

## TEACHER'S PERSONALITY: PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPLICATION ON PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS' LEARNING

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### Abstract

This study examined the teacher's personality and its psychological implication on primary school pupils' learning in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. The purpose of the study was basically to help teachers understand their different personality traits and how they affect children's learning. To guide the study, four research questions were raised and answered. The descriptive survey research design was used. A simple random sampling technique was used to gather one hundred teachers and fifty pupils from four public and seven private schools in the Area. The instrument used for the collection of data from teachers was an adapted personality questionnaire while a self-developed questionnaire was used for the pupils. The validity of the instrument was ascertained by the three experts, while the Cronbach Alpha was used to ascertain the

reliability of the instrument. The data collected were analysed using mean, standard deviation, frequency count, ranking and the independent sample t-test. The findings of the data collected revealed that the personality of the teacher plays a very important role in children's learning. It was recommended that the Ministry of Education should regularly organise symposia to offer training services to teachers to shape their different dimensions of personality and teachers should regularly engage in self-personality evaluation and development processes to help them build a good personality befitting for the teaching profession.

**Key Words:** Personality, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Openness.

### Introduction

Teaching is a deliberate activity that has to do with the impartation of worthwhile knowledge, ideas, values, and skills to learners. The process is deliberate, technical and professional (Kenni, 2020). Rajagopalan (2019) stated that teaching is all about sharing professional experiences that are profitable to an individual or group of individuals. Rajagopalan added that responsive (profitable) teaching should include among other things; subject-based knowledge, receptive attitudes, classroom techniques, and the desirableness to make a difference in the lives of young people. Specifically, David and Matthew (2017) argued that the theories of teaching and learning have established the vital roles of teachers in developing in learners some important activities apart from their core academic skills.

A teacher is an individual who is trained in a special area of discipline; whose job is to impact on learners' certain vital skills. One major element that influences teachers' capacity for effective pedagogy is their own personality. The teacher's personality trait determines to a large extent his or her effectiveness in pedagogy. In

addition, Zango et al. (2019) argued that teachers' reactions and attitudes to issues have a great impact on how they handle the lessons and learners in classroom interactions. Also, a tolerant, understanding and comely teacher with the passion and desire to teach is an asset to classroom effective instruction. An individual with a compassionate personality will not just promotes an environment that is conducive for learning, but will also give learners the opportunity to explore a variety of learning situations. Similarly, Arif et al. (2012) stated that learners learn better in friendly environments where they can participate in the instructional process than in an unfriendly environment where they cannot fully participate in the instructional process. Students' engagement in the learning process depends to a large extent on the teacher's behaviour and the type of characteristics they exhibit towards the students in the classroom. A teacher's personality therefore plays an utmost role in the teaching and learning processes.

Fatemi et al. (2016) claimed that teachers' personality must not be played down in student-teacher relationships in class. Corroborating this view, Essays (2018) stated that useful classroom interaction is strongly affected by the teachers' simplicity. Regrettably, teachers' personalities are not given much attention compared to the other aspects of classroom pedagogy. Kenni (2020) reflected that a teacher with a wonderful personality can impact learners significantly in their academic performance. Mpkannang (2015) argued that a teacher's

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personality should be given greater cognizance than other facilities involved in teaching and learning. According to Padlyalpattani (2015), personality is a mirror of what you do and say; the entire activities of the teacher boil down to doing and saying which an expression of what his personality is. The impact of a teacher with a good personality cannot be overemphasized because the teacher's personality impacts the cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains (Arif et al, 2012). The impacts on these domains are long-term and may even last forever. Hence, defective interactive patterns arising from a teacher's personality can cause great harm to the learners' physical, social, emotional and mental fitness.

### Statement of the Problem

Most learners struggle with classroom activities because of the inability of the teacher to convey information in a pleasant and constructive manner. These teachers lack the understanding that learners learn best in friendly and creative environments. Children learn through play because it is highly motivational and enhances children's participation in classroom activities. Most teachers, because of their unfriendly and strict personalities have denied children interesting and effective teaching thus resulting in learning difficulties, which makes children prefer to stay at home to run errands than to go to school to learn. The essence of teaching and learning is effective when the learner's interest is identified, stimulated and sustained. In the Nigerian school system, it is imperative to ensure that all the variables relating to the teacher's personality and the learner's academic overall achievements are proportionately balanced to enhance holistic development in the pupils. The researchers observed that the few research works done on this topic were basically carried out in the secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area. But the prevalence of a teacher's personality impact on children's learning at all level of education has not been carried out. Therefore, this study is aimed at examining teachers' personalities and their psychological impact on primary school pupils' learning in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

### Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- i. What are the prevalent dimensions of the personality of primary school teachers in Oredo?
- ii. To what extent does the teacher's personality influence the children's learning?
- iii. What dimension of personality is considered best for teachers?

- iv. What is the difference between the personality traits of male and female teachers in Oredo?

### Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive research Design. The population of the study comprises all public and private primary school teachers and pupils in Oredo Local Government Area, Edo State. The sample size was 98 teachers and 50 pupils from 4 public and 7 private schools in the Local Government Area. The simple random sampling technique was used to select the schools, while the cluster sampling techniques was use to select the teachers and pupils from the schools sampled. The instruments employed in gathering data for this research were two questionnaires. The first was for the teachers which was adapted from The Big Five Inventory-2 Short form (BFI\_2\_S). It was in two Sections A and B. Section A was used to obtain demographic information of the respondents, while Section B contained 30 items structured on a Four (4) point Likert-type scale. The scale ranges from Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The second questionnaire was for pupils. It was in three parts. The first part was to gather demographic information of the pupils. The second part had 10 items structured on the scale. The third part had 5 items representing the Big Five personality traits respectively. The pupils were to tick the personality traits they preferred for their teachers. The face and content validity of the instrument were ascertained by experts in the field of Psychology, and Measurement and Evaluation. To test for the reliability of the instrument, 30 copies of the instrument were administered to both teachers and pupils outside the sample schools. The Cronbach Alpha reliability statistics was used to analyse the data and it gave Alpha values of 0.83 and 0.86 respectively. The Instrument was administered to primary school teachers and pupils in public and private schools in Oredo. The data collected for the study were analysed using mean and standard deviation for research questions 1 to 3. The criterion mean of 2.50 was used for acceptance of the items raised. A normative mean of 15.00 was set as a bench mark for the prevalent dimensions of the Big Five personality traits of primary school teachers in Oredo Local Government Area. Research question four was answered using the independent sample t-test.

### Results

**Research Question One:** What are the prevalent dimensions of the Big Five personality traits of primary school teachers in Oredo Local Government Area?

Table 1: The prevalent dimension of the Big Five personality traits of primary school teachers in Oredo Local Government Area

| Items                                     | Mean         | Standard deviation | Remarks  |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|----------|
| <b>Extraversion</b>                       |              |                    |          |
| Tends to be loud                          | 2.54         | 1.15               | Agree    |
| Is dominant, acts as a leader             | 3.04         | .79                | Agree    |
| Is full of energy                         | 3.35         | .84                | Agree    |
| Is outgoing, sociable                     | 3.13         | .90                | Agree    |
| Prefers to be in charge                   | 2.67         | 1.16               | Agree    |
| Is more active than other people          | 2.78         | .97                | Agree    |
| <b>Cluster</b>                            | <b>17.55</b> | <b>3.57</b>        |          |
| <b>Agreeableness</b>                      |              |                    |          |
| Is compassionate, has a soft heart        | 3.48         | .74                | Agree    |
| Is not rude to others                     | 3.48         | .74                | Agree    |
| Assumes the best about people             | 3.02         | 1.06               | Agree    |
| Can be warm and caring                    | 3.48         | .68                | Agree    |
| Is respectful                             | 3.44         | .73                | Agree    |
| Tends not to find fault with others       | 2.85         | 1.08               | Agree    |
| <b>Cluster</b>                            | <b>19.48</b> | <b>3.74</b>        |          |
| <b>Conscientiousness</b>                  |              |                    |          |
| Is fascinated by art, music or literature | 3.51         | .62                | Agree    |
| Has so much interest in abstract ideas    | 2.94         | .93                | Agree    |
| Is original, comes up with new ideas      | 3.29         | .74                | Agree    |
| Has much artistic interest                | 3.29         | .71                | Agree    |
| Is complex, a deep thinker                | 3.46         | .74                | Agree    |
| Has high creativity                       | 3.13         | .65                | Agree    |
| <b>Cluster</b>                            | <b>19.63</b> | <b>3.26</b>        |          |
| <b>Neuroticism</b>                        |              |                    |          |
| Worries a lot                             | 2.70         | 1.01               | Agree    |
| Tends to feel depressed, blue             | 2.06         | .97                | Disagree |
| Is emotionally unstable, easily upset     | 2.23         | 1.13               | Disagree |
| Is not relaxed, handles stress poorly     | 1.77         | .93                | Disagree |
| Feels insecure, uncomfortable with self   | 1.91         | .86                | Disagree |
| Is temperamental, gets emotional easily   | 2.08         | 1.11               | Disagree |
| <b>Cluster</b>                            | <b>12.80</b> | <b>4.38</b>        |          |
| <b>Openness</b>                           |              |                    |          |
| Is fascinated by art, music or literature | 2.90         | 1.13               | Agree    |
| Has so much interest in abstract ideas    | 2.94         | .95                | Agree    |
| Is original, comes up with new ideas      | 3.29         | .87                | Agree    |
| Has much artistic interest                | 2.94         | .94                | Agree    |
| Is complex, a deep thinker                | 3.08         | .74                | Agree    |
| Has high creativity                       | 3.27         | .57                | Agree    |
| <b>Cluster</b>                            | <b>18.51</b> | <b>3.19</b>        |          |

Table 1 shows that Extraversion (17.55), Agreeableness (19.48), Conscientiousness (19.63), and Openness (18.51) were prevalent dimensions of the Big Five

personality traits of primary school teachers in Oredo Local Government Area. However, neuroticism (12.80) was not prevalent.

**Research Question Two:** to what extent does the teacher's personality influence the children's learning?

Table 2: The Influence of the Teacher's Personality on the Children's Learning

| Items                                                                | Mean         | Standard deviation | Remarks                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Teachers who always try new way of doing things                      | 2.98         | .14                | Make learning better     |
| Teacher lively and full of energy                                    | 2.77         | .52                | Make learning better     |
| Teachers who find it easy to make new friends                        | 2.44         | .62                | Does not affect learning |
| Teachers who prefer to be alone                                      | 1.46         | .74                |                          |
| Teachers who know how to organize classroom activities effectively   | 2.46         | .77                | Does not affect learning |
| Teachers who are lazy and do not know how to manage time effectively | 1.27         | .64                | Makes learning difficult |
| Teachers who care a lot about others                                 | 2.60         | .71                | Make learning better     |
| Teachers insult and belittle others                                  | 1.23         | .52                | Makes learning difficult |
| Teachers who get upset easily                                        | 1.19         | .39                | Makes learning difficult |
| Teachers who do not worry so much                                    | 1.35         | .64                | Makes learning difficult |
| <b>Cluster</b>                                                       | <b>19.70</b> | <b>1.69</b>        |                          |

Table 2 shows that the primary school pupils agreed that teachers who: always try new way of doing things, are lively and full of energy, and care a lot about others, make learning better. They also agreed that teachers who: find it easy to make new friends, and know how to organize classroom activities effectively do not affect learning. However, they disagreed that teachers who do not worry so much, get upset easily, insult and belittle others, and are lazy and do not know how to manage time effectively make learning difficult. The cluster mean and standard deviation of 19.70 and 1.69 indicated that the teacher's personality influenced the children's learning. To a high degree

**Research Question Three:** What dimension of personality is considered best for primary school teachers in Oredo Local Government Area?



Table 3: The dimension of personality considered best for primary school teachers in Oredo local government area

| The dimension of personality | Frequency | Ranking |
|------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Openness                     | 2         | 4       |
| Conscientiousness            | 15        | 2       |
| Extraversion                 | 16        | 1       |
| Agreeableness                | 13        | 3       |
| Neuroticism                  | 1         | 5       |

Table 3 shows that Extraversion was ranked as the best dimension of personality; this was followed by Conscientiousness and Agreeableness. But Openness and Neuroticism were ranked as the least dimension of personality by the pupils.

**Research Question Four:** What is the difference between the Big Five personality traits of male and female primary school teachers in Oredo Local Government Area?

Table 4: Independent sample T- Test of the difference between the Big Five personality traits of male and female primary school teachers in Oredo Local Government Area

|                   | Sex    | N  | Mean  | Std. Deviation | t      | p-value |
|-------------------|--------|----|-------|----------------|--------|---------|
| Extraversion      | Male   | 18 | 16.67 | 4.298          | -1.563 | 0.126   |
|                   | Female | 23 | 18.39 | 2.743          |        |         |
| Agreeableness     | Male   | 19 | 18.05 | 4.183          | -2.382 | 0.022   |
|                   | Female | 22 | 20.73 | 2.979          |        |         |
| Conscientiousness | Male   | 20 | 18.10 | 2.360          | -2.904 | 0.006   |
|                   | Female | 25 | 20.72 | 3.434          |        |         |
| Neuroticism       | Male   | 19 | 11.26 | 4.581          | -2.168 | 0.036   |
|                   | Female | 24 | 14.08 | 3.944          |        |         |
| Openness          | Male   | 20 | 19.55 | 3.364          | 1.984  | 0.053   |
|                   | Female | 27 | 17.74 | 2.877          |        |         |

Table 4 showed that a significant difference existed between Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism, as personality traits in favour of female primary school teachers in Oredo Local Government Area ( $p < 0.05$ ). However, no significant difference existed between extraversion and openness as personality traits of male and female primary school teachers in Oredo local government area ( $p > 0.05$ ).

### Discussion of Findings

The study examined teachers' personality: Psychological implication on primary school pupils' learning. The

finding that emanated revealed that Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness were the prevalent dimensions of the Big Five personality traits of primary school teachers in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. Neuroticism was not seen as a prevalent dimension of the Big Five personality traits exhibited by primary school teachers in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. However, the Conscientiousness personality traits were more dominant than the others. This result is in contrast with the study conducted by Arif et al (2012) at the Teacher Education Institute of Punjab, Pakistan where the findings showed that there is almost the same level of the personality traits of Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and Neuroticism personality traits among prospective teachers except the personality trait of Openness which was found to be somewhat dominant. The implication of this finding is that the majority of teachers in Oredo Local Government Area are fascinated by art, music or literature; have so much interest in abstract ideas; are original, and come up with new ideas; have much artistic interest; are complex, are a deep thinker; has high creativity.

The findings of the study also shows that a significant difference exists between the personality traits of Conscientiousness, Agreeableness and Neuroticism in male and female primary school teachers in Oredo with females scoring higher on the traits. However, no significant difference existed between the Extraversion and Openness traits of the personality of male and female primary school teachers in Oredo Local Government Area, Edo State. This result corroborates the findings of the study conducted by Arif et al (2012) where female teachers scored higher on Neuroticism, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness personality traits. However, the recent result is in contrast with the findings of Arif et al (2012) on the Openness trait where female teachers scored higher than male teachers. This contrast also exists in the Extraversion trait where male teachers scored higher than female teachers.

Another finding from the study is that the teacher's personality influenced the children's learning to a high degree. This is in contrast with the findings of the study conducted by Noreen et al. (2019) which showed that the dimension of Agreeableness, Extraversion, Neuroticism and Conscientiousness had no correlation with students' performance; however, Openness had a significant correlation between students' performance.

With respect to the best dimension of personality, it was revealed that Extraversion ranked first, followed by Conscientiousness and Agreeableness while Openness and Neuroticism were ranked as the least dimensions of

personality traits by the pupils in Oredo Local Government Area. This shows that the pupils prefer teachers who are friendly, sociable and good at leading others. This result is in unison with Sandra and Joseph (2015) which showed that there is a significant relationship between teacher effectiveness and Extraversion personality traits.

### Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness were the prevalent dimensions of the Big Five personality traits of primary school teachers. Neuroticism was not seen as a prevalent dimension of the Big Five personality traits exhibited by primary school teachers. However, the Conscientiousness personality traits were more dominant than the others. Furthermore, a significant difference exists between the personality traits of Conscientiousness, Agreeableness and Neuroticism in male and female primary school teachers in Oredo with females scoring higher on the traits. However, no significant difference existed between the Extraversion and Openness traits of the personality of male and female primary school teachers. In all, the teacher's personality influences children's learning to a high degree.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that:

- i. the Ministry of Education should regularly organise symposia to offer training services to teachers to shape their different dimensions of personal
- ii. the Ministry of Education should adopt checks and balances to make sure teachers comply with their codes and conducts of professional teaching dispositions.
- iii. school owners and heads should not only focus on the educational qualifications of applicants in recruiting teachers. They should conduct personality tests to examine if the applicant's personality is suitable for the teaching profession.
- iv. teachers should regularly engage in self-personality evaluation and development processes to help them build a good personality befitting for the teaching profession.

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