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Nexus between Personality Traits and Electoral Behaviour of Senior-Non-Teaching Employees of Nnamdi Azikiwe University

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Abstract

This study examines the association between personality traits and electoral behaviour among senior non-teaching employees of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, with the goal of filling knowledge gaps. The participants were 138 non-teaching employees from Nnamdi Azikiwe University who were chosen at random from 34 different units on campus. Data was collected using the electoral behaviour questionnaire which was developed during the research and has a Cronbach alpha of .726, as well as Goldberg's big five personality inventory (2018). The study employed a correlational design, with Pearson product momentum correlation as the statistical method. The study's findings revealed significant ANOVA values of $F(6,126) = 3.43$, p.05. Extraversion, at =.485, p.01, and openness to experience, at =.409, p.01, both strongly predicted electoral behaviour. It was suggested that politicians sought electorates who possessed both personality traits.

Keywords: Electoral behaviour, electorates, employees, personality traits, voter apathy

INTRODUCTION

Making citizens significant players in the country's political decision-making process is one of the most crucial parts of political involvement in the electoral process (Balatif, Labzai, & Rachik, 2018). In this view, group leadership is structured in such a way that followers can participate in decision-making through the electoral process. In Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka for example, the just-finished university workers' multipurpose cooperative election the procedure lasted for a set amount of time. Contestants were allowed to advocate for votes among senior administrative staff. As a result, people who lost the election expressed their displeasure in a variety of ways afterward. The claim was made against the election officials as well as the winners. As is customary, the majority of contenders were confident in their chances of winning. Electorates' assurances during the campaign contributed to this hope. Why did the electorate not make good on their promises to their presumed favourite candidates? In this context, the researcher is motivated to investigate the impact of personality traits on electoral behaviour among Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka senior non-teaching employees.

According to Bartels (2010), the academic study of voting has a long history. The current history of the academic study of voting (electoral behaviour), according to Bartels (2010), began soon before 1940. As a result, many electoral behaviour studies have garnered more attention than others (Hutchings & Jefferson, 2018). Similarly, during times of severe struggle for control of the government and its resources, researchers have defined electoral behaviour as people's efforts to conform to social norms, particularly when norm-compliance is

scrutinized publicly (Panagoulos, 2010). (Birvatn, Galle, Berge, Miguel, Posner, Tungodden, Zhang), a civil right in democratic governance (Sindermann, Mottus, Rozgonjuk, & Montag, 2021), the summoning of voters to polls to express their preference for a particular set of parties and candidates (Gerzia & da Silva, 2021), and an important aspect of public political participation in a democratic system (Sindermann, Mottus, Rozgonjuk, & Montag, 2021). (Mashud & Amin, 2020). The researcher defines electoral conduct as a demonstration of a citizen's right to change democratic governance by electoral standards.

Electoral behaviour scholars have used a variety of theoretical techniques to further comprehend the concept of electoral behaviour. According to Antunes (2010) and Mahsud and Amin (2020), there are three models of electoral behaviour: sociological, psychological, and rational choice theory. Similarly, the vast majority of scholars looked at the effects of electoral behaviour on well-being (De Neve, Ungar, & Eichstaedt, 2021; Dolan, Metcalfe, & Powdlhavee, 2008), increased health needs (Fernandez-Navia, polo-Muro, & Tercero-Lucas, 2021), increased spatial divisions in political support, and economic development (Herodowicz, Koneck). There has been a slew of studies on electoral behaviour, including a large-scale replication field experiment (Gerber, Huber, & Fang, 2020), field experiment technique (Panangopoulu, 2010), lab in-the-field-experiment (Bjorvatn et al. 2013), theoretical review of the existence of an association between political orientation, personality traits, and interpersonal behaviour (Grunhage and Reuter, & 2021), social exchange theory (Gong, 2022). There is a plethora of research on the link between electoral behaviour and personality factors (Ha, & Lan, 2015, Areal, 2021; Nai, Maier Vranic, 2021; and Morton & Kai, 2019).

Personality traits were defined by Sindermann, Mottus, Rozgonjuk, and Montag (2021) as a collection of hierarchically organized characteristics, with openness (to experience, consciousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Goldberg, 1990; Tupes & Christal, 1992) at one of the highest levels. Others described narcissism, psychopathy, and Machiavellianism as personality qualities. 2021) (Nai, Maier, and Vranie). Personality, according to Fiest & Feist (2009), is a pattern of relatively permanent features and unique characteristics that provide a person's conduct with both consistency and individuality (p.4).

Studies on the relationship between personality traits and voting behaviour appear to be in their infancy. Personality traits, according to Bakker, Lelkes, and Maka (2021), are stable inclinations to think, feel, and behave in specific ways. Personality traits are unique features that are persistent across time, according to the researcher in this study. Numerous studies have linked personality to electoral behaviour (Carney, Jost, Goshing, and Potter 2008), political attitudes and behaviours, including political ideology (Gerber, Huber, Doherty, Dowling, and Ha, 2010), and political efficacy (Gerber, Huber, Doherty, Dowling, and Ha, 2010). (Cooper, Golden & Socha, 2013).

Statement to the Problem

Previous research looked into related concepts such as political behavior and voting behavior (Garzia & de Silva, 2021; Frith et al; 2020, Balatif, et al; 2018; Okolie et al, 2021; Bornschier, et al 2021, Guo, 2020; Lee, 2020, Mugge et al; 2021 and Tanaka, et al, 2021). Other studies

examined personality traits, voting, and political behavior (Nai, 2022; Gerber, et al, 2011; Aldemur & Bayraktaroglu, 2004; Nai et al, 2021; Ha and Lau, 2015, Laguna et al, 2021). However, none of these studies examined the link between personality traits and electoral behaviours. The current research was motivated by these knowledge gaps.

Research Questions

Will there be a relationship between personality traits and electoral behaviour among Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka's senior non-teaching employees?

Theoretical Framework

The study's theoretical foundation was based on Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour (1991). As a result, electoral behaviour may be influenced by attitudes, personality traits, subjective standards, and perceived behavioural control (which is a goal-directed behaviour). The authors of this paper propose that, depending on their personality types, people can transcend subjective standards by developing a positive attitude toward electoral behaviour. They may be able to commence planning to carry out electoral actions as a result of this.

Personality traits and electoral behaviour

As a dark politician, Nai (2022) reported on a study on populism (a component of empathetic personality trait) (a component of electoral behaviour). The study's data came from an international survey that included expert ratings for 49 candidates' personality profiles after they had completed 22 national elections, matched with standardized survey data gathered in the aftermath of those same elections, which included self-rating of populist attitudes and candidates' likeability (CSES data, N= (70,690) results revealed that personality traits are significantly more likely to elect candidates high on dark and low on a scale of one to ten.

Gerber, Huber, Doherty, and Dowling (2011) published a study on the Big Five personality traits in the political realm (a component of electoral behaviour). The big five personalities were found to predict election behaviour. In another study, Aldemir and Bayraktaroglu (2004) used a five-factor personality inventory to determine the effect of personality factors on voter behaviour. There was a substantial difference between rule adherence (a personality trait) and respondents' desire to vote for a given political orientation (a component of electoral behaviour), according to the findings. According to Nai, Maier, and Vranic (2021), personality research goes a long way (for some). An examination into candidate personality qualities, voter profiles, and perceived likability in an experimental setting. There were 1,971 respondents from the United States who took part in the study. The findings show that dark candidates had personality traits such as narcissism, psychopathy, and Machiavellianism. A study on personality qualities and current voting (a component of electoral behaviour) was published by Ha and Lan (2015). The study used data from a large-scale nationwide survey field conducted during the 2008 presidential election. Personality qualities have a direct impact on present voting (a component of electoral behaviour), according to the findings.

Hypothesis

Among senior non-teaching workers of Nnamdi Azikiwe University in Awka, personality traits will significantly predict electoral behaviour.

Method

Participants

The survey included 133 non-teaching employees from Nnamdi Azikiwe University in Awka who volunteered their participation. Using a basic random sample method, individuals were chosen at random from various departments and units across the Awka campuses (Psychology, Igbo, Business administration, DVC administration, DVC academics, Council, Law, Examination unit, Religion, Political Science, Banking and Finance, Marketing, statistics, Geology, Human Capital Development, Dean Faculty of Social Sciences, Planning Unit, Electrical Engineering, Bursary, Personnel Registry, Alumni, and English Department were among the 36 units/departments chosen at random. Participants ranged in age from 23 to 62 years old, with a mean age of 36.69 years.

Males made up 30.8 percent of the group, while females made up 69.2 percent. A total of 77 (57.9%) of the participants are members of social groups, while 56 (42.1%) are not. One hundred and eleven people (83.5%) were members of religious organizations, whereas 22 (16.5%) were not. One hundred and seventy-two percent were married, 32 percent were single, and one percent were divorced. One hundred and twenty-eight (96.2%) were Christians, three (2.3%) were Muslims, and two (1.5%) were others. Two (1.5 percent) of the participants had completed O'levels, whereas nine (6.6 percent) had completed an OND/NCE, seven (5.3 percent) had completed a Bachelor of Science degree, and 115 (86.5 percent) had completed a master's degree. One hundred and twenty-three people (92.5%) were registered to vote, while ten people (7.5%) were not. Twenty-seven (20.3 percent) were registered members of a political party, while 106 (79.7%) were not. The research instruments were administered to the available and willing participants at the time of the study in their individual offices during break times using incidental random sampling.

The Electoral Behaviour Scale (EBS) and the Personality Traits Inventory (PTI) were utilized to collect data in this study (PTI). Nweke developed the electoral behaviour scale as part of the research (2022). A pilot test was undertaken to validate the EBS before the study. The study included 24 undergraduates who volunteered and were chosen at random from Nnamdi Azikiwe University's faculty of management in Awka. The participants ranged in age from 17 to 30 years old. Twenty-three people (95.8%) were single, while one person (4.2%) was married. Everyone who took part was a Christian. Twenty-three people (95.8%) had a senior secondary school certificate, while one person (4.2%) had a regular national diploma.

Four students (16.77%) were registered to vote, whereas 20 people (83.3%) were not. Two undergraduates (8.3%) belonged to a political party, whereas 22 participants (91.7%) were not affiliated with any political party. Nine (37.5%) of the individuals were members of a social group, while 15 (62.5%) were not members of any social group. There are twenty-one (87.5

percent). The majority of the participants were members of religious organizations, although three percent (12.5%) were not. On electoral behaviour, a total of 33 items were raised. Principal component analysis was used to analyse these items. The KMO value (Kaiser-Mayer-Olin) is. 62. Extracted factors explained 36.36 percent, 18.87 percent, 9.59 percent, 6.02 percent, 4.75 percent, 4.14 percent, and 3.33 percent of the total variation explained. The scree plot demonstrates that these 7 components account for the majority of the variance, with little variance explained after the 8th extracted element. Before rotation, the components or factors were extracted and the factor loadings were listed, and after rotation, the rotated component matrix reveals the same results.

The coronach alpha coefficient was also used to test the internal consistency of the seven factors. The result shows an alpha coefficient of.86. Then, using a zero-order correlation coefficient, tests for convergent and divergent validity were performed. Electoral behaviour was positively connected with the life satisfaction scale (r=.030, p.05), the indicator of self-esteem (r =.49, p.05), organizational frustration (r = -.45, p.05), and the trait anxiety inventory (r = -.32, p.05). The electoral behaviour scale is a seven-item scale that assesses several facets of people's election activity. Items on the electoral behaviour scale are measured on five Likert scale dimensions, such as strongly agree-5, to strongly disagree – 1. Some of the items on the scale include: within the past 12 months, I have frequently volunteered for political organizations, and within the past 12 months I have frequently voted. The personality trait inventory (PTI) was developed by Goldberg (2018). The PTI is a 44-item scale on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree. Sample items include " is a talkative", "does a thorough Job" etc. items on PTI are scored positively except items Extraversion: 1, 6R, 11, 16, 21R, 26, 31R, 36 Agreeableness: 2R, 7, 12R, 17, 22, 27R, 32, 37R, 42, Conscientiousness: 3, 8R, 13, 18R, 28, 33, 38, 43R, Neuroticism: 4, 9R, 14, 19, 24R, 29, 34R, 39, Openness: 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35R, 40, 41R, 14 which are reversed scored.

Design and Statistic

A correlation predictive design was used in this investigation. The descriptive, zero-order correlation, and multiple linear regression entry methods were used to analyse the data. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 was used to manage the data.

Results

The analysis was conducted in two stages: (a) Zero-order correlation between electoral behaviour and personality traits, and (b) Multiple linear regression between electoral behaviour and personality traits.

Table 1: Zero-order correlation of electoral behaviour and personality traits

		1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Electoral behaviour	1					
2	Extraversion	-.15	1				
3	Agreeableness	.03	.14	1			
4	Conscientiousness	.05	.12	.50**	1		
5	Neuroticism	.09	.02	-.37**	-.39**	1	
6	Openness	.22*	.41*	.40**	-.05	-.05	1

*Correlation is significant at the 0.5 level (2- tailed)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 2: Multiple linear regression of personality traits and electoral behaviour

Predictor variable	Adjusted R^2	Df1(df2)	F	β	Std. Error
Model 1(EBS)	**.099**	**6(126)**	**3.43**		
A. Extraversion				.485**	.14
B. Agreeableness				.065	.11
C. Conscientiousness				.07	.153
D. Neuroticism				.074	.124
E. Openness				.409**	.128

** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

Table 1 shows the zero-order correlation coefficient of the studied variables. There was a negative correlation between electoral behaviour and extraversion dimension at r= -.15, p > .01. The correlation between electoral behaviour and agreeableness dimension was positive at r = .03, p < .05, conscientiousness and electoral behaviour were positive at r = .05, p < .05, the correlation between electoral behaviour and neuroticism as positive at r = .09, p < .05 and the correlation between electoral behaviour and openness to experience was both positive and significant at r = .22*, p < .01. The model in table 2 were analysed using multiple regression. Therefore, the following outcomes were obtained: when enter method was applied to electoral behaviour for the five independent predictors (Extraversion, Agreeableness,

Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness to experience), the adjusted R^2 = .10. This means that the model contributed 10% in understanding electoral behaviour. The ANOVA summary (F-ratio) shows that the adjusted R2 value was significant at $F_{(6,126)}$ = 3.43, p < .05. Specifically, the unstandardized beta values for each of the predictor factors were for extraversion β = .485, p < .01, Agreeableness β = .065, p > .05, Conscientiousness β = .07, p > .05, Neuroticism β = .074, p > .05, and Openness to experience β = .409, p < .01.

Discussion and Conclusion

The study examined the relationships between personality factors and electoral behaviour among Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka non-teaching employees. The study's findings backed up the hypothesis that personality traits would predict electoral behaviour among non-teaching employees at Nnamdi Azikiwe University in Awka. Similar findings have been seen in other research (Nai, 2022; Nai, et al, 2021, Languna, et al 2021). The findings of the aforementioned studies focused on other characteristics of personality such as rule adherence, narcissism, psychopathy, and Machiavellianism, whereas the current paper evaluated the five personality domains specifically.

Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience are among these areas. According to the findings, only extraversion and openness to new experiences were significant predictors of electoral behaviour. Extraversion, in particular, is associated with the general inclination to feel good and to be gregarious, vivacious, and active. People with these characteristics appear to be more interested in electoral activity. Due to their emotional condition and ability to communicate with others in their environment, individuals may view election activities as one of those social events in which they can participate.

As a result of their characteristics, they appear active, vivacious, and social. Individuals who are open to new experiences may also exhibit active imagination, aesthetic sensitivity, attention to inner sentiments, a liking for variety, intellectual curiosity, and the ability to question authority. Such individuals appear to have a unique perspective on election activity. They appear interested in the outcome of election ideas because they believe every experience is unique and worthwhile. These persons are unable to withdraw from any election process in which they have participated. They appear to be uniquely driven to observe the end of any beginning process, in addition to participating in election activities.

They are engaged, and they aim to leave no stone unturned. Furthermore, Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned conduct provides an explanation for the function of personality factors in electoral behaviour. Having a favourable attitude regarding electoral behaviour, according to Ajzen (1991), sets the drive for achieving it. Individuals with extraversion and an openness to new experiences, according to this theory, may have the ability to overcome subjective norms that might otherwise prevent them from engaging in electoral behaviour. Because the subjective norm has been broken, it is much easier for such employees to prepare to participate actively in the election process. Obtaining a voter's card, attending political conventions, wearing political stickers, and speaking to others in favour of other contestants or candidates are all examples of such plans. Planning a task-related activity, according to Ajzen (1991), entails having a sense of behavioural control. Perceived behavioural control, rather than behavioural

intent, is seen to be a stronger predictor of task performance (Webb & Sheeran, 2007). As a result, personality traits and attitudes have an indirect impact on specific behaviour (Ajzen, 1991).

Limitation of the Study

The study had a small sample size of only 96 people. This sample size represents only a small percentage of the total population of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka non-teaching employees.

Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Studies

1. It was recommended that politicians should determine the personality domains of the electorates before designing electoral information.
2. Employees with extraversion and openness to experience traits should be the focus of most electoral messages.

It was suggested that more work should be embarked on with non-teaching employees. This may strengthen the findings of the present study.

Implications of the Study

i. Extraversion and openness to experience are the two specific domains of personality related to electoral behaviour.
ii. The theory of planned behaviour has been proven to be essential in the understanding of goal-directed behaviour within electoral activities.
iii. Politicians may be distinct in choosing loyalists based on their extraversion and openness to experience.

Conclusion

Extraversion and openness to experience both predict better electoral conduct than any other personality attribute among the study participants, according to the findings. Similarly, it has been demonstrated that the theory of planned behaviour allows for a more complex understanding of electoral behaviour. The newly designed electoral behaviour measure appears to have the psychometric properties needed to explain electoral behaviour among Nnamdi Azikiwe University employees.

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