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Mapping of Big Five Personality Traits of Management Students and its Impact on Career Choice

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ABSTRACT

Students of Business Management today have a wide variety of careers to choose from. There are a number of new age careers like entertainment, logistics, tourism which require management professionals to conduct their businesses in a professional manner. This study aims to map the Big Five Personality Traits of a select group of Management students and to analyse the impact of these traits on their career choice.

The study has attempted to map the Big Five Personality Traits of the selected sample of students namely openness, conscientiousness, Extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism through a descriptive research design. A simple random sampling has been used and data has been collected from the management students. The effect of Personality traits on the career choices of students has been analysed with the help of Pearson's Correlation, T-Test and Regression Analysis.

It was found through Bivariate correlation analysis personality traits Agreeableness and extraversion has significant relationship in choosing the career among B-School students. The career options were categorised for the purpose of analysis into new age careers (Hospital management, Adventures careers, Entertainment, entrepreneurship) and traditional careers (IT, Management, Business).It was found that some of the personality traits Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism and openness play major role in choosing the careers. The study has highlighted that students with personality traits of openness and agreeableness opt new age careers and those with the trait of agreeableness opt for traditional careers. The big five personality traits were used to predict their influence on career choice through a regression fit. The analysis showed that the Big five personality traits were able to predict the career choice to great extent.

Business Management Students today are perplexed with the array of career choices available. Lack of knowledge about their personality trait ends up choosing careers which are not suitable and also shifting of jobs within a short period of time. This study by highlighting the influence of personality traits on career choices will be helpful for students in career choice and also for organisations to look into job fit of candidates from the perspective of personality traits.

Keywords: Career Choices, Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism.

1. INTRODUCTION

Personality Trait is a much researched and debated concept in management. It has been used to understand and classify people in an organisation. Even though there is disagreement between various theorists on the meaning of the term 'personality' almost all of them agree that what people do or how they behave is influenced by their personality traits. In some instances it is also used to get insights about students' behaviour. Many theories and models have been developed to understand personality and its types. Funder (2001) defines personality as in terms of thought, emotion and behaviour. McCrae and Costa (1989) define personality as enduring emotional, interpersonal, experiential, attitudinal and motivational styles that explain behaviour in different situations. A personality trait is defined as a distinguishing, relatively enduring way in which one individual differs from another (Guilford,1959).The most popular among them is the big five personality traits model also known as the five–factor model. The big five personality traits are.

1.   Openness

2.   Conscientiousness

3.   Extraversion

4.   Agreeableness and

5.   Neuroticism

Big Five research has been carried out very early and is attributed to Galton(1884) and Baumgarten (1933) . But it is Allport and Odbert (1936) to whom personality traits are often associated.

Students differ from each other in terms of their personal values. They come from diverse backgrounds and so the way in which they process facts is different. Their personality factors are varied and also their level of acceptance. Personality traits are needed for people to be effective in their career. Personality has been accepted as an infuential factor on how people learn. (Lawrence,1997; Myer et al, 1998).

Timothy A. Judge et al, (1999) conducted a study to explore on the influence of the eBig Five Personality Traits on factors such as mental ability and career success. The study followed respondents in three stages from early childhood to retirement and was termed as Intergenerational study. Career success was measured through intrinsic and extrinsic factors . The study identified that conscientiousness as the personality trait which positively predicted career success and neuroticism as the trait which negatively predicted career success. Michael K. Mount et al. (2005) conducted a study among Ph.d students in Holland which explored the correlation between the Personality traits and their interest towards a particular vocation.

2. THEORY

Annamario Di Fabio et al. (2012) have examined the difficulties in career decision making in relation to Personality traits among Italian University students. They found that Emotional Intelligence contributes more in predicting career decision making difficulties rather than personality traits . The role of personality traits in career decision–making process was recognized and agreed upon among researchers (Saka & Gati, 2007; Saka, Gati & Kelly,2008).

Nagle & Anand (2012) conducted a study among young male adults in India on empathy and personality traits as forecasters of adjustment. They used Jackson Personality Inventory for this purpose. The study revealed that personality traits are good predictor of adjustment. Katherine Shceck et al(2015) have used the five factor personality model to assess the motivations for playing Video Games among students of Dakota State University, South Korea. They found out that there are variety of play motivations like achievement, Immersion etc. and these motivations are positively correlated with personality traits. Noel & Levas (2003) investigated the relationship between personality traits and behaviour in choosing of business major. Undergraduate business students taken as sample respondents of the study made an assessment of their own personality with the help of Cattell's 16 Personality Factor (16PF). The study revealed that distinctive sets of personality prompt them to select careers to match their expectations.

Safdar, Gulap & Saif Ullah (2013) examined the correlation between students' personality traits and their academic achievement based on big five personality trait theory. The study revealed that 'Conscientiousness' and 'Agreeableness' as personality traits found high in secondary school students. Further overall academic performance was not influenced by personality traits. Seyed Hossein Fazeli (2012) found that the choice and use of Memory English Language Learning Strategies were influenced by Personality traits. Ki–Ho–Kim et al. (2016), has conducted a study on the effect of Big Five Personality traits on the trust and behavioural pattern of Mobile Convenient Payment Service. They proved that respondents with high neuroticism preferred to accept mobile convenient payment service.

Career choices available for Management Students have undergone sea changes over the years. There are number of sectors where the need for management graduates has been increasingly felt. Some of these sectors include Logistics, Supply Chain, Hospitality, Entertainment and Adventure careers. Even though demand for management graduates in the above sectors is increasing the number of students who choose these careers is low. This has necessitated a study to map their personality traits and examine its impact on their career choices.

Following are the objectives of the study :

1. To map the personality traits of Management Students based on the Big Five Model.
2. To analyse the impact of the above traits on their career choice.

3. METHODS

The research design adopted for the study is descriptive research design. The study aimed at finding out the relationship between the personality traits of management students and their career choices.

3.1. Sampling Procedure

The final year students of a popular Business School in Chennai were taken as the study group and the study was conducted in November 2016.The Business School had student strength of 144. A simple random sampling method was adopted and the sample of size *n* = 48 was selected for the purpose of this study.

3.2. Hypotheses of the study

H0 1: There is no relationship between the personality traits and career choice among students

  H0 2: There is no significant difference between the choice of new age careers and traditional careers among students having different personality traits.

3.3. Staistical Analysis

Based on the Five Factor Model a questionnaire was developed to cover all the Big Five Personality Traits with a five point Likert Scale with 6 statements for each trait. The instrument was validated with the help of opinion from 3 faculty members. Pilot testing was done with 10 students and all the questions were understood with ease by the students. Reliability coefficient was found to be .793 for the instrument.

3.4. Statistical tools

Correlation has been used to find out the relationship between five personality traits and the career choice of the students. Anova is used to test the influence of five personality traits among the students for their career choice.

  Regression was employed to predict the suitable job based on personality traits

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 8.1

Correlation between the five personality traits and the career choice among the students

S. No	Personality Traits	Correlation	P–Value
1.	Agreeableness	–0.329	**0.021***
2.	Conientious	0.233	0.107
3.	Extravertion	–0.302	**0.035***
4.	Neuroticism	–0.003	0.986
5.	Openness	–0.67	0.646

  *Significant at 5% level.

Inference : It is found that there is a significant correlation between the personality traits –agreeableness and extraversion and the choice of their career.

Table 8.2
Mean difference between the choice of new age careers and traditional careers for different personality traits

S. No	Pesonality Traits	Mean ± S.D New Age	Mean ± S.D Traditional	P–Value
1.	Agreeableness	19.97 ± 3.076	24.35 ± 3.39	0.000*
2.	Conscientious	19.69 ± 3.392	22.40 ± 5.144	0.031*
3.	Extraversion	19.86 ± 2.825	21.25 ± 3.143	0.113
4.	Neuroticism	18.59 ± 3.386	22.90 ± 3.919	0.000*
5.	Openness	20.38 ± 2.397	22.00 ± 1.654	0.012*

*Significant at 5% level.

Inference : From the analysis it is revealed that there is significant difference in the choice of career among the students with the following personality traits (1) Agreeableness (2) Conscientious (3) Neuroticism (4) Openness. For the choice of new age career openness takes a major role which is followed by agreeableness, conscientious and neuroticism. For the choice of traditional career the personality of agreeableness takes the lead.

Table 8.3
Influence of the five personality traits among the students for their career choice

$ANOVA^b$

Model	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	5	1.522	15.470	.000^a
1	43	.098		
	48			

a. Predictors: (Constant), neuroticism, conscientious, extrovert, agreeableness, openness
b. Dependent Variable: job suit

The linear regression model fit indicates the correlation, the quality of prediction of the dependent variable (R = 0.802) and model explains 64% of the total variance in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variable. (R^2 = 0.643).

Table 8.4
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.802^a	.643	.601	.314

Predictors: (Constant), neuroticism, conscientious, extravertion, agreeableness, openness

The F – ratio in the ANOVA table tests whether the overall regression model is a good fit for the data. The table shows that the independent variables are able to statistically predict the dependent variable, F(5, 43) = 15.470, p < .0005 (*i.e.*, the regression model is a good fit of the data).

Table 8.5
Estimated model co–efficient

		Coefficients				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	Model	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	−3.455	.647		−5.338	.000
	Openness	.051	.013	.399	3.905	.000
	Conscientious	.041	.011	.358	3.874	.000
	Extrovert	.034	.012	.282	2.733	.009
	Agreeableness	.047	.016	.284	2.990	.005
	Neuroticism	.060	.021	.271	2.870	.006

a. Dependent Variable: job suit

The general form of the model to predict the suitable job from the personality traits is, Y = −3.455 + 0.051 (openness) +0.041 (conscientious) +0.034 (extrovert) +0.047 (agreeableness) +0.060 (neuroticism)

The study aimed at mapping the 5 Big personality traits and their impact on career choices.

It was found through bivariate correlation analysis the personality traits Agreeableness and extrovert has significant relationship in choosing the career among B–School students. Many of the career options like hospitality management, IT, Adventure careers, entertainment related careers essentially requires the above two personality traits. So it can be concluded that student possessing the personality traits like Agreeableness and extrovert predominantly can adopt themselves to such career options.

Further the career options were categorised for the purpose of analysis into new age careers (Hospital management, Adventures careers, Entertainment, entrepreneurship) and traditional careers (IT, Management, Business)

A t– test was performed and it is revealed that the personality traits (Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism and openness) play major role in choosing the new age or the traditional careers. The study has highlighted that students with personality traits of openness and agreeableness opt new age careers which is evident from the students 't' test. For the choice of traditional careers the trait of agreeableness takes the lead.

The big five personality traits were used to predict their influence on career choice through a regression fit. The analysis showed that the Big five personality traits were able to predict the career choice to great extent (R = 0.802).

Further the model fitted is good for predicting the influence of personality trait on career choice which is proven through Analysis of variance ($p < 0.0005$)

5. CONCLUSION

The study has revealed that all the Big Five personality traits viz., Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism are able to predict the career choice to a considerable extent. Organisations across various domains like IT, Manufacturing and Services have been witnessing turnover of employees to a very large extent in recent times. Mapping the personality traits of prospective employees and deciding on their job fit will go a long way in reducing turnover of employees. Employees often find themselves out of place in a particular job mainly due to mismatch of their personality trait and job profile. This can be avoided to a large extent by identifying the personality trait and matching with suitable careers.

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