

Dimensions of Personality Traits and Innovative Behaviour of Private Secondary School Owners in Ogun East Senatorial District, Ogun State

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Abstract

This study examined the dimensions of personality traits and innovative behaviour of Private secondary school owners / managers in Ogun East Senatorial District, Ogun State. A survey research design was adopted for the study. The sample comprised of three hundred respondents. Random and purposive sampling techniques were employed to select the sample. The results revealed that the dimensions of personality traits - Openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion and agreeableness had influence on innovative behaviour of private school owners; there was no significant influence of neuroticism as dimension of personality traits on innovative behaviour of respondent. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations among others were made. Private school owners should improve on their personality traits and attitude towards innovative behaviour and the Ministry of Education and Association of Private School Owners should constantly be organizing workshops and seminars on how school owners can channel their personality traits towards boosting their innovative behaviour in order to meet up with their objectives.

Keywords: innovative, behaviours, personality traits, school owners, private schools

Many people start businesses just because they see others doing the same thing, but they lack the necessary creativity to see them through. They are eventually seen struggling endlessly to keep the firm afloat, or the business falls. In the educational system, a similar trend is common. To improve efficiency, every educational institution must embark on a planned, systematic, and risk-taking reform led by school owners with creative thinking. The process of bringing new ideas, techniques, strategies, and processes for achieving tasks

into the educational system in order to enhance it is known as innovation. Without a doubt, any school system's survival is dependent on a progressive administration that is dynamically inventive, since it is the organization's driving force. A positive attitude or personality attribute, as well as corresponding innovations, may help a school, like any other institution, stay afloat.

With the current trend in globalization and marketplace competitiveness, coupled with the proliferation of schools, private school owners must now think outside the box in order to remain relevant and enjoy patronage. Their ownership role is under serious pressures that can only be sustained with the right personality trait. A school owner, is expected to set its standards and establish its ideals. He/she must consider the school to be more than just a collection of classes. From a business perspective, a school is an organization with a life of its own. Therefore, every school owner must be creative, without which it cannot succeed. Furthermore, the degree of innovative activity might have an influence on business performance and competitiveness (Omerzel & Jurdana, 2016).

UNICEF (2021) explains that innovation is more than just a new technology. It is about solving a real problem in a fresh, simple way to promote equity and improve learning. Intellectual capital was one of several factors evaluated by some researchers when it came to effective expansion. It was opined that an organization's potential to innovate is determined by its ability to leverage its knowledge resources. Such ability is determined by the personality trait of the owner (Bello, 2017).

It requires an innovative behaviour in order to maintain the support of teachers and parents. In this era of proliferation, it is clear that no school owner can achieve their objectives without a creative approach. To compete in today's world, private school owners must include all innovative intellectual pursuits, technical talents, leadership skills, and other activities into their institutions (Thurlings et al., 2015). Simply said, being creative is doing things differently or in ways that have never been done before. An innovator is someone who believes in this concept and works to create conditions where people are given the skills and resources; they need to question the status quo, push limits, and accomplish progress. In today's increasingly complex work environment, innovation is more important than ever for organizational performance and long-term sustainability (Yuan & Woodman 2010; Anderson et al., 2014; Latif et al., 2020). Organizations can acquire capabilities via innovation in order to survive and obtain a competitive edge (Doru, 2018).

According to Ferrari (2013), innovative behaviour is an attribute that leads to resourceful knowledge, by implementing novel techniques or methods, tools and contents which will improve one's creative potential. It is described as the intentional acts that evolve and generate thought that promotes role performance (Hammond, et. al., 2011; Kheng & Mahmood, 2013). In Janssens' work (as cited in Bawuro et al., 2019), innovative behaviour is described as a

deliberate conception which is determined to initiate, and relate novel thoughts into the organisation in order for improvement to emerge. It is described as the foundational platform towards tackling and handling emerging issues and challenges to achieve competitive advantages (Ma Prieto & Pérez-Santana (2014). The classification of stages of innovative behaviour offered by Janssen (2004) emphasizes the nature of interaction of the employer (School Owner) with his environment, the stages are: 1) finding new opportunity, 2) generation of a new idea, 3) promotion of a new idea, 4) introduction of an innovative solution in organizational life.

Innovation does not come by chance; innovative ability is determined by the personality trait of the owner. A personality trait is described as the “consistent and enduring patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviours” (Bello, 2016). According to Atanda (2019), personality relates with school managers’ thinking, feelings and ideal relationship within and out the school environment. The personality of school managers has bearing on the effective or ineffective discharge of their duties. Normally, every human being has a particular trait that dominates one’s personality and this category of trait will automatically establish the person’s behaviour and value (Adeniyi & Anuodo, 2018). Yesil and Sozbilir (2013) also offer the confirmation concerning the important link amid personality and innovative behaviour. The study of Sev (2019) also buttressed the influence of personality traits on job performance behaviour of business owners.

The issue of personality traits is best explained by the big five personality traits model from which Njoku et al. (2017) identify the five personality types that are functional in predicting diverse kinds of work-related attitudes and behaviours. According to them, the model portrays that personality consists of five relatively independent dimensions that altogether offer a consequential classification for the study of individual differences. The five dimensions are: (i) Openness to Experience (ii) Conscientiousness (iii) Extraversion (iv) Agreeableness and (v) Neuroticism or Emotional Stability. Several studies had been carried out on how each of these dimensions of the personality traits influences innovative behaviour.

Openness to experience as a dimension of personality traits deals with the number of interests to which one is attracted and the depth to which those interests are pursued. Those that possess this trait do have inquisitiveness, remarkable thoughts, exciting activity and diversity of knowledge. The study of Yesil and Sozbilir (2013) and Munir and Beh (2016) revealed that openness to experience as personality dimensions is absolutely connected to innovation behaviour of an individual. Hasso in Pahwa (2015) also asserted that business owners’ openness provides an atmosphere of belief, risk-taking and innovation for their staff.

Conscientiousness as a dimension of personality traits relates to how a person controls, regulates, and directs impulses. The findings of Mkoji and Sikalieh (2012) assisted in revealing that conscientiousness as a dimension of

personality trait had significant predictive influence on job performance and other work-related criteria. They showed that personality traits had predictive influence on job-related criteria, like job satisfaction and job performance.

Extraversion as a dimension of personality traits deals with the level of sensory stimulation with which one is comfortable. This trait makes one sociable and active in discharge of duties. School owners that possess extravert traits will be able to pilot the affairs of meetings, manage presentations and go ahead with revolution (Atanda, 2019). In the study of Owoseni (2011), extraversion had significant effect on innovative behaviour of business owners; those with high extroversion exhibited more innovative behaviour than those who were low on extroversion. The study of Omoankhanlen and Emuren (2017) showed that extraversion and agreeableness personality traits significantly relate to innovative work behaviour measures (explorative and exploitative innovation).

Agreeableness as a dimension deals with the number of sources from which one takes one's norms for right behaviour. The trait makes one to be empathetic, sympathetic, supportive and considerate. The study of Abatecola et al. (2011) established that agreeableness is significantly associated to leadership. In another research by Matzler et al. (2011), agreeableness was found to be significantly related to employees' work place performance and innovative activities in terms of initiating and introducing new ideas, designs and practices. In the same vein, Pahwa (2015) revealed that higher levels of agreeableness promote high quality interpersonal interaction inside and outside of the organization which eventually persuade others to attractive initiatives towards building beneficial suggestions for organisational change.

Neuroticism or Emotional Stability in terms of personality traits deals with the number and strength of stimuli required to elicit negative emotions in a person. This was established in the study of Ali (2019) who discovered that neuroticism had negative influence on individual innovativeness and satisfaction with life perceptions, while the findings of Atanda's (2019) study revealed that emotional stability, extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness and openness to experience as personality traits had positive influence on task performance. In the same vein, the study of Munir and Beh (2016) revealed that neuroticism had no significant predictive influence on innovative work behaviour.

All the dimensions of these personality traits play a significant role in influencing innovative behaviour in schools. This indicates that managers' personalities are critical to their reflections and could determine their behaviour (Safarie & Tarlani-aliabadi, 2014). Personality traits influence behaviours in diverse ways, such as in interaction with teachers, students, and learning experiences chosen. Several researches have discussed the influence of personality traits of students, teachers, and principals on academic performance, job performance, administrative effectiveness or innovative tendency in Nigeria (Adeniyi, 2014; Ajayi et. al., 2017; Atanda, 2019; Bawuro et al., 2018; Bawuro,

et. al., 2019; Bello, 2016) but none, to the best of the researchers' knowledge has been conducted on which dimensions of personality traits influence innovative behaviour of the private school owners in Nigeria.

Statement of Problem

Proliferation of private schools in Nigeria has made the management, development and success of existing private schools to be a complex nature. Private school owners now have to think outside the box in order to still be relevant and enjoy patronage; this calls for innovative behaviour that will retain teachers' and parents' patronage. It is clear that no school owner can succeed in achieving its objectives without innovative behaviour in this situation of proliferation. The level of innovative behaviour of any school owner depends on their personality traits because it has important power on their thinking, feelings and relationship with stakeholders (teachers, parents and society). Several studies have confirmed the influence of personality traits on innovative behaviour of teachers and principals of public schools whose environmental conditions were different from those of private schools. It therefore, becomes relevant to carry out research with regards to private schools. Therefore, this study examined the influence of the dimensions of personality traits on innovative behaviour of Private secondary school owners in Ogun East Senatorial District, Ogun State.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to examine the influence of the dimensions of Personality traits (openness to experience, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism and conscientiousness) on innovative behaviour of Private school owners. Specifically, the study sought to examine the influence of:

- i. Openness to experience as a dimension of Personality traits on innovative behaviour of Private school owners
- ii. Extraversion as a dimension of Personality traits on innovative behaviour of Private school owners
- iii. Agreeableness as a dimension of Personality traits on innovative behaviour of Private school owners
- iv. Neuroticism as a dimension of Personality traits on innovative behaviour of Private school owners
- v. Conscientiousness as a dimension of Personality traits on innovative behaviour of Private school owners

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What is the significant influence of the dimensions of Personality traits (openness to experience, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism and conscientiousness) on innovative behaviour of Private school owners?

2. What is the significant influence of openness to experience as a dimension of Personality traits on innovative behaviour of Private school owners?
3. What is the significant influence of extraversion as a dimension of Personality traits on innovative behaviour of Private school owners?
4. What is the significant influence of agreeableness as a dimension of Personality traits on innovative behaviour of Private school owners?
5. What is the significant influence of neuroticism as a dimension of Personality traits on innovative behaviour of Private school owners?
6. What is the significant influence of conscientiousness as a dimension of Personality traits on innovative behaviour of Private school owners?

Methodology

Research Design

For the purpose of this research work, descriptive research design was adopted. This was appropriate because all the variables were described as they existed without manipulation.

Population and Sampling

The population of this study comprised of about 899 private school owners in Ogun State. Three hundred (300) private secondary school owners were selected for this study. The respondents were selected from Ogun East Senatorial district using simple random sampling technique.

Instrumentation

The researcher utilised two questionnaires titled “Personality Trait Questionnaire” and “Innovative Behaviour Questionnaire” are as follows:

Personality Traits Questionnaire (PTQ): This questionnaire was adopted from the BFI designed by John and Srivastava (1999) which was culled from the Big Five Model developed by Goldberg’s (1992). It was a 44-item questionnaire having possible responses ranging from strongly agree = 4, agree = 3, disagree = 2 to strongly disagree = 1. The validity was determined with a substantive difference with other instruments. John and Srivastava (1999) corrected the validity of the instrument by focusing on the pairwise comparisons between instruments to determine the Convergent and Discriminant Validity. The corrected validity correlations averaged .91. However, this excellent overall result masked some important differences. Across instruments, the first three of the Big Five (Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness) showed mean reliabilities clearly exceeding .90, suggesting virtual equivalence among the instruments. Neuroticism (.88) and Openness (.83) were lower. Items sampled are: “I am talkative”, “I am reserved”, “I am full of energy” and “I generate a lot of enthusiasm”

Innovative Behaviour Questionnaire (IBQ): This questionnaire was adapted from Innovative Teaching Core Competencies scale developed Zhu et al. (2013). The scale was used to elicit responses on innovative teaching behaviour

of school managers and owners. The adapted form of the instrument is a seventeen-item of 4-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree (SA) to strongly disagree (SD). The original version of this instrument was a 57-item scale and it was designed to measure teacher's innovative teaching competencies. Confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) were conducted by Zhu et al. (2013) to check if the items can examine the innovative teaching competencies expected of the samples. The reliabilities of the innovative teaching competencies (learning competency, educational competency, social competency and technological competency) were all greater than 0.80 and regarded as very good. The instrument was adapted because the researchers of this study reframed some of the statements in order to use school owners or managers as subject for the scale. In an attempt to determine the validity of the adapted 17-item instrument, the researchers gave the draft of the questionnaire to some experts, to ascertain its face and content validity. The experts pointed out some ambiguous items which were changed, restructured and the irrelevant ones were completely removed. A test-retest with two weeks interval was then carried out and it yielded .81 coefficient which is strong enough to justify the use of the instrument.

Method of Data Analysis

The questionnaires were administered by the researchers to the respondents in their respective schools and were collected back immediately after completing the filling. The statistical method that was used in analysing the research questions raised is regression analysis at .05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: Is there any significant influence of personality traits on innovative behaviour of private school owners?

Table 1:

Regression Analysis of Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Openness and Neuroticism on Innovative Behaviour of Private School Owners

REGRESSION		ANOVA						
Model		Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Remark
R	=.144	Regression	202.704	5	101.352	3.13	.045	Significant
R ²	=.021	Residual	9588.692	294	32.285			
Adj. R ²	=.014	Total	9791.397	299				

Results in Table 1 revealed that personality traits and innovative behaviour yielded a coefficient of regressions (R) of 0.144 and a regression square of 0.021. This shows that 2.1 % of the total variance in managers' innovative behaviour is accounted for by the personality traits. Results also indicated that the analysis of variance of the multiple regression data produced an F-ratio value of 3.13 significant at .05 level. This means that personality traits had a significant influence on innovative behaviour of private school owners.

Research Question 2: Is there any significant influence of openness to experience on innovative behaviour of private school owners?

Table 2:

Regression Analysis of Openness to Experience and Innovative Behaviour of Private School Owners

REGRESSION		ANOVA						
Model		Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Remark
R	=.049	Regression	133.921	1	133.921	1.196	.027	Significant
R ²	=.022	Residual	55758.551	298	111.965			
Adj. R ²	=.000	Total	55892.472	299				

Results in Table 2 revealed that openness to experience and private school owners' innovative behaviour yielded a coefficient of regressions (R) of 0.049 and a regression square of 0.022. This shows that 2.2 % of the total variance in innovative behaviour is accounted for by openness to experience. Results also indicated that the analysis of variance of the regression data produced an F-ratio value of 1.19, significant at .05 level. This means that openness to experience had significant influence on innovative behaviour of private school owners.

Research Question 3: Is there any significant influence of extraversion on innovative behaviour of private school owners?

Table 3:

Regression Analysis of Extraversion and Innovative Behaviour of Private School Owners

REGRESSION		ANOVA						
Model		Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Remark
R	=.010	Regression	3.809	1	3.809	.050	.024	Significant
R ²	=.000	Residual	38140.869	298	76.588			
Adj. R ²	=-.002	Total	38144.678	299				

Results in Table 3 revealed that extraversion and private school owners' innovative behaviour yielded a coefficient of regressions (R) of 0.010 and a regression square of 0.000. This shows that extraversion did not account for any variance in innovative behaviour. Results also indicated that the analysis of variance of the regression data produced an F-ratio value of .50, significant at 0.05 level. This means that extraversion had a significant influence on innovative behaviour of private school owners.

Research Question 4: Is there any significant influence of agreeableness on innovative behaviour of private school owners?

Table 4:

Regression Analysis of Agreeableness and Innovative Behaviour of Private School Owners

REGRESSION		ANOVA						
Model	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Remark	
R	=.059	Regression	134.748	1	134.748	1.765	.018	Significant
R ²	=.004	Residual	38009.930	298	76.325			
Adj. R ²	=.002	Total	38144.678	299				

Results in Table 4 revealed that agreeableness and private school owners' innovative behaviour yielded a coefficient of regressions (R) of 0.059 and a regression square of 0.004. This shows that 0.4 % of the total variance in innovative behaviour is accounted for by agreeableness. Results also indicated that the analysis of variance of the regression data produced an F-ratio value of 1.765, significant at .05 level. This means that agreeableness had significant influence on innovative behaviour of private school owners.

Research Question 5: Is there any significant influence of neuroticism on innovative behaviour of private school owners?

Table 5:

Regression Analysis of Neuroticism and Innovative Behaviour of Private School Owners

REGRESSION		ANOVA						
Model	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Remark	
R	=.026	Regression	65.275	1	65.275	.334	.564	Not Sig.
R ²	=.001	Residual	97433.627	298	195.650			
Adj. R ²	=-.001	Total	97498.902	299				

Results in Table 5 revealed that neuroticism and private school owners' innovative behaviour yielded a coefficient of regressions (R) of 0.026 and a regression square of 0.001. This shows that 0.1 % of the total variance in innovative behaviour is accounted for by neuroticism. Results also indicated that the analysis of variance of the regression data produced an F-ratio value of .334, not significant at .05 level. This means that neuroticism had no significant influence on innovative behaviour of private school owners.

Research Question 6: Is there any significant influence of conscientiousness on innovative behaviour of private school owners?

Table 6:

Regression Analysis of Conscientiousness on Innovative Behaviour of Private School Owners

REGRESSION		ANOVA						
Model		Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Remark
R	=.015	Regression	13.364	1	13.364	.119	.030	Significant
R ²	=.026	Residual	55879.108	298	112.207			
Adj.R ²	= -.002	Total	55892.472	299				

Results in Table 6 revealed that conscientiousness and private school owners' innovative behaviour yielded a coefficient of regressions (R) of 0.015 and a regression square of 0.26. This showed that 2.6 % of the total variance in innovative behaviour is accounted for by conscientiousness. Results also indicated that the analysis of variance of the regression data produced an F-ratio value of 0.119, significant at .05 level. This means that conscientiousness had a significant influence on innovative behaviour of private school owners.

Discussion of the Findings

This study examined the dimensions of personality traits and innovative behaviour of Private secondary school owners in Ogun East senatorial district, Ogun State. Research question one stated that is there any significant influence of personality traits on innovative behaviour of private school owners in Ogun East senatorial district, Ogun State? The result revealed that personality traits had a significant influence on innovative behaviour of private school owners. This result is consistent with the findings of Sev (2019) who found out that personality traits influence job performance behaviour of business owners. The findings of Yesil and Sozbilir (2013) also offer the confirmation concerning the important link amid personality and innovative behaviour. Furthermore, the findings of Mkoji and Sikalieh (2012) also revealed that personality traits had predictive influence on job-related criteria, like job satisfaction and job performance.

The findings on research question two revealed that there was a significant influence of openness to experience on innovative behaviour of respondents. This could be because school owners who possessed a great extent of openness to experience will definitely display or hunt for innovative ideas that will improve or sustain the growth of the business. This result is consistent with the findings of Yesil and Sozbilir (2013) and Munir and Beh (2016) that revealed that openness to experience as personality dimensions is absolutely connected to innovation behaviour of an individual.

The findings on research question three revealed that there was a significant influence of extraversion on innovative behaviour of respondents. A plausible justification for this result may be connected to the assumptions that business owners that possess enthusiastic spirit and are friendly in nature tend to have innovative ideas and see opportunities where others believe is impracticable. This corroborates the findings of Owoseni (2011) who

discovered that extraversion had significant effect on innovative behaviour of business owners; those with high extroversion exhibited more innovative behaviour than those who were low on extroversion. Hasso (2013) in Pahwa (2015), asserted that business owners' openness provides an atmosphere of belief, risk-taking and innovation for their staff.

The findings on research question four revealed that there was a significant influence of agreeableness on innovative behaviour of respondents. This implies that school owners that are good in serving and cooperating with teachers and parents of their students could most likely possess high innovative behaviour. This is consistent with the findings of Abatecola et al. (2011) who established that agreeableness is significantly associated to leadership. In the same vein, Pahwa (2015) revealed that higher levels of agreeableness promote high quality interpersonal interaction inside and outside of the organization which will persuade others to attractive initiatives towards building beneficial suggestions for organisational change

The findings on research question five revealed that there was no significant influence of neuroticism on innovative behaviour of private school owners in Ogun East Senatorial District, Ogun State. This is in agreement with the findings of Ali (2019) that revealed that Neuroticism is found to be negatively related to individual innovativeness and satisfaction with life perceptions. Furthermore, the findings of Munir and Beh (2016) also revealed that neuroticism had no significant predictive influence on innovative work behaviour.

The findings on research question six revealed that there was a significant influence of conscientiousness on innovative behaviour of respondents. A plausible justification for this result may be related to the assumptions that people that are respectful, goal-oriented and meticulous will systematically prearrange their thoughts to achieve their goals. This result is in agreement with the findings of Mkoji and Sikalieh (2012) who also revealed that the conscientiousness as a dimension of personality trait had significant predictive influence on job performance and other work-related criteria.

Conclusion

The result of this study revealed that personality traits had significant influence on innovative behaviour of private school owners. Openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion and agreeableness as dimensions of personality traits had relative influence on innovative behaviour of private school owners. Lastly, there was no significant influence of neuroticism as dimension of personality traits on innovative behaviour of private school owners.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from the study, the following recommendations were made.

- i. Private school owners should improve on their personality traits and attitude towards innovative behaviour.
- ii. There should be a competency evaluation for private school owners in order to determine their level of educational knowledge and qualification as well as the various personality traits they possess to ensure strict compliance with what is expected of any school owner before he/she is allowed to establish a school. This will serve as a measure to control unnecessary proliferations of non-compliant schools.
- iii. There should be constant workshops and seminars, testing and evaluation bodies that on a regular basis say every 4-5 years that measure the accreditation level of private schools and private school owners. This should be the added responsibility agreed upon by the Ministry of Education and Association of Private School Owners. In this regard, they should constantly organize workshops and seminars on how school owners can channel their personality traits towards boosting their innovative behaviour in order to meet up with the established objectives.

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