

EXAMINING PRINCIPALS' PERSONALITY ATTRIBUTES IN RELATION TO EFFECTIVE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION IN PUBLIC SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT: The study investigated the relationship between principals' personality attributes and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The study was guided by five objectives, five research questions, and five corresponding null hypotheses which were tested at a significance level of 5%. The theoretical framework of the study was hinged on the Five Factor Model (FFM) of personality, popularly referred to as the Big Five personality model, which was first proposed by Lewis R. Goldberg in 1981. The study adopted a correlational design. The population of the study comprised the 6166 principals and teachers of the 333 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State as at the time of the study. The sample size of the study was 300 respondents comprising 30 principals and 270 teachers. Proportionate, purposive, and stratified random sampling techniques were used to select the sample from the three senatorial districts of Rivers State (Rivers East, Rivers West and Rivers South-East). The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire designed by the researcher and titled "Principals' Personality Attributes and Effective Administration of Public Senior Secondary Schools Questionnaire (PPAEPSSSQ)". The questionnaire had two major sections for Principals' Personality Attributes, and Administrative Effectiveness variables. The reliability coefficients of the two sections were respectively 0.88 and 0.78, and this gave an average reliability score of 0.83 for the PPAEPSSSQ. The reliability scores were obtained through PPMC statistics. The research questions and the null hypotheses were answered and tested respectively using Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient and the sig-2-tailed values. The findings of the study revealed that the personality attributes of openness to experience, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and extraversion highly, strongly, and positively related with administrative effectiveness of principals, whereas the personality attribute of neuroticism had a strong negative significant relationship with administrative effectiveness. The study concluded that principals' personality attributes are imperative for administrative effectiveness of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The study recommended among others that the government via the Ministry of Education should incorporate personality assessment into the selection process and training programs of principals to ensure that they possess the right mix of personality attributes that can enhance administrative effectiveness of schools.

Keywords: Principals, Personality, Personality attributes, Administrative Effectiveness, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Neuroticism.

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INTRODUCTION

Secondary education occupies a critical position in the education delivery architecture of Nigeria serving as link between the basic level of education and the higher education level. The quality of education received by students in secondary schools is highly dependent on the effectiveness and efficiency of the administrative process of these schools, and the principal who is the chief administrator of the school has significant role to play in this regard. Not only are principals the leaders of instruction in these schools but they are wholly in charge of the entire administration process of the schools, overseeing teachers' and students' activities and general wellbeing, administering school finances and having oversight of the school facilities, maintaining cordial relationship with parents and the community, and relating with the schools board and ministry of education at the same time (Friedman, 2020). In the process of dispensing all of these duties, what they think, say and do may have significant effect on the outcome of the administrative process and on general performance of the school. One critical factor that may therefore determine how effective principals become in the administration of schools is their personality attributes.

Owuamanam and Owuamanam cited in Adeniyi (2024) defined personality as the attributes of the individual which make him unique (distinguishing him from other individuals). It describes an individual's characteristic pattern of thinking, feeling, and behaving. It includes how a person acts, the way he views others, the impression he creates in others, how he is perceived by others, and the pattern of behaviour that is typical of the person. According to Saucier and Goldberg cited in Soto et al. (2016), there are five models of personality or personality attributes. These dimensions are popularly referred to as the "Big Five" personality attributes or traits and they include openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. Every leader's personality is dominated by one of these attributes. The type of attribute or trait that dominates a principal determines his behaviour, and more importantly his administrative style. For instance, Loo cited in Adeniyi (2024) believed that principals who are open to experience are able to increase the overall positive climate of the school. Several other authors appear to take sides with one attribute or the other with respect to how much of effectiveness they bring about in certain kinds of organizations. Based on these opinions, it is imperative to assess the effects of the various personality traits (personality attributes) on the administrative effectiveness of principals in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Administrative effectiveness according to Adeniyi cited in Adeniyi (2024) is principals' ability to carry out administrative tasks related to the management of teaching and learning (instruction), personnel relationships within the school, organization management and administration, students' performance and school-community relations towards the attainment of school goals and objectives. As such, proactive principals are able to coordinate and harmonize the potentials of all educational resources (human, material and intangible resources) at their disposal for the achievement of educational goals and objectives in their schools. Seeing the relationship between personality attributes and people's behaviours, life concepts, tendencies and actions, it becomes easy to tell that a principal's personality attributes will no doubt affect or influence their leadership behaviour and leadership behaviour is widely averred in literature to have impact on school effectiveness and the implementation of professional learning communities (Mathewson cited in Adeniyi, 2024). As such, the study examines principals'

personality attributes and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the critical role played by principals in shaping the learning environment and achieving academic goals in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, these schools continue to face challenges related to ineffective administration, poor teacher morale, decreased student achievement, and poor stakeholders' participation in matters that would bring about school improvement. While several studies have been carried out to investigate factors responsible for such phenomena in the school system, there appears to be paucity of research on how principals' personality attributes could be influencing administrative effectiveness in schools. The fact that principals are the leaders of these schools, and are the central figures in the administrative processes of the schools foretells that their personalities could have significant influence on the social climate of the school and on every other aspect of school administration. It is against this backdrop that this study investigated the relationship between principals' personality attributes and effective administration of public senior secondary schools, with a view of identifying the personality attributes that are essential for effective school administration and establishing how they influence administrative effectiveness of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Aim and Objectives and of the Study

The aim of the study was to access the relationship between personality attributes of principals and their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to:

- Determine the extent principals' personality attribute of openness to experience relates with effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- Investigate the extent principals' personality attribute of conscientiousness relates with effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- Evaluate the extent principals' personality attribute of agreeableness relates with effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- Ascertain the extent principals' personality attribute of extraversion relates with effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- Evaluate the extent principals' personality attribute of neuroticism relates with effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The study will be guided by the following research questions:

- To what extent does principals' personality attribute of openness to experience relate with effective administration of public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State.
- To what extent does principals' personality attribute of conscientiousness relate with effective administration of public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State?

- To what extent does principals' personality attribute of agreeableness relate with effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
- To what extent does principals' personality attribute of extraversion relate with effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
- To what extent does principals' personality attribute of neuroticism relate with effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at a significance value of .05 to guide the study:

- There is no significant relationship between principals' personality attribute of openness to experience and effective administration of public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State.
- There is no significant relationship between principals' personality attribute of conscientiousness and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- There is no significant relationship between principals' personality attribute of agreeableness and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- There is no significant relationship between principals' personality attribute of extraversion and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- There is no significant relationship between principals' personality attribute of neuroticism and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study was theoretically anchored in the Five Factor Model (FFM) of personality, popularly referred to as the Big Five personality model, which was first proposed by Lewis R. Goldberg in 1981 as cited in Solo et al. (2016). The model is a set of five broad, bipolar trait dimensions: Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness to Experience. These five dimensions efficiently capture a wide range of individual differences in personality, making it to be "the most widely used structural model in personality measurement and research" (Soto et al., 2016).

The Big Five personality traits are the most basic dimensions in the structure of human personality that determine the features of human thinking, feeling, and behaviour. This model of personality suggests that all people, regardless of gender, age, or culture, share the same basic traits, but differ in the degree of their manifestation. The Big Five factors and their constituent traits are *Openness to Experience* (O), *Conscientiousness* (C), *Extraversion* (E), *Agreeableness* (A), and *Neuroticism* (N); common acronyms for the Big Five are OCEAN, NEOAC, or CANOE. Each of the Big Five dimensions is a combination of several distinct but closely related traits, which describe a continuum between two extreme poles (Soto et al., 2016).

People who score high on Openness to Experience (also called Openness, Culture, or Intellect) are usually artistic, curious, imaginative, and original; and have wide interests, sensitivity to aesthetic experiences and fantasy, and a rich emotional life. People low in openness have a narrower set of interests and are more conventional in their outlook and behaviour; they are closed to new ideas and experience their emotions less intensely. Persons who have high scores on Conscientiousness strive to achieve high standards and are self-disciplined, orderly, deliberate, responsible, thorough, and dutiful. Low-conscientious persons rarely plan ahead; they may be careless and disorganized in personal matters, and often fail to establish a well-defined set of life goals. Highly Extraverted (or Surgency) people are warm, talkative, assertive, active and energetic, cheerful, and high in positive affect; they generally like to be around others and prefer stimulating environments. Introverted people, in contrast, like to be alone or with a few close friends; they are reserved and serious, value their independence, and prefer quiet environments. People high in Agreeableness are altruistic, cooperative, compassionate, appreciative, forgiving, generous, kind, sympathetic, and trust the good intentions of others. Disagreeable people, in contrast, tend to be characterized by antagonism, skepticism, and a competitive rather than cooperative approach to life. People who score high on Neuroticism are emotionally sensitive; they become upset easily and frequently experience negative emotions. This pole of Neuroticism also includes sadness, anger, anxiety, worry, self-consciousness, vulnerability to stress, and a tendency to act impulsively. People who score low on Neuroticism are calm and emotionally stable (the N factor is sometimes referred to by its low pole – “Emotional Stability”). Even under stressful conditions, low-N people remain confident and experience few negative emotions.

The five factor model is particularly relevant to the present study as it is almost a summary of what the study is about. It lays foundation for background knowledge of the personality attributes variables of principals that would be explored in the study, which include openness to experience, agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion, and neuroticism. The model highlights the fact that every single individual’s personal attributes falls within the scope of these five core traits, and as such, it becomes easy to study principal’s personal attribute within a reachable scope. Besides, the model also enables the researcher to identify the behavioural patterns and inclinations that are associated with each of the attributes, so that it becomes easy to frame the items of the instrument for the study in a way that they would succinctly measure what they are intended to measure.

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Secondary School Principals’ Administrative Effectiveness

The principal is the chief administrator of the secondary school and being effective in his administrative duties is simply not negotiable. The concept of effectiveness has been defined by different authors in different ways but all having similar meaning. Olaitan cited in Luga (2016) saw effectiveness as knowledge, skills, attitudes and judgment generally required for the successful performance of a task. These knowledge, skills, mindsets and thought patterns, when used whether singularly or in various combinations, results in successful performance of a job. In the opinion of Katane cited in Luga (2016), effectiveness has to do with the ability of an administrator to integrate different kinds of knowledge and use them synergically. Since it is clear that effectiveness is about producing the desired intended results, principals’ administrative

effectiveness is therefore the ability of the principal to produce the desired administrative outcomes in his administration of the school. It is the positive response to administrative efforts and actions with the intention to accomplish stated goal.

The administrative performance in decision making, delegation of duties to subordinates, and setting good examples and motivating the teachers and students alike in an effort to create a conducive working environment to accomplish school goals and objectives seem to enhance subordinate performance for school success. The administrative effectiveness of secondary school principal had been observed by Adegun cited in Akomolafe (2022) as a factor inhibiting attainment of goals in secondary schools. Tess cited in Akomolafe (2022) claimed that administrators must motivate staff to use their creativity and initiative as necessary in making inputs, towards the accomplishment of institutional goals.

Features of Administrative Effectiveness of Senior Secondary School Principals

In the context of this discourse, principals' administrative effectiveness refers to the ability of the school principals to effectively carry out administrative tasks related to instructional programming, staff personnel administration, student personnel administration, financial and physical resources, and school-community relations toward achieving the school goals and objectives. These variables are examined below:

Instructional Leadership

The principal is the curriculum leader of the school. He or she is responsible for designing, implementing, and evaluating changes in the instructional program of the school. In the Nigerian educational system, the nation designs the broad curriculum policy in strict consonance with its socio-economic and cultural needs. The principal implements and evaluates the changes in the instructional program. Evaluation comes in form of the principals' constant accountability for his teachers, and the inspector uses the principals' record during the course of his evaluation of the school's instructional program. Instructional leadership consists of direct and indirect activities that affect students' learning outcomes through the provision of direct assistance to teachers, curriculum and staff development as well as action research (Glickman et al. cited in Bada et al., 2020; Heck cited in Bada et al., 2020).

Staff Personnel Administration

Staff personnel in secondary school system comprise all teaching and non-teaching staff. It is the principal's responsibility to establish a process that will ensure that every staff contributes maximally to the effectiveness of the school. Effective staff personnel administration helps the principal in determining performances of teachers and success of the school (Telem & Buvitski, 2015).

Student Personnel Administration

Student personnel administration refers to all the activities that are carried out by the school administrator to ensure that the students derive the best from the schools curricular and co-curricular activities (Osegbue, 2021). The extent to which this is achieved may also be correlated with the principal's personal attribute.

School-Community Relations

School-community relationship is a key performance indicator of principals' administrative effectiveness (Abraham & Ememe, 2022) because schools exist basically for the community. Principals' of the schools are known to be chief public relation officers of their schools, by this position, an effective school administrator aims at interpreting the educational programmes to the school community.

Effective Administration of Financial and Physical Resources

The management of financial and physical resources in the school is another index of principals' administrative effectiveness which could be affected by the principal's personality attributes. Financial management is process of planning, sourcing and ensuring judicious use of school funds (Egboka & Igbokwe, 2021). The principals as the chief accounting officers of the schools are saddled with the responsibility of ensuring judicious use of school funds through several financial management competency.

Positive Instructional Outcomes

Positive instructional outcome is indisputably the ultimate goal of effective administration. Every aspect of relationship between the principal and the stakeholders of the school and every administrative activity or function performed by the principal are all tended towards successful teaching and learning outcomes. If all has been done right but students end up performing poorly in their academics whether in school-based or in external assessments, then it is obvious that all or a lot has been done wrong by the school administration and the principal cannot be said to be an effective administrator.

Principals' Personality Attributes

Some researchers have carried out studies on the concept of personality including Babyak (2024) and Carnes et al. (2015). In their opinion, personality is comprised of those unique traits that individuals possess that distinguish them from other individuals. In this paper, personality attributes are used interchangeable with personality traits or simply personality. These traits determine individuals' thinking, actions, norms, and values.

Models, theories, and tests have been designed to gather more information about personality. The Big Five Personality Model (Carnes et al., 2015) emerged as an example; it has five trait dimensions that have been labeled as:

- Openness to experience (being curious and experimental),
- Conscientiousness (being responsible and hardworking),
- Agreeableness (being soft-hearted and caring),
- Extraversion (being outgoing, positive and self-confident), and
- Neuroticism (displaying anxiety and nervousness).

Other personality tests have emerged over the years, including the DISC test (Carnes et al., 2015) that is centred on the four different personality traits of Dominance (D), Influence (I), Steadiness

(S), and Conscientiousness (C), and De Bono's six thinking hats and 360-degree feedback evaluation (Kim et al., 2019).

Attribute of Openness to Experience

Openness to experience also called “intellect” or just “openness”, signifies an individual's attribute of being curious, explorative, having variety and aesthetic sensitivity, and of being predictively creative. People who have the attribute of openness are imaginative, curious, and open-minded. Openness to experience is an important trait for principals, as it indicates the response of the principals to proactivity, creativity, and adoption to change.

According to Soto et al. (2016), openness (or openness to experience) refers to the overall depth and breadth of a principal's intellectual, artistic, and experiential life. Important facets of Openness include aesthetic sensitivity (vs. insensitivity), imagination (vs. lack of creativity), and intellect (vs. lack of intellectual curiosity). Highly open principals tend to have a broad range of interests, and enjoy learning and trying new things; those low in Openness tend to have narrower interests, and prefer familiarity and routine over novelty and variety. However, there is less consensus about the definition of Openness than about the other Big Five dimensions. Some researchers prefer the alternative label Intellect, and propose that intelligence should be included as an aspect of this dimension alongside intellectual curiosity and interests.

Principals' Attribute of Openness to Experience and Administrative Effectiveness of Public Senior Secondary Schools

Principals' openness to experience is a personality trait that significantly influences their administrative effectiveness. Soto et al. (2016) averred that openness to experience is the degree to which an individual is receptive to new ideas, experiences, and perspectives. The key aspects of openness to experience were highlighted to include innovative thinking, flexibility, curiosity, open-mindedness, and appreciation for aesthetics (Novikova, 2023). Principals who are open to experience are able to think innovatively - generating novel solutions and approaches to situations and problems. Their flexibility in approaching matters of administrative concern helps them to adapt to changing circumstances and priorities. They are curious – desirous to learn, explore, and seek out new knowledge and experiences. Being open-minded fellows, they are able to consider multiple perspectives and evaluate evidence objectively, and their appreciation of aesthetics enables them to value creative and artistic expressions.

Openness to experience as a personal attribute of principals influences their administrative effectiveness in some obvious ways, which include:

- **Innovative Problem-Solving:** Principals with high openness to experience are more likely to develop innovative solutions to complex problems.
- **Effective Change Management:** Wali (2021) was of the view that open-minded principals are able to effectively manage change. They are better equipped to manage change, adapt to new circumstances, and lead their schools through transitions.
- **Fostering a Culture of Innovation:** Principals with high openness to experience create a school culture that values creativity, experimentation, and risk-taking.
- **Improved Decision-Making:** Open principals consider multiple perspectives, evaluate evidence objectively, and make informed decisions.

- **Enhanced Collaboration:** Principals with high openness to experience foster collaboration, build strong relationships, and facilitate communication among stakeholders.

Openness to experience has implications for principals' principalship of secondary schools. One of the implications is embracing lifelong learning. Principals have to recognize the importance of ongoing learning and professional development to their effectiveness on their jobs. Secondly, openness to experiences encourages innovation. Principals therefore have to foster a culture of innovation which encourages teaching and non-teaching staff of the school to experiment and try new approaches to task performances. Thirdly, principals' openness to experiences enables them in seeking and soliciting feedback from stakeholders of the school system. Fourthly, openness to experience would enable principals to encourage a growth mindset among teachers, staff, and students, emphasizing the value of learning from failures and setbacks.

Attribute of Conscientiousness

Conscientiousness is defined as the quality of an individual to show self-discipline, to strive for competence and achievement (Greenberg, 2021). This dimension stretches from well-organised, careful, self-disciplined, responsible and precise at the high end, to disorganized, impulsive, careless, and undependable at the low end (Bell & Murugan, 2023). Fincham and Rhodes cited in Bell and Murugan (2023) also described it as the broad underlying factor that develops out of associations between smaller traits such as obedience, persistence, impulse control, planning and organising, perfectionism and integrity. Conscientious leaders tend to show behaviours such as thinking before doing, delaying gratification, following standards and planning and organizing, and prioritizing tasks (Bin Daud et al., 2021).

Conscientiousness as a personal attribute predisposes the principal to the capacity to organize things, complete tasks, and work toward long-term goals. Its key facets include orderliness (vs. disorganization), self-discipline (vs. inefficiency), and reliability (vs. inconsistency). Highly conscientious principals prefer order and structure, are productive workers, tend to follow rules and norms, and are better able to delay gratification, whereas those low in conscientiousness have difficulty controlling their impulses and are easily distracted from tasks, and this determines how administrative effective they can be.

Principals' Attribute of Conscientiousness and Administrative Effectiveness of Public Senior Secondary Schools

The principal's conscientious attributes play a significant role in determining their administrative effectiveness. Conscientiousness refers to the degree to which an individual is organized, responsible, and dependable. The key attributes of conscientiousness were identified by Kim et al. (2019) and Roberts et al. (2024) to include organization, responsibility, dependability, self-discipline, and perfectionism. Organization is about the ability to plan, prioritize, and manage tasks efficiently. Responsibility implies the willingness to take ownership of decisions, actions, and outcomes. Dependability of the conscientious principal is about the principals' reliability and consistency in fulfilling obligations and commitments. Self-Discipline entails the ability to regulate one's behaviour, emotions, and impulses to achieve goals. Perfectionism in this regard describes the tendency of striving for excellence and high standards in work and personal life. It

thus becomes clear how Conscientiousness as an attribute could have some positive influence on principals' administrative effectiveness.

Literature highlighted the key ways conscientiousness as an attribute of a principal could influence administrative effectiveness (Futterer et al., 2023). These include:

- **Improved Time Management:** Conscientious principals manage their time effectively, prioritizing tasks and minimizing procrastination.
- **Enhanced Decision-Making:** Conscientious principals make informed, well-reasoned decisions, considering multiple perspectives and potential consequences.
- **Increased Accountability:** Conscientious principals take ownership of their actions, decisions, and outcomes, promoting a culture of accountability.
- **Better Communication:** Conscientious principals communicate effectively with stakeholders, providing clear, timely, and transparent information.
- **Positive School Culture:** Conscientious principals foster a positive school culture, promoting a sense of community, respect, and inclusivity.

According to Futterer et al. (2023), besides motivational and cognitive aspects, conscientiousness importantly predicted school administrators' professional development participation, especially in systems in which they choose professional development voluntarily. Conscientiousness describes, for example, people's tendencies to follow norms and rules and to be highly responsible, and it predicts many important life outcomes, for example, occupational success, academic achievement, among others (Dudley et al., 2016; Roberts et al., 2024). It significantly predicts teachers' effectiveness (Kell, 2019; Kim et al., 2019; Klassen & Tze, 2024). Thus, in comparison with other personality traits, conscientiousness has been discussed as the most important factor for academic and work-related contexts (He et al., 2019; Poropat, 2019; Zell & Lesick, 2022).

Attribute of Agreeableness

Agreeableness is a personality trait that includes behaviours, such as being caring, collaborative, kind and well-mannered. Agreeableness can predict tolerance, cooperation, and contribution to the team. It can also be an indicator of the way that people correspond to the actions of others, and people with high levels of agreeableness, are more likely to comply, with the norms of the group.

Personality trait of agreeableness is an inclination to be kind, forgiving, trusting, generous, concerned, helping and trustworthy (McCrae & John cited in Aftab et al., 2017). Agreeableness might influence well-being. Highly agreeable principals compared with the disagreeable principals are inclined to be involved in actions such as collaborating with teachers and other stakeholders of the school system, conveying sympathy and care for staff and students, giving others a sense of respect and politeness (Graziano & Tobin, 2019). Consequently, agreeable principals are inclined to be well loved by stakeholders of the school system (Jensen-Campbell et al., 2022) and are more fruitful in creating satisfying and stable intimate relations (Robins et al., 2022). The well-being and administrative effectiveness of agreeable principals might be boosted by these positive social relationships. Agreeableness is positively associated with well-being and

positive self-esteem, which are often infectious (Grant et al., 2019). It means high level of agreeableness will lead to higher level of well-being and administrative productivity. **Principals'**

Attribute of Agreeableness and Administrative Effectiveness of Public Senior Secondary Schools

Principals' attribute of agreeableness significantly influences their administrative effectiveness. Agreeableness refers to the degree to which an individual is cooperative, empathetic, and sensitive to the feelings of others. Aftab et al. (2017) identified the key aspects of agreeableness to include cooperation, empathy, kindness, flexibility, and avoidance of conflict. Principles that are agreeable often have the willingness to cooperate and work collaboratively with other staff of the school system. Empathetically, they understand and appreciate the feelings and perspectives of others. They possess the tendency to be compassionate, considerate, and generous. They easily adapt to changes and priorities, making them flexible in their administrative approaches. They also have the tendency to avoid conflict and to seek harmony among the stakeholders of the school system.

The influence of principals' personal attribute of agreeableness on effective administration of secondary schools is far reaching. Grant et al. (2019) and Graziano & Tobi (2019) identified them as presented below:

- **Positive School Culture:** Principals with high agreeableness foster a positive school culture, promoting a sense of community and cooperation.
- **Effective Communication:** Agreeable principals communicate effectively, listening actively and responding empathetically.
- **Conflict Resolution:** Principals with high agreeableness manage conflicts effectively, seeking solutions that satisfy all parties. The school system is prone to conflict. As a social system, the various groups of human elements in the system inevitably disagree. It takes an agreeable principal to be able to handle and resolve such conflicts amicably and foster peace whenever they arise.
- **Teacher Satisfaction and Retention:** Agreeable principals promote teacher satisfaction and retention, creating a supportive and collaborative work environment.
- **Parent and Community Relations:** Principals with high agreeableness build strong relationships with parents and the community, fostering trust and cooperation.

Consequent upon the behavioural disposition of agreeable principals, they are inclined to be well loved by stakeholders of the school system (Jensen-Campbell et al., 2022) and are more fruitful in creating satisfying and stable intimate relations (Robins et al., 2022). The well-being and administrative effectiveness of agreeable principals might be boosted by these positive social relationships. Work environments with a fairly high level of interpersonal interaction like the school system, as in a participative management environment, require tolerance, selflessness, and flexibility (Witt & Burke, 2023); hence the need for principals' agreeable attributes.

Attribute of Extraversion

Extraversion, as a significant personality trait, is related to popularity and social success - indicating an individual who is talkative, assertive, and sociable. Extraversion is also connected to a happier life and a higher lifetime income. To continue with extraversion, it indicates someone who is sociable, decisive, and gregarious. Extraversion at the workplace can predict team spirit and team proficiency.

For Benoliel and Somech (2020), highly extroverted people tend to be sociable, optimistic, outgoing, energetic, expressive, active, and assertive. They seek out the company of others, prefer a high degree of social interaction with a wide variety of people and tend to have many friends and acquaintances (Sak, 2024). In contrast, low extroverted individuals tend to be quieter and more reserved (Costa and McCrae cited in Benoliel & Somech, 2020). They prefer to work alone or with individuals rather than in large groups (Sak, 2024). A high level of extroversion has been found to be related to job performance in occupations where a significant portion of the job involves interactions with others (Barrick et al., 2021).

Principals' Attribute of Extraversion and Administrative Effectiveness of Public Senior Secondary Schools

Extraversion refers to the degree to which an individual is outgoing, assertive, and sociable (Greenburg, 2021). The key aspects of this attribute were highlighted by Fincham and Rhodes cited in Bell and Murugan (2023) to include assertiveness, sociability, energy and enthusiasm, competitiveness, and positive emotions, all of which are imperative for effective school administration. The assertive nature of extraverted principals enables them to express opinions and needs clearly and confidently. As socialites, they seek social interaction and enjoy the company of others. They exude the ability to convey energy, enthusiasm, and passion for work and ideas. They are competitive – striving for achievement and recognition, and with their positive energy, they experience and express positive emotions, such as happiness and excitement. These attributes often endear them to teachers, students, parents, and other critical stakeholders of the school system.

Principals' attribute of extraversion has been found to have some significant influence on the administrative effectiveness of schools. Literature (Ashton et al., 2022; Novikova, 2023) identified some areas of this influence to include:

- **Effective Communication:** Extraverted principals communicate effectively, articulating their vision and ideas clearly and confidently.
- **Building Relationships:** Principals with high extraversion build strong relationships with teachers, staff, students, and parents, fostering a sense of community and cooperation.
- **Motivating and Inspiring:** Extraverted principals motivate and inspire others, conveying energy, enthusiasm, and passion for work and ideas.
- **Conflict Resolution:** Principals with high extraversion tend to be more effective in resolving conflicts, as they are more likely to take charge and assert themselves.
- **Representing the School:** Extraverted principals effectively represent their school, promoting its mission, values, and achievements to external stakeholders.

One of the implications of extraversion attributes for principals is the development of public speaking skills. Principals have to recognize the importance of effective public speaking and develop skills that will help them in communicating excellently and confidently. Extraversion could also help principals in building a strong network. The need for principals to foster a positive relationship with teachers, staff, students, parents, and external stakeholders to build a strong support network can simply not be overemphasized. Another implication of extraversion attribute for principals is the demonstration of enthusiasm and passion. This requires that principals convey strong energy, enthusiasm, and passion for work and ideas, inspiring and motivating other staff in the school. It also has implication for taking initiatives and for representing the school effectively even as principals are the schools' public relations officials.

Attribute of Neuroticism

Neuroticism (sometimes referred to by its socially desirable pole, Emotional Stability) concerns the extent to which someone is prone to experiencing negative emotions and moods. Its core facets include anxiety (vs. calmness), depression (vs. contentment), and emotional volatility (vs. stability) (Soto et al., 2016). Highly neurotic individuals experience more frequent and intense negative emotions, such as fear, sadness, and frustration, and have frequent mood swings. Those low in Neuroticism remain calm and optimistic, even in difficult situations, and find it easier to regulate their emotions.

People who score high on Neuroticism are emotionally sensitive; they become upset easily and frequently experience negative emotions (Novikova, 2023). This pole of Neuroticism also includes sadness, anger, anxiety, worry, self-consciousness, vulnerability to stress, and a tendency to act impulsively. People who score low on Neuroticism are calm and emotionally stable (the N factor is sometimes referred to by its low pole "Emotional Stability"). Even under stressful conditions, low-N people remain confident and experience few negative emotions.

Principals' Attribute of Neuroticism and Administrative Effectiveness of Public Senior Secondary Schools

Principals' attribute of neuroticism can significantly influence their administrative effectiveness. Neuroticism refers to the degree to which an individual experiences negative emotions, such as anxiety, anger, and vulnerability. Soto et al. (2016) identified the key aspects of neurotic personality to include anxiety, anger and hostility, vulnerability, self-consciousness, and emotional instability. Neurotic principals are easily anxious – with high tendency to experience anger, hostility, and irritability. They are vulnerable to stress, criticism, and negative feedback. Their self-consciousness predisposes them to insecurity, and they are overly concerned with what others think. They are prone to experiencing emotional instability, mood swings, and emotional reactivity.

The influence of the attribute of neuroticism on administrative effectiveness of principals may include:

- **Impaired Decision-Making:** Neuroticism can impair decision-making, as principals may be overly influenced by emotions and personal biases.

- **Strained Relationships:** Principals with high neuroticism may struggle to build and maintain positive relationships with teachers, staff, students, and parents.
- **Increased Stress and Burnout:** Neuroticism can increase stress and burnout, as principals may be more reactive to challenges and setbacks.
- **Decreased Innovation and Risk-Taking:** Principals with high neuroticism may be less likely to innovate and take risks, as they may be overly concerned with potential failures and criticisms.
- **Negative School Culture:** Neuroticism can contribute to a negative school culture, as principals may create a climate of fear, anxiety, and stress.

Principals with neurotic personality therefore need to recognize the importance of emotional intelligence and develop skills to manage emotions, empathize with others, and build positive relationships. It would be important that they prioritize self-care, engaging in activities that promote relaxation, stress reduction, and emotional well-being. They would also need to seek feedback and support from trusted colleagues, mentors, and mental health professionals to manage neurotic tendencies. Intentionally creating a positive school culture, promoting a climate of trust, respect, and emotional safety would also add to their improvement in administrative effectiveness.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted correlational research design. This was because the study sought to establish the relationship between the five core personality attributes of principals and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The population of the study comprised the 6166 principals and teachers of the 333 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The sample size of the study was 300 respondents comprising 30 principals and 270 teachers. Purposive, proportionate, and stratified random sampling techniques were used to select the sample from the three senatorial districts of Rivers State (Rivers East, Rivers West and Rivers South-East). The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire constructed by the researcher and titled “Principals’ Personality Attributes and Effective Administration of Public Senior Secondary Schools Questionnaire (PPAEAPSSSQ)”. The questionnaire was divided into three main sections: Section A which solicited data on respondents’ demographic variables; Section B which solicited data on Principals’ Personality Attributes; and Section C which solicited data on Administrative Effectiveness of Senior Secondary Schools. The reliability of the instrument was established through test-retest method and Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation statistics. The section B of the instrument (Principals’ Personality Attributes Section) had a reliability coefficient of 0.88, while the Section C (Administrative Effectiveness of Senior Secondary Schools Section) had a reliability coefficient of 0.78. As such the average reliability score of the PPAEAPSSSQ was 0.83. The research questions were answered using PPMCC, and the null hypotheses were equally tested using PPMCC at a significance level of 0.05. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) - Version 25 was used for the analysis.

RESULTS

Research Question One: To what extent does principals' personality attribute of openness to experience relate with effective administration of public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State?

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between principals' personality attribute of openness to experience and effective administration of public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

Table 1: PPMC output of extent of relationship between principals' personality attribute of openness to experience and their administrative effectiveness

Variable	N	Mean	SD.	r	Sig-2-tailed	Remark
Openness to experience	30	3.028	.165	.631	.000	H ₀ rejected
Administrative effectiveness	270	3.032	.167			

.05 level of significance

Table 1 shows the PPMC output of the test of relationship between principals' personality attribute of openness to experience (30) and their administrative effectiveness (270) in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The table reveals that openness to experience had a mean score of 3.028 with standard deviation of .165 while administrative effectiveness had a mean score of 3.032 with standard deviation of .167. These values, which are both higher than the criterion mean of 2.50 show that high level of openness to experience of principals corresponded with high level of administrative effectiveness. The relationship coefficient, $r = .631$ shows that openness to experience had a strong positive relationship with administrative effectiveness. The table further revealed that the sig-2-tailed value is less than the significance value, $p = .000 < .05$. This means that H₀ is rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted. Therefore there is a significant relationship between principals' personality attribute of openness to experience and administrative effectiveness of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

The result shows that principals' personality attribute of openness to existence positively relates to a high extent with their administrative effectiveness. In other words, the more open to experience a principal is, the more effective he is in administering the school. This finding is in line with that of Aftab (2017) who found that openness to experience was one of the strong attributes of school staff which brought about their well-being and effective job performance. Openness to experience in this regard is the degree to which an individual is receptive to new ideas, experiences, and perspectives. The finding is equally in line with the position of Novikova (2023) that openness to experience is expressed in key aspects such as innovative thinking, flexibility, curiosity, open-mindedness, and appreciation for aesthetics.

Research Question Two: To what extent does principals' personality attribute of conscientiousness relate with effective administration of public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State?

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between principals' personality attribute of conscientiousness and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 2: PPMC output of extent of relationship between principals’ personality attribute of conscientiousness and their administrative effectiveness

Variable	N	Mean	SD.	r	Sig-2-tailed	Remark
Conscientiousness	33	3.750	.168	.836	.000	H ₀ 2 Rejected
Administrative effectiveness	270	3.749	.166			

.05 level of significance

Table 2 reveals that conscientiousness had a mean score of 3.750 with standard deviation of .168 while administrative effectiveness had a mean score of 3.749 with standard deviation of .166. These show that high levels of conscientiousness of principals corresponded with high levels of administrative effectiveness (with the scores being higher than the criterion mean of 2.50). The relationship coefficient, $r = .836$ shows that conscientiousness had a very strong positive relationship with administrative effectiveness. The table further revealed that the sig-2-tailed value is less than the significance value, $p = .000 < .05$. This means that H₀2 is rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted. Therefore there is a significant relationship between principals’ personality attribute of conscientiousness and administrative effectiveness of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

The finding of the study has thus revealed that conscientious as a personality attribute of principals has a very strong and positive relationship with principals’ administrative effectiveness. This is in agreement with Adeniyi (2024) who found that conscientiousness was the most exhibited characteristic trait reported by principals in Southwestern Nigeria and that conscientiousness was the necessary personality trait which predisposed secondary school principals to be effective in discharging their administrative duties. Kim et al. (2019) and Roberts et al. (2024) had identified the key attributes of conscientiousness to include organization, responsibility, dependability, self-discipline, and perfectionism. These indeed are key leadership traits which every principal needs to adopt and exhibit in their administrative enterprise for school improvement. Maxwell (2012) had also hinted on these attributes as key leadership competences for organizational effectiveness.

Research Question Three: To what extent does principals’ personality attribute of agreeableness relate with effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between principals’ personality attribute of agreeableness and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 3: PPMC output of extent of relationship between principals’ personality attribute of agreeableness and their administrative effectiveness

Variable	N	Mean	SD.	r	Sig-2-tailed	H0 remark
Agreeableness	33	3.580	.354	.675	.000	H ₀ 3 Rejected
Administrative effectiveness	270	3.590	.352			

.05 level of significance

Table 3 revealed that agreeableness had a mean score of 3.580 with standard deviation of .354 while administrative effectiveness had a mean score of 3.590 with standard deviation of .352.

These show that high levels of agreeableness of principals corresponded with high levels of administrative effectiveness (with the scores being higher than the criterion mean of 2.50). The relationship coefficient, $r = .675$ shows that agreeableness had a strong positive relationship with administrative effectiveness. The table further reveals that the sig-2-tailed value is less than the significance value, $p = .000 < .05$. This means that H_{03} is rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted. Therefore there is a significant relationship between principals' personality attribute of agreeableness and administrative effectiveness of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

The findings thus reveal that as principals increase their agreeableness tendencies, their administrative effectiveness also increases. Agreeableness in this regard refers to the degree to which principals are cooperative, empathetic, and sensitive to the feelings of others. The findings relate with Aftab (2017) who found that agreeableness was one of the attributes that assured administrative wellbeing of schools. he identified the key aspects of agreeableness to include cooperation, empathy, kindness, flexibility, and avoidance of conflict. Consequent upon the behavioural disposition of agreeable principals, they are inclined to be well loved by stakeholders of the school system (Jensen-Campbell et al., 2022) and are more fruitful in creating satisfying and stable intimate relations (Robins et al., 2022). Hence, developing agreeable tendencies by principals is imperative for administrative effectiveness and school growth.

Research Question Four: To what extent does principals' personality attribute of extraversion relate with effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypothesis Four: There is no significant relationship between principals' personality attribute of extraversion and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 4: PPMC output of extent of relationship between principals' personality attribute of extraversion and their administrative effectiveness

Variable	N	Mean	SD.	r	Sig-2-tailed	Remark
Extraversion	33	3.602	.154	.795	.000	H_{04} Rejected
Administrative effectiveness	270	3.610	.153			

.05 level of significance

Table 4 reveals that extraversion had a mean score of 3.602 with standard deviation of .154 while administrative effectiveness had a mean score of 3.610 with standard deviation of .153. These show that high levels of extraversion of principals corresponded with high levels of administrative effectiveness (with the scores being higher than the criterion mean of 2.50). The relationship coefficient, $r = .795$ shows that extraversion had a very strong positive relationship with administrative effectiveness. The table further reveals that the sig-2-tailed value is less than the significance value, $p = .000 < .05$. This means that H_{04} is rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted. Therefore there is a significant relationship between principals' personality attribute of extraversion and administrative effectiveness of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

The high extent significant positive relationship between extraversion personality attribute of school principals and administrative effectiveness found in this study is highly supported by literature. Bell and Murugan (2023) had found that extraversion was significantly related to leadership effectiveness. Extraversion in this regard is the degree to which an individual is outgoing, assertive, and sociable (Greenburg, 2021). Murugan went on to highlight

the key aspects of to include assertiveness, sociability, energy and enthusiasm, competitiveness, and positive emotions, all of which are imperative for effective school administration. Being very sociable and enthusiastic make extraverted principals to be charismatic, and this has the tendency of bringing about stakeholders' goodwill and willing followership of teachers. It is also much easier for students, teachers, and parents to love principals who are extroverts. All these account for the testimony of respondents to the high extent relationship of principals' personality attribute of extraversion and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question Five: To what extent does principals' personality attribute of neuroticism relate with effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypothesis Five: There is no significant relationship between principals' personality attribute of neuroticism and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 5: PPMC output of extent of relationship between principals' personality attribute of neuroticism and their administrative effectiveness

Variable	N	Mean	SD.	r	Sig-2-tailed	Remark
Extraversion	33	2.620	.754	-.652	.034	H ₀ Rejected
Administrative effectiveness	270	2.010	1.150			

.05 level of significance

Table 5 shows the PPMC output of the test of relationship between principals' personality attribute of neuroticism (30) and their administrative effectiveness (270) in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The table reveals that neuroticism had a mean score of 2.620 with standard deviation of .754 while administrative effectiveness had a mean score of 2.010 with standard deviation of 1.150. These show that high levels of extraversion of principals corresponded with low levels of administrative effectiveness. The table shows that the relationship coefficient, $r = -.652$. This means neuroticism had a strong negative relationship with administrative effectiveness. The table further reveals that the sig-2-tailed value is less than the significance value, $p = .034 < .05$. This means that H₀ is rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted. Therefore there is a significant negative relationship between principals' personality attribute of neuroticism and administrative effectiveness of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

The findings show that a strong but negative significant relationship exists between principals' personality attribute of neuroticism and administrative effectiveness. This means increase in neurotic behaviours of principals bring about decrease in administrative effectiveness of the school. In other words, neuroticism has an obvious negative influence on administrative effectiveness of principals. This finding is in agreement with Soto et al. (2016) who had found the key aspects of neuroticism to include anxiety, anger and hostility, vulnerability, self-consciousness, and emotional instability. All of these attributes in a leader can actually stall progress, as they do not appeal to the expectations of followers.

CONCLUSION

The study has investigated principals' personality attributes and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. It was anchored on the Big Five theoretical model, which advanced five key personality attributes to possess great potentials at determining people's behavioural tendencies, as well as their performance outcomes in leadership and administrative engagements. These attributes investigated in the study include openness to experience, conscientiousness, agreeableness, extraversion and neuroticism. The design of the study captured the relationships between these personality attributes and principals' administrative effectiveness was determined. All the attributes except neuroticism showed to have strong, significant positive relationships with administrative effectiveness of principals. Conscientiousness promote organization, empathy, and cooperation in the school community; extraversion and openness enhance communication, motivation, and innovation leading to improved administrative outcomes; whereas neuroticism is found to be capable of impeding administrative effectiveness, emphasizing the need for principals to develop emotional intelligence and coping strategies.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made to ensure that principals develop the appropriate traits that enhance administrative effectiveness:

- The government via The Ministry of Education should incorporate personality assessment into the selection process and training programs of principals to ensure that they possess the right mix of personality attributes that can enhance administrative effectiveness of schools.
- The Schools board should provide principals with training and development opportunities to enhance their emotional intelligence, leadership, and administrative skills for improved outcomes of public secondary schools.
- The Ministry of education should normalize pairing experienced principals with novice or newly appointed principals in mentorship schemes to provide guidance and support.
- The Ministry of Education should develop policies that promote effective administration, including principal evaluation and support systems.
- Principals should engage in continuous learning and self-development, especially in emotional intelligence to continually nurture requisite attributes for administrative effectiveness.

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