



EFFECT OF PERSONALITY TRAITS OF SCHOOL HEADS ON TEACHERS PERFORMANCE AT SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL

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Abstract

Leadership is the ability to influence and lead others to achieve organizational goals. Research in leadership showed that personality traits support leadership. Leadership refers to the ability to influence, motivate, and guide individuals or groups toward achieving common goals. Personality traits are patterns of thoughts, emotions, and behaviors that shape how individuals interact with others. Personality traits of head teachers influence the teachers' job performance. The current study was quantitative based on a correlational survey design. The major objective of this study was to determine the effect of personality traits of head on teachers' performance at the secondary school level in Lahore, Punjab. The sample of the study consisted of 300 public sector teachers selected through a simple random sampling technique. Head teachers' personality traits and teachers' performance questionnaires were used to collect data from the respondents. The personality traits of heads include five dimensions: extraversion, neuroticism, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness, with 25 items, and teachers' performance involved two dimensions: contextual performance, and task performance, with 15-items. The reliability of personality traits of heads and teachers' performance questionnaires was .910 and .912, respectively. The calculated data were analyzed employing means, standard deviation, Pearson correlation, and regression techniques to explore the phenomenon. The results of the study showed a moderate relationship between the personality traits of heads and teachers' performance. Moreover, the results of the study showed that the personality traits of heads positively influence teachers' performance, particularly in the dimensions of instructional planning, classroom management, and professional commitment. On the basis of the results of the study, it was recommended that the education department may integrate personality traits assessment, and training of institutional heads development programs. Policymakers and educational leaders enhance school effectiveness through improved head teacher dynamics.

Keywords: Head teachers, personality traits, teachers' performance

Introduction

Personality traits are enduring features that shape individuals' patterns of thinking, feeling, and behavior. These traits help to explain how people respond in various situations and perform their roles. Contemporary personality researchers commonly explain these characteristics through the Big Five Personality Model (BFPM), which includes extraversion, neuroticism, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness. This framework provides a comprehensive basis for understanding leadership personality behavior and its influences within educational institutions (Matthews et al., 2003; Rachmad, 2002). School heads assist during policy implementation, academic leadership, administrative functions, staff management, financial management, and community relations in an institution. Their responsibilities extend beyond administration to supervision, professional support, motivation, and the creation of a positive school environment. Effective heads communicate a clear vision, foster collaboration, and build strong relationships with teachers, students, and the community, which are influenced by their personality traits (Hosie & Nankervis, 2016).



Personality traits significantly shape leadership behavior and management practices. School heads with positive traits try to manage institutions, promote cooperation, and enhance teachers' motivation and commitment. Teachers are likely to perform well when they perceive care, fairness, and support from their school heads. Leadership grounded in appropriate personality traits contributes to better planning, decision-making, implementation, and professional development within schools (Malik et al., 2016). The results of previous studies indicated that personality traits are associated with leadership effectiveness and performance outcomes. With the rapid educational transformation, social change, technological advancement, and amplified performance expectations, school leadership has become more important than ever. It is essential for school heads to adapt contemporary leadership styles to meet institutional needs in maintaining high levels of performance. Personality traits such as emotional stability, openness, and extraversion influence how heads respond to these demands and guide the performance of their staff (Ibad, 2018).

Teachers' performance is a key determinant of institutional success that includes task performance and contextual performance. Task performance refers to how well a person performs their duties according to set standards, while contextual performance refers to voluntary participation beyond formal duties to support the social and psychological environment of an organization. Leadership personality traits influence through shaping teachers' motivation, engagement, and professional behavior (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997; Motowidlo et al., 2012).

Personality traits studies reported the contributions in employee performance mostly framed in the Western context (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Judge et al., 2002). Most existing literature focused on leadership styles, instructional leadership, and managerial practices of school heads, with comparatively limited attention to their personality traits and how traits affect teachers' performance (McCrae & Costa, 1997). Studies that determined the relationship between school heads' personality traits and teachers' performance at the secondary school level were scarce in the context of Pakistan. Local studies emphasize administrative effectiveness, school climate, or student achievement outcomes, while teachers' performance encompassing task performance and contextual performance has less associated to school heads' personality characteristics (Goodman & Svyantek, 1999; McCrae & Costa, 1997). Furthermore, limited studies have structured with standardized personality frameworks such as Big Five personality traits to apprise school leadership in Punjab, Pakistan. There exists a research gap in exploring the effect of personality traits of school heads on teachers' performance at the secondary school level in Pakistan. Therefore, there is a need to explore the effect of personality traits of school heads on teachers' performance at the secondary school level. This study provided valuable insights for leadership development, policy formulation, and professional training programs in secondary education.

Statement of the Problem

School leadership is widely recognized as a key indicator in enhancing teachers' performance and school functioning. School heads contribute to motivating teachers and fostering a positive organizational culture in the school. Limited attention has been given to the role of school heads' personality traits that influence teachers' performance in the context of Pakistan. Teachers' performance, such as instructional effectiveness, classroom management, and collaborative practices persist despite ongoing reforms and training initiatives. Existing studies in the local context have primarily focused on structural or policy-related dimensions affecting teachers' performance, while the personal attributes of school



heads, which may significantly shape teachers' tasks, and contextual performance, remain underexplored. There is a need to explore the personality traits of school heads and their impact on teachers' performance. The absence of empirical evidence linking specific personality traits of school heads with teachers' performance outcomes limits the ability of policymakers and educational administrators to make informed decisions regarding leadership selection, training, and development at the secondary school level. Therefore, there is a need to evaluate the effect of personality traits of school heads on teachers' performance at the secondary school level. This helps to improve teacher performance and provide evidence-based insights for policymakers, educational administrators, teachers, and training institutions to strengthen school at secondary education.

Research Objectives of the Study

The major objectives of the study were;

- 1) To find out the existing level of heads' personality traits and teachers job performance.
- 2) To find out the relationship between the schools' heads' personality traits and teachers Job performance.
- 3) To evaluate the effect of schools' heads' personality traits on job performance.

Significance of the Study

The results of the study contribute to the growing body of educational leadership literature by empirically exploring the effect of personality traits of school heads on teachers' performance. The results of this study provided insights for policymakers in making decisions regarding the selection, appointment, and training of school heads bridge gaps between personality traits and educational leadership. The study is helpful for school heads with empirical evidence to foster supportive learning environments that enhance teachers' motivation, collaboration, and overall performance of the school. The study may be helpful for teacher training institutions to integrate personality traits assessment and leadership development into school practices. Improved teacher performance contributes to better student learning outcomes in the school. Furthermore, this study is valuable for future researchers for exploring leadership personality traits in educational settings. It may serve as a reference point for comparative studies across provinces, school types, and educational levels within Pakistan.

Literature Review

The literature review of this study focused on the concepts of leadership, personality traits of school heads, dimensions of personality traits, job performance, dimensions of teachers' performance, and previous studies related to the effect of school heads' personality traits on teachers' performance at the secondary school level.

Leadership

A leader is an individual who guides, inspires, and directs to achieve institutional goals. Leadership refers to the ability to influence followers toward the attainment of common goals (Kouzes & Posner, 2004). Leadership functions focus on guiding, coordinating, and facilitating group efforts to achieve instructional goals. Leadership as a dynamic process involves creativity, support, and services for teachers' better performance (Bolden, 2004; Rachmad, 2002; Spillane et al., 2003). Leadership represents an emotional bond between leaders and followers that strengthens vision and coordination in goal achievement (Bohn & Grafton, 2002; Riggio & Newstead, 2023). Leaders coordinate, supervise, and influence individuals or groups to accomplish organizational objectives (Rus et al., 2010; Wallace et al., 2022). Effective leaders develop emotional connections with their followers, fostering motivation and self-confidence that enhance institutional outcomes (Davis & Gardner, 2012).

School heads, through their personality traits, contribute in the school climate improvement, teachers' professional development, and students' holistic development (Chandler et al., 2023; Özdemir & Yirmibeş, 2016). The heads act as instructional leaders to run an institution (Collinson, 2012; Chandler et al., 2023). Successful leaders develop leadership capacity among teaching staff to ensure sustained institutional success (Cohen et al., 1997). Heads leadership practices enhance teachers' performance that improves students' holistic learning in an institution (Cotton, 2003; Goleman, 2016). School leaders organize collaborative learning activities for teachers such as lesson planning, assessment strategies, pedagogical dialogues, and reflective discussions to support teachers' professional growth (Mangin & Stoelinga, 2009). Contemporary leadership focuses on shared leadership, emotional intelligence, inclusivity, adaptability, capacity building, and innovation for educational improvement (Snart, 2011; Singh et al., 2023). Transformational leaders inspire adaptability and commitment among staff, guiding toward institutional success (Amis et al., 2004). Leadership actions influence employees' performance, motivation, and efficiency in an institution (McLaurin, 2008; Wallace et al., 2022).

Personality Traits of School Head

Personality traits refer to the stable features that shape how individuals think, feels and respond in professional situations. Headship is associated with task-oriented and relationship-oriented behaviors to the institutional success (Siddiqui, 2014; Zalewska, 2016).

Dimensions of Personality Traits

The five personality trait dimensions were stated: Extraversion: Extraversion is one of the most influential personality traits for predicting leadership effectiveness (Judge et al., 2002). School heads with high extraversion influence others through interactions that motivate teachers to achieve team and institutional goals. Extraverted personality traits heads tend to be sociable, assertive, enthusiastic, and outgoing, which enables them to foster positive relationships and encourage collaboration with others (Spark, 2021; Zhang et al., 2022). Study of Wilmot et al., (2019) results showed that extraversion and its lower-order traits predict leadership emergence, that influencing teachers' performance and institutional outcomes.

Neuroticism: Neuroticism personality trait that contains emotional instability and a tendency to negative emotions, including anxiety, depression, and irritability. Heads with low neuroticism tend to be emotionally stable, resilient, and better equipped to handle challenges in the school environment. School heads with high scores in neuroticism personality traits have more mood fluctuations, heightened stress, and emotional reactivity. High neuroticism leadership trait leads to reduced organizational effectiveness, highlighting the importance of emotional regulation in educational leadership (Prins et al., 2019).

Agreeableness: Agreeableness personality trait involves kindness, teamwork, trustworthiness, sympathy, and forgiveness (McCrae & Costa, 2013). Heads with high agreeableness tend to form positive relationships with teachers and staff, receive better emotional support, and adapt more easily to group dynamics (Lebowitz, 2016; Yang & Hwang, 2014). Agreeable leaders foster a cooperative and supportive work environment, which reduces job stress and enhances performance and productivity (Cohen et al., 2017). In the educational context, agreeableness positively influences teacher interactions, collaboration, and overall classroom outcomes (Özdemir & Yirmibeş, 2016).



Conscientiousness: Conscientiousness personality trait refers to responsibility, reliability, and goal-directed behavior in an organization (Robbins & Judge, 2011). School heads high in conscientiousness plan activities to achieve institutional goals. Their focus is to manage administrative and instructional tasks through improving school performance. Conscientious leaders provide structure, guidance, and contribute to a productive work environment (Motowidlo & Kell, 2012).

Openness: The openness personality trait reflects intellectual curiosity, creativity, resourcefulness, and a willingness to explore new ideas (Robbins & Judge, 2011; Zell et al., 2022). Heads with high openness are more likely to innovate, adopt unconventional solutions, and promote creative teaching methods. This trait enhances the adaptability of the institution to changes and encourages a culture of continuous improvement. Research exhibited that openness contributes in enabling heads to think strategically, embrace novelty, and inspire teachers to engage in problem-solving and innovative practices (Lebowitz, 2016; Zell et al., 2022). Understanding how the personality traits of school heads influence teachers' performance is essential for improving leadership practices and enhancing schools' performance (Judge et al., 2002; Wilmot et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2022).

Job Performance

Job performance refers to the degree to which an individual contributes to achieving predetermined institutional goals. Teachers perform their professional duties, roles, and responsibilities in accordance with educational standards and school goals. School heads' traits, openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, and agreeableness influence teacher job performance. Teachers' performance is a key determinant of institutional effectiveness that influence through motivation, commitment, and leadership support (Bhat & Bashir, 2016; Dinantara, 2019; Shafiq & Hamza, 2017; Hashim & Shawkataly, 2017; Motowidlo & Kell, 2012).

Dimensions of Job Performance

Teachers' performance comprises two main dimensions: task performance and contextual performance. **Task Performance:** Task performance refers to how well a person performs the assigned tasks during planning, delivering lessons, maintaining records, and completing academic and curriculum activities. Task performance provides technical assistance in planning, organizing, directing, and coordinating the core operation. Task performance entails behavioral goods or bad task activities coupled with the institution's values fluctuation (Christian et al., 2011). Task performance contributes to supporting organizational activities that are essential for key processes. Task performance assists staff in essential activities during their duties. Task performance contributes to implementing institutional process. Task performance is about the proficiency with which activities are accomplished. It depends upon the skills, knowledge, and ability of teachers (Hosie & Nankervis, 2016).

Contextual Performance: Contextual performance serves the organizations in achieving efficiency through its psychological and social dimensions. Contextual performance constitutes extra-role behaviors and behaviors as a good citizen. Some other examples of contextual performance include task volunteering, helping colleagues, and defending or supporting the organization (Christian et al., 2011). Contextual performance referred to voluntary contribution to the operation and climate institution. It entails doing things to colleagues, acting as a



facilitator, and supporting the institution outside the parameters of one's regular work responsibilities (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997). Contextual performance contains the manners that provide direction of the emerging environment and commitment with the institution, persistent tasks' interest in supporting colleagues' performance (Motowidlo & Kell, 2012). Contextual performance establishes additional character of performances as an inhabitant (Motowidlo et al., 2014). Contextual performance and task performance are considered distinct behaviors, each making separate contributions to improving workplace outcomes. Contextual performance is related to teachers' tendency to behave in ways that facilitate the social and psychological context of an institution (Christian et al., 2011).

Studies Related to Effect of Personality Traits of Heads on Teachers Performance at Secondary School Level

A study was framed by Zakka, Sa'Adu, Garba, and Egorp (2024) to explore the relationship between personality traits and teachers' job performance in Nigeria. The study was a quantitative correlational study based on a survey design. The Big Five Personality Inventory (BFPI) and Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire (TJPQ) were used to collect data from respondents. A sample of 624 secondary school teachers was collected through a multistage sampling technique. The reliability was ensured for BFPI, .79, and TJPQ, .80 through Cronbach's alpha. Pearson correlation analysis was used to explore the association between personality traits and teachers Job Performance. The results of the study indicated a significant positive relationship between personality traits and teachers' job performance. The study concluded that the personality traits of teachers contribute to professional development.

A study was structured by Zaman, Alwi, and Shaiq (2023) to analyze head teachers' personality traits on teacher perception of working environment in Pakistan. The study was a quantitative correlational study based on a cross-sectional survey design. A sample of 206 public sector secondary school teachers was selected through convenience sampling. The collected data were analyzed using correlation analysis. The results of the study revealed strong positive relationships between principals' personality traits and teachers' and job performance. The study concluded that school leaders' personality traits contribute to shaping teachers' satisfaction and indirectly influence teacher performance.

Research Methodology

The study was quantitative in nature, using a survey method with a correlational research design. A sample of 300 teachers was selected through a simple random sampling technique to explore the phenomenon. The structured personality traits scale developed by Fiske (1949) and the job performance scale of Goodman and Svyantek (1999) were used to collect data from the respondents. Prior permission was obtained from scale developers through email to use for this study. Five educational leadership experts were consulted to ensure the content validity of context-relevant aspects of scale items. The Cronbach's alpha score was calculated to ensure the reliability of the scales. Personality traits scale consisted of 24 items, and the teaching performance scale consisted of fifteen items. The reliability was calculated through Cronbach's alpha score for personality traits and job performance scale .91 and .92 respectively. After obtaining permission from the school education department and selected school heads. The Google Form link generated was shared in the school education department WhatsApp groups, and a physical visit to the selected institutions was conducted to collect data. Ethical considerations were followed throughout the study. Participants were informed about the purpose and procedures of the study and their participation. Informed consent was

obtained. Confidentiality and anonymity were ensured by excluding names and school identities from the instruments, and the collected data were used solely for academic purposes.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The collected responses were coded and entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis. The collected data were analyzed according to research objectives, using descriptive statistics, mean, standard deviation, and inferential statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression analysis.

Table 1

Relationship between the dimensions of personality traits of head with teacher’s performance

<i>Variables</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>
Extraversion	-					
Neuroticism	.324**	-				
Agreeableness	.413**	.588**	-			
Consciousness	.631**	.394**	.444**	-		
Openness	.463**	.442**	.482**	.681**	-	
Teachers Performance	.488**	.377**	.421**	.571**	.434*	-

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

Table 1 showed that Pearson correlation analysis was used to explore the association between the dimensions of personality traits of head and teachers performance. The results showed a moderate association across all factors of PTH with TP, evidenced by the correlation coefficients: .488, .377, .421, .571 and .434. These values suggest a consistent strong relationship, highlighting the impact of the dimensions of Personality traits of head on teachers’ performance.

Table 2

Relationship of personality traits of head with teacher’s performance

<i>Variables</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Personality Traits of Heads</i>	-	
Teachers Performance	.458**	-

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

Table 2 demonstrated the correlation of personality traits of head with TP, Pearson Correlation was utilized. The statistical findings indicated that there was strong relationship of Personality traits of head on teachers performance, with r value .458 respectively.

Table 3

Effect of dimensions of personality traits of head on teacher’s performance

<i>DV</i>	<i>Constructs</i>	<i>S.E</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>
Teachers performance	(Constant)				
	Extraversion	.21	.42	2.00	.00**
	Neuroticism	.08	.14	1.69	.00**
	Agreeableness	.13	.25	1.93	.04*
	Consciousness	.14	.49	3.44	.01*
	Openness	.11	.37	3.17	.00**

Table 3 showed that consequence of all the dimensions of Personality traits of head on job performance. The results of regression analysis showed the dimensions of PTH had moderate consequence on TP with beta values .42, .14, .25, .49 and .37 respectively.

Table 4

Effect of personality traits of head on job performance					
<i>DV</i>	<i>Constructs</i>	<i>S.E</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Teachers Performance	(Constant)				
	Personality Traits of Head	.14	.334	2.44	.01*

Dependent Variable: TP

Table 4 showed that consequence of personality traits of head on job performance of teachers, the results of regression analysis indicated that personality traits of heads had moderate consequence on teachers' performance with beta value of .334 respectively.

Results

The study results stated moderate levels of satisfaction with dimensions of school heads' personality traits: extraversion, neuroticism, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness. The correlation analysis indicated a moderate positive relationship between personality traits and teachers' job performance. The regression analysis further revealed a moderate and significant effect of personality traits on teachers' performance.

Discussion

The findings of the present study revealed that the personality traits of school heads have a significant and positive effect on teachers' job performance at the secondary school level. Results of the study reported that heads who demonstrated conscientiousness, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and emotional stability contributed to better instructional planning, classroom management, and professional commitment. These results highlight that school leaders' personality traits are essential determinants of teacher motivation, engagement, and performance in the school. The results of this study align with the findings of Zaman, Alwi, & Shaiq (2021), who reported that principals' positive personality traits, including openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness, strongly influenced teachers' perceptions of a supportive and productive work environment in Pakistani secondary schools. This study showed that principals having constructive personality traits were more satisfied with their work environment, which indirectly enhances their professional effectiveness. Similarly, the findings correspond with Zakka, Sa'Adu, Garba, & Egorp (2024), who stated that personality traits of extraversion and neuroticism were significantly associated with teachers' job performance in Nigerian secondary schools. Overall, the present study was supported by previous studies that school heads' personality traits enhance teacher performance.

Conclusion

This study concluded that personality traits and teacher performance were associated and essential to achieving institutional goals. Moreover, there was a moderate relationship between all the dimensions of personality traits and job performance. Additionally, conscientiousness and extraversion had a moderate correlation with job performance as compared to other dimensions, openness, agreeableness, and neuroticism. Furthermore, there was a



moderate effect of dimensions of personality traits on job performance, whereas the factors conscientiousness and extraversion had moderate effect on job performance than the other dimensions of openness, agreeableness, and neuroticism.

Recommendations

On the basis of the results of the study, it is recommended that the education department integrate personality assessment and leadership training in principal development programs. Policymakers and educational leaders enhance school effectiveness through improved head–teacher dynamics. The school heads may adopt the strategies to influence the teachers. The teachers may focus on their teaching skills to command subjects, because it directly affects their job performance and the achievements of the institutions. The government may give special attention to improve school’s head skills to enhance teachers’ performance. Policy makers may arrange training both for heads and teachers, from time to time, and provide opportunities to refresh their knowledge and skills.

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