

## EXAMINE THE CORRELATION BETWEEN PRINCIPALS' PERSONALITY TRAITS AND ADMINISTRATIVE EFFECTIVENESS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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### Abstract

The study examines the correlation between principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State. Two research questions and two hypotheses in line with the research purposes guided the study. The research uses a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative analysis of survey data with qualitative analysis of interviews with principals in the state using correlational research design for the study. The population of the study comprised all the 263 principals (67 males and 196 females) from the 263 public secondary schools in the six education zones of Anambra State. All 263 public secondary school principals in the six education zones of Anambra State were used for the study. Three questionnaire and interview were used as instruments for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts. The data from the trial-testing was analyzed using Cronbach Alpha method, with reliability coefficient of 0.81. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient ( $r$ ) was used for the data analysis. The findings suggest that there is a significant correlation between personality traits and administrative effectiveness, with certain traits such as openness, conscientiousness, and emotional stability being positively associated with effective school leadership. These results have important implications for the selection and training of principals in Anambra State, as well as for future research on leadership in the education sector. Overall, this study contributes to a better understanding of the role of personality in school leadership and highlights the importance of considering personality traits in educational policies and practices. This suggests that principals with these personality traits may be more effective in managing secondary schools in Anambra State. However, further research is needed to determine the extent to which these traits can be developed and nurtured in individuals for optimal administrative effectiveness. Additionally, the implications of these findings for school leadership and educational policy are discussed.

**Keywords:** Principal, Personality, Traits and Administrative

### Introduction

In a few words, the principal is the chief executive of a school who performs the necessary managerial functions for administrative effectiveness. The principal bears all the troubles and challenges in the school and also receives all the glory that

comes out from the school. The goal of principals' effective administration lies in decision making, delegation of duties to subordinates, setting good examples and motivating teachers and students alike in an effort to create conducive working environment to accomplish school goals and

objectives. That is why Adegun (2012) stressed that the realization of these goals depends on leadership and the effectiveness of the school principal.

The administrative effectiveness of principals which bears primarily on controlling and coordinating resources for the attainment of educational goals have proved to be a topic of primary concern in many schools in Nigeria in general and Anambra State in particular. From all indications, the administrative effectiveness of secondary school principals cannot be under-estimated. Arikewuyo (2018) found that most secondary school principals were not effective in their administrative functions. Arikewuyo further remarked that despite the huge sums of money spent by government on education, most state Government pushed in so many resources into the school system and even went to the extent of buying buses for the office of all the principals in the state and provided some necessary facilities for their schools, yet, the educational system in Anambra State still seems to be contending with numerous challenges such as poor implementation of educational policies, cultism, examination malpractices, misappropriation of fund, inadequate facilities, role conflict, and poor administration (Anambra State Ministry of Education, 2021). These problems may be interpreted on the basis of lapses on the side of administration in most secondary schools and emotional intelligence portrayed by principals. The ability of a principal to satisfactorily perform these administrative roles depends on, among other things, the matching of the principal's personality traits

Personality traits are individual characteristics that describe a person's typical patterns of behavior, emotions, and thoughts. They are enduring patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that shape an individual's unique character. Erdheim, Wang and Zicker (2012) asserted that personality traits play a very significant role in school effectiveness which may result in increased output. Ajayi, Shiyabade, Ajayi, Olodude and Olowoporoku (2017) stated that principals' personality traits can make or mar administrative effectiveness because it is a determinant of both teachers' and students' success, confidence and interest to learning. Personality in this context refers to the totality of a person's behaviour which encompasses the person's thoughts, feelings and observable behaviours. Weiten, Lloyd, Dunn and Hammer (2018) viewed personality as individual unique constellation of consistent behavioural traits. Personality is the impression one makes on people one has encountered. This means that it accounts for consistent and persistent behaviours of individuals. For instance one can be said to be intelligent, cheerful, hopeful, outgoing or friendly. An impression many people have about an individual is interpreted as his personality.

Five factor models of personality traits were initially proposed by Costa and McCrae in 1992 which often describe the relationship between an individual's personality and various behaviours. The following five personality traits as recognized by Costa and McCrae cited in Ajayi et al. (2017) include: openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion and neuroticism. Neuroticism is a condition in which individuals are prone

to negative thoughts such as anger, envy, anxiety and guilt. Such individuals are often in a state of depression and do not know how to manage life. They always look at the negative sides of life and find it extremely difficult to cope with stress. Secondly, individuals with openness to experience are generally very active, have a tremendous inclination towards creativity and aesthetics and listen to their hearts (Adeniyi and Anuodo, 2018). That is, they follow their inner feelings. Such individuals are generally open to new learning, skill sets and experiences. People who score high on openness are quite broadminded and modern in their outlook as compared to individuals who score low on the same parameter. Such individuals are conservative, reluctant to changes and have a traditional approach in life.

Extraversion refers to a state where individuals show more concern towards what is happening outside. Such individuals love interacting with people around and are generally talkative (Adeniyi and Anuodo, 2018). They do not like spending time alone but love being the centre of attraction of parties and social gatherings. Such individuals love going out, partying, meeting people and often get bored when they are all by themselves. They admire the company of others and hate staying alone. Conscientiousness refers to individuals with a conscientious personality trait. They listen to their conscience and act accordingly. Such individuals are extremely cautious and self-disciplined. They never perform any task in haste, but think twice before acting. People with this personality trait are generally methodical and tend to

become perfectionists in the long run (Ajayi et al., 2017). The authors further remarked that people who score high on conscientiousness scale are proactive, goal oriented and self-disciplined. Lastly, agreeableness is a personality trait which helps individuals to adjust in almost all situations they find themselves. Such individuals are original in their attitudes and deeds. They accommodate themselves to all situations and are friendly and kind-hearted. People who score high on agreeableness are ready to help others and usually smile whenever a problem arises (Adeniyi and Anuodo, 2018). Conversely, individuals who score low on agreeableness find it difficult to adjust for the sake of others and are unfriendly.

It is therefore believed that each of the big five personality traits is like a bucket that holds a set of traits that tend to occur together. Generally, every secondary school principal has one of these traits dominating his personality. The type of trait that is dominating one's personality will determine one's behaviour and more importantly, one's administrative effectiveness. For instance, Weisenbach (2014) was of the opinion that a school principal with highly dominant (extraversion) trait appears to be unable to create favourable school climate. On the other hand, Buckmaster (2016) expressed that extraversion is related to leadership effectiveness. Buckmaster further explained that people that are considered as extraverts are sociable, assertive, and energetic people. They enjoy interacting with others in their environment and demonstrate self-confidence. They emerge as leaders in a wide range of circumstances because they are both

dominating and gregarious in their environment. Buckmaster went on to say that out of all personality traits, extraversion has the strongest relationship to both leader emergence and leader effectiveness. In the opinion of Adeniyi (2012) a principal that is high in neuroticism may find it difficult to easily control his/her emotion or be able to handle stress well, hence, may not be able to relate well with the staff thereby affecting administrative effectiveness. Consequently, this brings about frictions in schools between principals, staff and students; and this has negative impacts on the interpersonal relationships and co-operation among teachers towards achieving set goals of the schools. This lack of appropriate personality traits in principals may appear to be the reason for poor administrative effectiveness as seen in teachers' poor commitment to duty, absenteeism, truancy, poor record keeping, lateness to school and classes, poor relationship with others, lack of discipline of students and poor evaluation of learners. It is therefore against this backdrop that this study determined principals' personality traits and as correlates of administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the correlation between male principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State?
2. What is the correlation between female principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State?

### **Hypotheses**

The following assumptions guided this study.

1. There is no significant correlation between male principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. There is no significant correlation between female principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State.

### **METHODS**

#### **Research Design**

The study adopted the correlational research design. The study was conducted in Anambra State, South-East, Nigeria. The population of the study comprised all the 263 principals (67 males and 196 females) from the 263 public secondary schools in the six education zones of Anambra State (Department of Planning Research and Statistics, Post Primary Schools Service Commission [PPSSC], Awka 2021). All 263 public secondary school principals in the six education zones of Anambra State were used for the study. In other words, the study involved the entire population of principals who served as research participants. Three questionnaires were used as instruments for data collection. In order to ascertain the face validity of the instruments face validation of the instruments (PPTQ, PEIQ and PAEQ) were carried out. Face validation was done by three experts; two in the Department of Educational Management and Policy and one in Measurement and Evaluation Unit, Department of Educational Foundations, all in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi University, Awka.

The reliability of the instrument was ascertained by administering the instruments

to 30 public secondary school principals in 30 selected schools in Enugu State which was not part of the study but shares similar characteristics with Anambra State in terms of educational settings. The data from the trial-testing was analyzed using Cronbach Alpha method, which was suitable for measuring the internal consistency of an instrument. The direct delivery method was used to administer the copies of the questionnaires and interview to all the principals in their respective schools. This procedure made it easier for the administration and collection of the instrument to be done within four weeks. Out of the 263 copies distributed, 256 (65 males and 191 females) copies were returned duly completed, and used for data analysis. This

gave a return rate of 97.34%, which the researcher considered adequate for the study. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was used to answer research questions one to six. The (r) was used to determine the nature of the relationship between the variables.

Simple linear regression statistics was used to test hypotheses. All analyses were carried out using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 25. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, simple linear regression and multiple linear regressions are considered most appropriate for the study because the study sought to establish the relationship among the variables in the study.

## Results

**Research Question one:** What is the correlation between male principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State?

**Table 1: The correlation between male principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State.**

Variables	N	Male personality traits	Administrative effectiveness	Remarks
Male personality traits	65	1.00	.756**	High positive relationship
Administrative effectiveness	65	.756**	1.00	

Table 1 shows the Pearson correlation results on the correlation between male principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State. The results show that the Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) value on male principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness is .756, The results indicate that the research subjects agreed that there is high positive correlation between male principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State.

**Research Question Two:** What is the correlation between female principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State?

**Table 2: The correlation between female principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State**

Variables	N	Female personality traits	Administrative effectiveness	Remarks
Female personality traits	191	1.00	.785**	High positive relationship
Administrative effectiveness	191	.785**	1.00	

The correlation analysis displayed in Table 2 presents the results on correlation between female personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State. Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) value of .785 was obtained, The results show that the respondents agreed that female personality traits have substantial positive correlation with administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State.

**Hypothesis**

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is significant correlation between male principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State.

**Table 3: Simple linear regression summary analysis on the correlation between male principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State**

Variables	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Std. Error of the Estimate	F-value	P-value	A	Remarks
School furniture	.756 <sup>a</sup>	.765	.762	5.910	118.266	.001 <sup>b</sup>	.05	Significant

In Table 3, the test of hypothesis three presents that the p-value (.001) was less than .05 level of significance. So, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant correlation between male principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State was not upheld. Hence, the alternative hypothesis was upheld. This means that there is significant correlation between male principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State. Moreover, the R-square value was .765, which also infers that male principals' personality traits have 76.5% perfection to significantly correlate with administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State.

### Hypothesis

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is significant correlation between female principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State.

**Table 4: Simple linear regression summary analysis on the correlation between female principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State**

Variables	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Std. Error of the Estimate	F-value	P-value	A	Remarks
School instructional materials	.785 <sup>a</sup>	.781	.778	5.775	123.040	.001 <sup>b</sup>	.05	Significant

The simple regression analysis presented in Table 4 reveals that the p-value (.001) was less than .05 Level of Significance. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant correlation between female principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State was not upheld. Thusly, the alternative hypothesis was upheld. This shows that there is significant correlation between female principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State. Besides, the R-square value was .781. It is understood that female principals' personality traits have

78.1% veracity to significantly correlate with administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State.

### Male Principals' Personality Traits and Administrative Effectiveness in Secondary Schools in Anambra State

The findings in Table 1 revealed that there was a high positive correlation between male principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State. The test of hypothesis three presented in Table 3 revealed that there was a significant relationship between male principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in

Anambra State. From the findings, it is obvious that male principals in Anambra State agreed that there is high positive and significant correlation existing between male principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in the state. This implies that male principals' qualities such as leadership, communication, decision-making, and organizational skills play a crucial role in their ability to manage and lead secondary schools successfully. In other words, male principals' personality characteristics such as social responsibility, sensitivity to the needs of staff and creating harmony within the school environment contribute to the growth of administrative effectiveness.

This finding therefore is in line with the finding of Adeniyi (2014) that male principals' personality traits were very effective because of their ability to show fair outcomes and have a general concern for others. The study of Danladi and Auwalu (2020) agreed with the present study that male principals' personality traits such as ability to lead, active and uniquely qualified has a strong and significant relationship with their leadership effectiveness. Danladi and Auwalu also found that gender of principals was a significant predictor of their personality traits on leadership effectiveness. On the other hand, this finding disagreed with the finding of Nkechukwu and Anyikwa (2019) that extraversion and neuroticism personality traits are not significant predictors of male married teachers' marital adjustment. The difference between both findings could be that opinions of

respondents differed due to geographical location or as a result of chance factor.

### **Female Principals' Personality Traits and Administrative Effectiveness in Secondary Schools in Anambra State**

The findings in Table 2 revealed that there was a high positive correlation between female principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State. The results in Table 4 also indicated that there was significant relationship between female principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State. From these results, it is obvious that female principals in secondary schools in Anambra State concur that there is a high positive and significant correlation between female principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools. A high positive correlation between female principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools suggests that certain personality characteristics such as social responsibility, sensitivity to the needs of staff and creating harmony within the school environment exhibited by female principals have a significant impact on their administrative effectiveness. This correlation indicates that specific qualities and characteristics possessed by these principals may contribute to their ability to lead and manage secondary schools effectively.

The findings on the correlation between female principals' personality traits and administrative effectiveness are in tandem with the earlier finding of Danladi and

Auwalu (2020) which found that female principals exhibited moderately extraversion and agreeableness personality traits for leadership effectiveness in public secondary schools in Kano State. Their study further established that gender of principals was a significant predictor of their personality traits on leadership effectiveness. This finding opposed the finding of Adeniyi (2014) that gender of principals influenced their personality traits in discharging administrative duties. The difference between both findings could be that opinions of respondents differ due to geographical location as a result of chance factor.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Government through the Ministry of Education should implement comprehensive training programs for school principals, focusing on personal trait, leadership skills, and effective communication. This will help them better understand and manage their emotions and those of others, fostering a positive school environment.
2. Ministry of Education should establish support systems and mentorship programs for principals, allowing them to seek guidance and advice from experienced administrators. This would create a nurturing environment and promotes the development of positive traits and emotional intelligence.
3. Finally School board should inculcate in principals a better understanding of the role of personality in school leadership and highlights the importance of considering personality traits in educational policies and practices.

However, further research is needed to determine the extent to which these traits can be developed and nurtured in individuals for optimal administrative effectiveness. Additionally, the implications of these findings for school leadership and educational policy are discussed.

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