

## **Working Mothers' Personality Types as Predictors of Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Kogi State, Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

*This study investigated the predictive influence of working mother's personality types for their children's academic performance in Kogi State. The study used descriptive survey type of the non-experimental research design. The sample for the study was 480 working mothers employed in public and private establishments with their children in senior secondary school class two (SS2) selected through multi-stage sampling technique from the three senatorial districts of Kogi State. The study used a structured questionnaire and a proforma to collect data on the working mothers and their children's academic performance. Data collected were subjected to analysis of variance and multiple regression analysis. The results showed that there was no significant influence of working mother's personality types on the students' academic performance ( $F_{(4,474)} = 0.580$ ;  $P > 0.05$ ); also there was no significant predictive influence of openness, agreeableness, extraversion, conscientiousness and neuroticism as personality types on the academic performance of children of working mothers ( $F_{(4,474)} = 1.344$ ;  $P > 0.05$ ). Based on the findings, it was recommended that working mothers should try as much as possible to relate their character or personality type with those of their children to balance how they respond to their children's academic upbringing.*

**Keywords:** Working mothers, personality types, academic performance, secondary school students

### **Introduction**

Women are being educated in order to increase their productivity at the family level as well as in the society at large. Mothers spend a lot of money on social activities relating to covering up the image of the family hence tend to work to add to the husband's financial strength or income. Many women, today, are found outside their homes engaging in part time or full time paid work. Mothers are taking up employment in various establishments based on their training (Ogbonna, 2010). Job demands and obligation have been on increase in working places. Mothers may have to change their time for domestic work probably to have enough time for official duties. Mother roles at home may suffer and sometimes the results may lead to commotion, crisis, stress due to fatigue, excessive

workloads comprising office carry over work coupled with house chores such as cooking, house cleaning, washing clothes and used plates, planning how to satisfy the husband, children and sometimes extended relatives.

Parental activities in secondary school students' educational development would probably take the form of good parenting in the homes. For instance, the provision of security and stable environment, telecommunication gadgets, intellectual stimulation, parent-child discussion, participation in school events, visiting schools to share information and attendance at parents-teachers association (PTA) meeting, most often fall on the mothers. Mothers' employment appears to have influence on the academic performance of their children especially when it is considered that mothers play significant roles in the children education starting from conception, informal to formal educational level.

Working mothers are found in both rural and urban areas and their children attend schools in these areas. Many of the working mothers at the urban centres appear to engage their children with extra lessons. Some pay private teachers to teach their children in subjects which are not their field of specialization. Many of the children of working mothers in urban centres seem to have opportunity to learn under experienced and more qualified teachers while those of their colleagues in rural areas probably have access to few teachers and possibly not as qualified and experienced as the teachers in the urban areas. The employment status of mothers whether on shift basis or part time employment or full employment to a large extent appear to determine the success of their children's academic performance.

Working mothers' personality types could also be a factor in the academic performance of their children. Personality, according to Schocter, Gilbert and Wegner (2009), is an individual characteristic style of behaving, thinking and feeling which arises from within the individual and remains fairly consistent throughout life. Personality type on the other hand refers to the psychological classification of different types of individuals. According to them, introverts and extroverts are the two fundamentally different categories of people. Furthermore, in the present day, it appears there are five different broad basic personality types that are usually present in a unique mix that defines how an individual thinks, feels and behaves. These personality types are; openness, extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness and neuroticism. Working mothers are human beings and each individual of the working mothers cannot all have the same category of personality types hence, working mothers could possibly possess traits of any of the five grouping of the personality types.

Women with personality characteristics of openness seem to capitalize on their attribute of optimism, curiosity, broad mindedness and creativity to encourage their children academically and they seem to be inquisitive about the progress of their children in school.

A mother with agreeableness type of personality appears to be nurturing, sympathetic, friendly and agreeable. They make provision for tomorrow and seem to be a good listener to issues that concern with others especially when it seems to do with the progress of the children. This type of mother cares much about others. The bundle of social skills in them appears to make them to interact advantageously and effectively well in every area of their children life. The conscientious working mothers appear to be direct, focused, analytical, logical and strategic for her sense of duty and obligation to work success oriented in nature and motives but tough. They seem to have great deal of courage and appear to like competing with others. They tend to like intellectual ideas, while the working mothers love learning, construct ideas, and caring for the family and friends to who they remain loyal.

The extraversion working mothers seem to be sociable, talkative, aggressive, energetic, and enthusiastic. Extraversion has been found to be a valid predictor of job performance characterized by social interaction (Bing & Lounsbury, 2000). Extraversion as a factor that refers to sociability and the propensity of people to draw pleasure form interacting with others is generally believed to be associated with higher level of job satisfaction (Judge et al, 2002). Tallman and Bruning (2008) argued that people who are high in extraversion tends to be high performers and committed to the organisation and their works.

Neuroticism, an aspect of personality trait, has been labelled in relation to emotional stability, emotionality and stability (Goldberg, 2000; Tellegan, 2005). Neuroticism is associated with negative emotions (Penly & Tomaka, 2002). People with high neuroticism are self-pitying, anxious, less trusting, depressed, nervous, lacking positive psychological adjustment and feeling helpless. Neuroticism is socially expressed trait associated with poor social skills and lack of trust in others. Neurotic individuals tend to have relatively negative core self-evaluations, leading to emotional distress and associated behaviours (Rusting & Larsen, 2008). Neuroticism is also related to a person's general tendency to experience negative effects such as fear, sadness, embarrassment, anger, guilt and disgust (Dalton & Wilson, 2000).

Certain factors such as parental personality appear to have link with parent's attitude towards discharge of duty to their children, husband, close relatives and scheduled of work in offices as workers. A working mother demands certain personality traits to be effectual at home as housewife and at office as civil servant. A working mother may succeed as housewife and as office worker if her personality characteristics matched with her office work and the demands at home as one that needs to keep her home in order but if she does not possess the good personality traits for the kind of work a working mother faces, she may collapse due to stress, boredom or lack of rest. The consequences may be transfer of aggression.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework for the study is based on the psychoanalytic theories of personality as postulated by Freud, Sigmund Freud basis of psychoanalysis of personality entails examining past causes for an individual's present behaviour and thus maintained that an individual's present behaviour is determined by both interpersonal and intrapsychic factors. Psychoanalysis aims at acquiring an understanding of oneself and one's conscious conflicts and networking or reconstructing the effects on the individual. It also attempts to examine how individual adjusted to certain developmental conflicts. Freud believed that human kind is essentially biological, born with certain instinctual drives and that behaviour is a function of reacting indepth to these drives. He also believed that human beings are irrational, unsocialised and destructive of themselves and others. Freud believed that there are three different levels of awareness that influence personality development; (a) the conscious (b) the pre-conscious and (c) unconscious levels.

The Conscious level: Freud opined that at any one point in time an individual can be aware or conscious of only a very limited number of things. An individual focuses attention upon a particular task while many other events are occurring around the individual. The Pre-Conscious: Freud stated that many ideas or thoughts that were not part of the conscious can be brought to a conscious state by an individual. The Unconscious: Freud believed that this portion largely determines behaviour. The individual is not aware of the mental activity that occurs in their part of the mind, nor can he bring these activities into consciousness. Freud postulated three aspects of human personality, the id; the ego and the super-ego. The id is seen by Freud as the original system of personality. A new-born is the id. The id consists of the constitution of the infant. Freud included sex and aggression within the id concept. Generally the id impulses come into consciousness only when the ego is in a weakened state. The ego develops as the individual interacts with the environment. The ego develops out of the id and mediates between the id and super-ego. It is the conscious and logical self of the individual. The super-ego is a form of individual internal control. It is the individual's conscience or inner voice which dictates a lot of "should" and "should not" about an individual's behaviour. Freud postulated that the ego has an important role to play in events that arouse anxiety within an individual. The ego may approach the problem by employing defense mechanisms such as identification, displacement, sublimation, repression etc.

Rush (1984) explained that the psychoanalytic theory of Freud is simultaneously a theory of personality, motivation, development and mental illness. The main idea behind the psychoanalytic scheme is the concept that only a small part of human mental activity is illustrated by conscious thought. A relatively large part of mental activity occurs at the preconscious and unconscious levels. Processes that are not in consciousness at a given time are preconscious activities, but that can become conscious when needed. However,

unconscious activities are more important; these are largely storage of instinctive urges. Unconscious activities can influence behaviour, but these activities cannot directly enter consciousness. Horney (1953) stressed on a concept of the intrinsic difficulties of life. Horney said that people face risk in coping with childhood experiences of helplessness and isolation and this risk is actually development of ten different neurotic trends, e.g. neurotic need to exploit others.

Mother is the first person a child has contact and bond with in the family. The mother teaches the child the norms of the society and often looks into the academic work of her child. Working mothers typically seem to experience higher negative family-to-work spill over as well as role inequality in childcare and house work. Ability to balance family and work roles as office paid worker may be a potential psychological problem at home and at work place stress, concern for the family members and over work loads of many types in the work place are likely to engender frustration and negative emotionality. Negative emotions appear to play a role in much aggression and violent behaviour of neurotic mothers. This study intends to investigate the personality types of working mothers and the influence on academic performance of the secondary school students in Kogi State.

### **Research Questions**

1. Do the personality types of working mothers influence the secondary school students' academic performance?
2. What are the contributions of openness, agreeableness, extraversion, conscientiousness and neuroticism personality types to the students' academic performance?

### **Methodology**

The research design adopted for this study was a descriptive research design of a survey type. It combined the use of correlation survey studies and ex-post facto research design. The population of the study consisted of working mothers employed by both private and government establishment in Kogi State. The sample for the study consisted of 480 working mothers and their children in senior secondary school class two (SS 2) selected from the three senatorial districts of Kogi State. The sample was selected through multi-stage sampling technique. The first stage involved selecting two local government areas from each of the three senatorial districts using simple random sampling technique. The second stage involved random selection of five secondary schools from each of the six local government area making thirty schools. The third stage involved sampling of 240 working mothers that the children are male in (SS 2) and 240 female in (SS 2) at the cluster gathering of schools' Parents-Teachers Association meeting.

The research instrument used for the study was a structured questionnaire titled “Working Mother Personality Types Questionnaire and Academic Performance”. Face and content validities of the instrument were done by giving out the research topic objective of the study, research questions and research hypotheses to two experts in psychology and two experts in tests and measurement for screening in the Faculty of Education, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko.

The reliability of the instrument was carried out using test-retest method by administering the questionnaire twice at an interval of two weeks to a 20 non-participating respondent from Ministry of Education, Lokoja who has children in SS2 in Kogi State. The responses collected from the same questionnaire that was administered twice were subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation which showed the coefficient of 0.63. The questionnaire was administered to the working mothers whose children are in SS2 by the help of the school principals of the sample schools at the various venues of the school Parents-Teachers Association meeting. The completed sets of questionnaire were collected back by hand from the working mothers at the end of the (PTA) meeting while the academic performance record of the SS2 students were collected from their school principals using a designed proforma for the purpose of data analysis. The data collected were analysed using inferential statistics (Anova and multiple regression).

### **Results**

In attempting the research questions 1 and 2, each of the questions was converted to research hypotheses thus:

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant effect of working mother's personality types on children's academic performance.

In order to test the hypothesis 1, scores relating to academic performance of children of working mothers were computed and subjected to Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) at 0.05 level of significance based on mothers' personality types.

**Table 1:**

ANOVA showing performance of children of working mothers by personality types

<b>Source</b>	<b>SS</b>	<b>dF</b>	<b>Ms</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>P</b>
Between Groups	280.790	4	70.197		
Within Groups	57464.958	475	20.979	0.580	.677
Total	57745.748	479			

P>0.05

Table 1 shows that the computed F-value (0.580) is not significant for the groups at P = 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is not rejected. This implies that there was no significant effect of working mother's personality types on children's academic performance.

**Hypothesis 2:** Openness, agreeableness, extraversion, conscientiousness and neuroticism as personality types of working mothers will not significantly predict the academic performance of secondary school students.

In order to test this hypothesis, the responses collected using working mother personality types questionnaire on openness, agreeableness, extraversion, conscientiousness and neuroticism personality types were scored, collated and computed along with the data collected on academic performance of the children of working mothers and were subjected to analysis using analysis of variance (ANOVA) and multiple regression and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The result is as shown in table 2.

**Table 2:**

Multiple Regression of personality types as predictors of academic performance of children of working mothers

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta (B)	T	Sig.
Constant	50.158	5.216		9.617	.000
Extraversion	.182	.271	.032	.247	.502
Agreeableness	.247	.360	.098	1.842	.066
Conscientiousness	.491	.267	.098	1.842	.066
Neuroticism	.233	.252	.046	-.926	.355
Openness	.450	.272	.076	1.653	.099

Multiple R = 0.118, Multiple R<sup>2</sup> = 0.014, Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = 0.004, F<sub>(4,474)</sub> = 1.344.

Table 2 shows that openness, agreeableness, extraversion, conscientiousness and neuroticism as personality types did not significantly predict the academic performance of children of working mothers. (F<sub>(4,474)</sub> = 1.344; P > 0.05). The null hypothesis is not rejected. The table reveals that there was significant but very low positive multiple correlation between the predictor variables extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness of working mothers and their children academic performance (r = 0.118; P < 0.05). The value of the coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup> = 0.014) indicates that the predictor variables jointly accounted for about 1.4% of the observed variance in academic performance of children of working mothers.

The result in the table 2 further shows that, taking the absolute value of the regression coefficients, the single best predictor of academic performance of children of working mothers among the personality types is conscientiousness  $B = 0.098$ ; 9.8%. This is closely followed by openness  $B = 0.076$ ; 7.6%), neuroticism ( $B = 0.046$ ; 4.6%), agreeableness ( $B = 0.034$ ; 3.4%) and extraversion ( $B = 0.32$ ; 3.2%) with the least contribution. The calculated F-ratio (1.344) is not statistically significant at  $P=0.05$  level of significance. This implies that the predictor variables do not jointly provide a significant explanation for the variation in the academic performance of children of working mothers.

### **Discussion**

Hypothesis one was not rejected. This finding did not corroborate the findings of Eyong, David and Umoh (2014) who found significant difference between achievements of students with high and low conscientiousness and agreeable personality types. This result may be due to the differential sampled respondents used in this study and that of Eyong et al. Eyong investigated and compared directly the personality types of the students and their academics, while in this present study, working mothers and children academic performance were the major variables understudied in this study hence working mothers variables may be responsible for the major difference in the findings of the study.

The hypothesis two was not rejected. The hypothesis shows that the predictor variables did not significantly predict children's academic performance. This finding did not agree with the findings of Steinmayr et al (2010) on the ability of the variables (intelligence, openness and conscientiousness) to predict students' academic performance/achievement. It may be because the personality variable types of the working mothers used in this study are not combined with other variables like intelligence employed by Steinmayr. The result corroborated the findings of Hokimi et al (2011) and Edward et al (2016) who found significant relationship between personality types and children academic achievement. The two findings also showed that conscientiousness was the most potent predictor variable of academic performance among the personality type variables.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that: personality types variables are not strong and potent enough predictors of academic performance of children of working mothers. That is working mothers personality types are poor predictors of academic performance of children.

Therefore, the following recommendations are made: working mothers should try as much as possible to relate their character or personality type with those of their children and balance how they relate or react to their children's academic upbringing.

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