributions of neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience are insignificant. The consequences is the rejection of our null hypothesis.

Research Question 3:

To what extent is neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness independently related to students' disruptive behaviour?

Hypothesis 3:

Neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness do not significantly relate to students' disruptive behaviour.

To answer research question 3 and its corresponding null hypothesis, the students were classified into different personality traits based on their scores on the big five personality assessment scale. This is to say the students were classified to any particular personality trait that they had the highest score. This is presented in table 4 the scores were correlated using Pearson Correlation as shown in table 5

Table 4.4 Prevalence of Personality Traits Among 400 Senior Secondary School Students.

Personality trait	N	%
Neuroticism	49	12.3%
Extraversion	33	8.2%
Openness to experience	78	19.5%
Agreeableness	157	39.3%
Conscientiousness	83	20.8%
Total	400	100

Table 4.5 Summary of analysis showing the relationship between neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness and student's disruptive behaviour.

Correlation Variance	N	X	SD	r-cal	Sig	Alpha
Neuroticism	49	30.1020	3.44749	-.219	0.131	0.05
Disruptive Behaviour		27.1020	12.62644			
Extraversion	33	29.3636	4.32159	-.087	0.630	
Disruptive Behaviour		30.9394	11.64834			
Openness to experience	78	29.9487	3.14538	-.182	0.111	
Disruptive Behaviour		27.0769	11.55761			
Agreeableness	157	30.3223	3.17963	-.275	0.000	
Disruptive Behaviour		23.6624	9.61806			
Conscientiousness	83	29.7108	3.44833	-.032	0.775	
Disruptive Behaviour		24.6747	9.50623			

Table 5 shows that when neuroticism was correlated with disruptive behaviour an r-value of -.219 was obtained. This shows that the value is a very low negative relationship and it is not significant at 0.131 which is higher than our chosen level of 0.05 level of probability. Since it was not significant the null hypothesis is accepted.

When extraversion was correlated with disruptive behaviour an r- value of -.087 was obtained this shows that the value is a very low negative relationship and it is not significant at 0.630 which is higher than our chosen level of 0.05 of probability. Since it was not significant the null hypothesis is accepted.

When openness to experience was correlated with disruptive behavior an r- value of -.182 was obtained this also shows that the value is a very low negative relationship which is not significant at 0.111 which is higher than our chosen level of 0.05 level of probability. Since it was not significant the null hypothesis is accepted.

When agreeableness was correlated with disruptive behaviour an r- value of -.275 was obtained this shows the value is a very low negative relationship but significant at 0.000

which is lower than our chosen level of 0.05 level of probability. Since it was significant we reject the null hypothesis.

Also when conscientious was correlated with disruptive behaviour an r-value of -.032 was obtained this also shows that the value is a very low negative relationship which is not significant at 0.775 which is higher than our chosen level of 0.05 level of probability. Since it was not significant we accept the null hypothesis.

This indicates that when the personality traits were handled individually in its prevalent rating, they all showed a negative relationship with disruptive behaviour. Also only agreeableness is significantly related with disruptive behaviour. While neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience and conscientiousness do not significantly relate with disruptive behaviour, we therefore reject and accept our null hypothesis.

Discussion of Findings

The discussion of this study was presented based on the results of the research question stated and the hypothesis formulated and tested in the study.

Relationship between joint personality traits of (neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness) and student's disruptive behaviour.

The results got indicated that personality traits such as neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness when taken together were found to be positively related to student's disruptive behaviour.

Furthermore, on statistical testing, using ANOVA associated with multiple regression there was a significant relationship between the joint personality traits and students disruptive behaviour. The result of this study is not in agreement with the findings made by Panayioutou and Davazogiou (2005) in a study: Correlates of Teachers Appraisal of Student's Behaviour carried out in the University of Cyprus. Findings revealed that traits such as neuroticism may make aggressive and hard- to - control behaviours appear more threatening. In the present study neuroticism trait is not significantly related to disruptive behaviour. The difference in findings may be as a result of difference in culture, sample size and the statistical tools used for the study.

Relationship between the independent personality traits (neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness) and disruptive behaviour of students' in senior secondary school.

The results got indicated that, personality traits such as neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness when considered independently, revealed that only the personality traits of agreeableness and conscientiousness are significantly related to students' disruptive behaviour.

Furthermore, on statistical testing, using beta value and t-test associated with multiple regression result revealed that there was a significant relationship between the personality traits of agreeableness and conscientiousness with students' disruptive behaviour. This finding however, disagrees with the findings made by Carly and Tammy (2002), on the topic: The Relationship between Big Five Personality Traits, Negative Affectivity, Type A behaviour, and work-family conflict. The result of their study showed that agreeableness was significantly related to time-based conflict. Specifically, the result indicated that more

agreeable persons were less likely to experience time -based conflict. Collaborating this view, Panayioutu and Davazoglou (2005), on severity ratings of students' behaviours in their study on "Correlates of Teacher Appraisals of Students Behaviours", identified conscientiousness among other personality traits as the most important characteristics that helps teachers attend to both overtly disruptive and emotionally distressing student's behaviour. The difference in result could be that the previous researchers worked on married adults and teachers alike, while present study focused on secondary school students.

Relationship between neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness with disruptive behaviour of students' in senior secondary school.

The results got showed that, personality traits such as neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness when considered independently has a very low negative relationship with disruptive behaviour.

Furthermore, on statistical testing, it was revealed that neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience and conscientiousness do not significantly relate with disruptive behaviour. While agreeableness is significantly related to disruptive behaviour. This finding however agrees with the findings made by Carly and Tammy (2005), on the topic: The Relationship between Big Five Personality Traits, Negative Affectivity, Type A behaviour, and Work-Family Conflict. The result of their study showed that agreeableness was significantly related to time-based conflict. the similarity in the result could be that the previous researcher worked on the Big Five personality traits, while present study also used the Big Five personality traits.

Based on the findings, the five personality traits jointly relate with students disruptive behaviour. When considered independently only the personality traits of agreeableness and conscientiousness relate with student's disruptive behaviour while neuroticism, extraversion and openness to experience do not relate with student's disruptive behaviour.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made;

1. That government should as a matter of urgency, engage the services of guidance counsellors in our secondary schools, especially in secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area to assist students with personality traits that are vulnerable to disruptive tendencies.
2. That teachers, parents and guidance counsellors should help students set attainable goals, since this will help reduce the incidence of disruptive behaviour.
3. School authorities should organize seminars/workshops in our secondary schools and resource persons knowledgeable in the subject matter should be drafted to speak to the students to enable them understand how the different personality traits works.

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