PERSONALITY TRAITS AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS FACTORS IN PREDICTING PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOUR OF ADOLESCENTS

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the impact of personality traits and emotional intelligence on pro-social behaviour among adolescents in Owerri. It was guided by seven hypotheses. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design and the statistics was multiple regression. The sample of the study comprised 200 participants drawn through convenient sampling from the three zones that make up Imo state. Three instruments were employed for data collection, they were Big Five Inventory (BFI) scale by John (1990), Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence by Schutte (1998) and Pro-social behaviour scale by Batson and Week (1996). The result of the analysis showed that personality traits did not significantly predict prosocial behaviour among adolescents in Imo State. The result further showed that emotional intelligence level did not predict pro-social behaviour. Finally the result revealed that there was no significant joint influence of personality traits and emotional intelligence on pro-social behaviour of adolescents. The study recommends that people should debunk the stereotype that says certain personality traits are good at pro-social behaviour than others.

INTRODUCTION

Prosocial behaviour can be seen as behaviour directed towards promoting the well-being of another. Behaviours such as caring, helping, sharing and volunteering are encompassed under the category of prosocial behaviour. It is voluntary behaviour intended to benefit another, consists of actions which benefit other people or society as a whole, such as helping, sharing, donating, co-operating, and volunteering. It can also be referred to as a broad category of behaviours that include any action that provides benefit to others like following rules in a game, being honest and cooperating with others in social situations. Prosocial behaviour is usually motivated by concern about the welfare of others and the rights of others. Prosocial behaviour is central to human social functioning and it fosters positive traits that are beneficial to the society. Helping behaviour in humans ranges from generous selfless acts to ignoring real needs.

In fact, it is voluntary behaviour with the intent to help other people or as member of a group assist others in need or in distress, as well as others whose needs are relatively trivial. Prosocial behaviour has benefit for the benefactor, for example adolescents who are more pro-social tend to be better loved by their peers and adults who engage in helping activities tend to have better psychological health (Scoffield, 2007).

Prosocial behaviour is synonymous with altruism which means helping others for their welfare without seeking anything in return. According to Sanstock (2007), the circumstances most likely to evoke altruism are empathy for an individual in need, or a close relationship between the benefactor and the recipient. Altruism is the subset of pro-social behaviour; it is performed by people of all ages. It has positive and high correlation with empathy. It is practiced for various reasons such as moral, selfish, manipulative, ethical or social reasons.

Many psychologists believe that in childhood, females tend to be more likely to engage in pro-social behaviour than males. Woman are perceived as more nurturing and pro-social, although they likely help more only in certain kind of circumstances. Indeed men are more likely to help when there is some risks involved (Eisenbery, 1992).Psychologists believe that pro-social behaviour is affected by both biological and environmental factors. Findings in twin studies support the view that heredity plays a role: identical twins who share 100% of their genes are more similar to each other in prosocial behaviour.

Several factors are involved in whether or not someone chooses to help another individual in different situations. The amalgamations of psychobiological and social influences affect this decision. They include: siblings and peers (Hastings, Utendale, & Sullivan, 2007); close friends, especially if the affective quality of the friendship is high. It should be noted that Prosocial behaviour increases when parents are warm, supportive, responsive, and sensitive to their children's needs. In contrast, less prosocial behaviour is found among children whose parents are authoritarian, strict, or punitive. Prompting adolescents to engage in kind acts, however, many have benefits beyond personal happiness, as prosocial behaviour predicts academic achievement and social acceptance in adolescents.

During adolescence, teens often struggle with their body changes, mood swings and social issues. The end of this developmental period is tied more so to social and emotional factors and can be ambiguous. Adolescence is a vital period in social development because adolescents can be easily influenced by the people they develop close relationships. The dearth of work on enhancing happiness and prosociality in adolescents, coupled with evidence of their many benefits, highlights the desirability of extending research to this age group.

For proper understanding of prosocial behaviour among adolescents, a look at personality of adolescents becomes expedient. Many psychologists believe that pro-social behaviour is associated with some specific types of personality, in other words some personality types engage more in prosocial behaviour than others. Personality as a dynamic and organized set of characteristics possessed by a person that uniquely influences the environment, cognitions, emotions, motivations, and behaviour in various situations likely influences prosocial behaviour. Personality which is the pattern of thoughts, feelings, social adjustments, and behaviours consistently exhibited over time that strongly influences one's expectations, self-perceptions, values, and attitudes also may define human reactions to other people, problems, and situations. For the purpose of this study, Big five personality dimension will be used. The Big Five model implies that personality consists of five relatively independent dimensions that altogether provide a meaningful taxonomy for the study of individual differences.

These dimensions are considered to be underlying traits that make up an individual's overall personality. These five dimensions are Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism.

Openness to experience refers to the number of interests to which one is attracted and the depth to which those interests are pursued. People who like to learn new things and enjoy new experiences usually score high in openness. It indicates how open-minded a person is. A person with a high level of openness to experience in a personality test enjoys trying new things and in this circumstance has a tendency for prosocial behaviour. They are imaginative, curious, and open-minded. Individuals who are low in openness to experience would rather not try new things

Conscientiousness refers to the number of goals on which one is focused. It is related to dependability and volition. A person scoring high in conscientiousness usually has a high level of self-discipline. These individuals prefer to follow a plan, rather than act spontaneously. Their methodical planning and perseverance usually makes them highly successful in their chosen occupation. Conscientiousness is about how a person controls, regulates, and directs the impulses.

Extraversion refers to the level of sensory stimulation with which one is comfortable. These people get their energy from interacting with others, while introverts get their energy from within themselves. It indicates how outgoing and social a person is. They enjoy being with people, participating in social gatherings, and are full of energy. A person low in extraversion is less outgoing and is more comfortable working alone.

Agreeableness refers to the number of sources from which one takes one's norms for right behaviour. A person with a high level of agreeableness in a personality test is usually warm, friendly, and tactful. They generally have an optimistic view of human nature and get along well with others. A person who scores low on agreeableness may put their own interests above those of others. They tend to be distant, unfriendly, and uncooperative. Agreeable individuals find it important to get along with others. They are willing to put aside their interests for other people. These individuals are helpful, friendly, considerate, and generous.

Neuroticism refers to the number and strength of stimuli required to elicit negative emotions in a person. Neuroticism is sometimes called Emotional Stability. This dimension relates to one’s emotional stability and degree of negative emotions. People that score high on neuroticism often experience emotional instability and negative emotions. Emotional stability refers to a person's ability to remain stable and balanced. People who score high in neuroticism are very emotionally reactive. They will have an emotional response to events that would not affect most people. A high scorer in neuroticism on a personality test has a greater chance of feeling threatened or being in a bad mood in a normal situation that may not prompt prosocial behaviour.

Emotional intelligence is the mental ability to understand an individual’s emotion and other people emotions. Emotional intelligence is the capability of individuals to recognize their own emotions and those of others discern between different feelings and label them appropriately.

It is the capacity to be aware and control ones emotions and to manage interpersonal relationship empathetically. Emotional intelligence is an organizing framework for categorizing abilities relating to understanding, managing and using feelings (Salovey & Mayer, 1994). It helps to define strength and abilities that engender productivity and achievement of goals. Individuals with low emotional intelligence display signs such as being unaware of emotional triggers, being unable to specify or name emotions, being unable to deal with emotional charged situations, having unexpected emotional outbursts, blaming others for existing emotional problems, having difficulties with understanding the feelings of other people and lacking empathy. Individuals with high emotional intelligence display signs as being curious about other people, being able to read facial expression, being able to manage difficult situations, being able to express oneself clearly and finally being able to easily influence other people. Emotional intelligence is the ability to identify one's emotion and harness those emotions and apply them to tasks like thinking and problem solving especially prosocial behavior problems.

Statement of the Problem

With the turn of events in Nigeria, coupled with the concomitant hardship and insecurity, the issue of prosocial behaviour has become an important subject of serious investigation. More so, the adolescent period is a stage that is filled with many distractions that may not yield to the prosocial callings. The knowledge of adolescents' pro-social behaviour is completely lacking in our society and such level of ignorance is not good for a developing country that needs every resource for development. In addition, there are few research conducted on emotional intelligence and pro-social behaviours especially with adolescents Imo state. Thus, this study is a strong attempt at looking at whether personality and emotional intelligence will impact on prosocial behaviour among adolescents especially in view of the great role prosocial behaviour plays in the development of the society.

Purpose of the Study

This study examines the impact of personality and emotional intelligence on prosocial behaviour among adolescents in Owerri. However, in specific terms, this study looked at:

1. If big five personality traits will influence prosocial behaviour of adolescents in Imo state.
2. To examine if emotional intelligence will influence prosocial behaviour of adolescents in Imo state.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Big Five Personality Traits and Prosocial Behaviour

Wilson (2011) examined the influence of personality on pro-social behavior among high-school students using simple random sampling.128 students were recruited from a population of 600. The sample consists of 58 male and 70 female. The study revealed

that personality had a significant influence on pro-social behaviour. In another study by Brucel (2014) on personality influence on pro-social behaviour on Cedar students; the population of the study was made up of 73 males and 68 female giving it a total of 141 participants. The result concluded that personality has no significant impacts on pro-social behaviour.

Additional research has focused on other personal attributes and their relationship to PSBs. Variability in the agreeableness dimension from the Big five theory of personality might result in differences in people's propensity to act prosocially (Graziano & Eisenberg, 1997). Other personality traits strongly associated with agreeableness also have been shown to correlate with prosocial actions. Thus, highly agreeable workers are likely to engage in prosocial behaviour. Also, King, George, and Hebi (2005) presented and tested a theoretical argument for expecting conscientiousness to interact with interpersonal dimensions of personality in predicting helping behaviours. The results revealed significant interactions between conscientiousness, on the one hand, and agreeableness, extraversion and emotional stability, on the other, in predicting helping behaviours.

Emotional Intelligence and Pro-social Behaviour

Studies using a variety of self-report measures have shown that Emotional intelligence is associated with important social outcomes, including social adjustment, altruism and civic virtue and leadership potential. Generally, studies have shown that Emotional intelligence ability is related to greater empathy, less negative interactions with peers, high quality relationships, less conflicts and antagonism with friends (Brackett, Mayer, & Warner, 2004). In another study by Charbonneau and Nicol (2002), the relationship between Emotional intelligence and prosocial behaviour in 134 adolescents involved in a 6-week training camp run by the Military was investigated. They were asked to evaluate themselves on Emotional intelligence and randomly chosen peers evaluated them on PSBs, the results showed that there were relationships between Emotional intelligence and altruism ($r = .25$, $p < .01$) and civic virtue ($r = .24$, $p < .01$).

Hypotheses

1. Extroversion will not statistically predict prosocial behaviour of adolescents in Owerri.
2. Neuroticism will not statistically predict prosocial behaviour of adolescents in Owerri.
3. Openness to experience will not statistically predict prosocial behaviour of adolescents in Owerri.
4. Agreeableness will not statistically predict prosocial behaviour of adolescents in Owerri.
5. Conscientiousness will not statistically predict prosocial behaviour of adolescents in Owerri.
6. Emotional intelligence will not statistically predict prosocial behaviour of adolescents in Owerri.

METHOD

Participants

The participants used in this study were two hundred (200) adolescents selected through convenient sampling technique from communities in the 3 zones of Imo State which are Owerri, Okigwe and Orlu.Owerri zone had 70 participants, Okigwe zone had 70 participants and Orlu zone had 60 participants. They were 88 males and 112 females aged between 12-18 years with mean age of 15.

Instruments

Three instruments were employed in this study; they were the Big Five Inventory (BFI) scale by John (1990), Emotional Intelligence test by Schutte (1998) and Prosocial behaviour scale by Batson and Week (1996).

The Big Five Inventory has (44) items scored on a Likert format varying from - disagree strongly – strongly agree. John (1990) provided the original psychometric properties for American samples, while Umeh (2004) provided the properties for Nigerian samples. The convergent validity co-efficient for American samples are 6.75 and 6.85.The divergent validity coefficient obtained by Umeh (2004) with university maladjustment scale is: extraversion, .05, agreeableness, .13, Conscientiousness, .11, neuroticism, .39, openness to experience, .24. The norms for the scale are extraversion 27.10, agreeableness 28.75, conscientiousness 29.60, neuroticism 24.48, and openness to experience 35.18. Scores equal to or higher than the norms indicates that the client manifest the specific personality type while scores lower than the norms indicates otherwise.

Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence. The scale measures specific aspects of awareness and expression of emotion, outlook on life, depressed mood, ability to regulate emotions and impulsivity. It contains 33 items. As expected, higher scores on the 33-item emotional intelligence scale were associated with less alexithymia as measured by the Toronto Alexithymia Scale [$r(24) = - 0.65$, $p < 0.000$], greater attention to feelings as measured by the Attention subscale of the Trait Meta Mood Scale [$r(48) = 0.63$, $p < 0.000$) Schutte (1998). The scale is scored with 1 almost to 4 rarely. Oluseyi (2002) validated the prosocial behaviour scale providing the psychometric properties for Nigerian samples. The Nigerian norm is 30. 31. Lower possible score of 1 and highest possible score of 60 could be obtained by any given respondents. Thus, scores from 15 to 30 indicate low level of prosocial behaviour while scores from 31-60 indicates high level of pro-social behaviour.

Procedure

The researcher went to the three zones of Imo state which are Owerri, Okigwe and Orlu and shared the questionnaire. Explanations were made to the participants on the essence of the research and instructions on how to fill the questionnaires were given. The researcher adopted a face to face method of administering the three instruments to the adolescents. The questionnaires were collected after they had been filled.

Design and Statistics

The design used in this study was cross sectional survey design. Standard Multiple Regression Analyses was the statistics used for the analyses. It was used because the researcher wants to predict relationship between variable of interest.

Results

Table 1: Correlation among all study the variables

Variables	PSB	ExtNeu	OPAg.	Con	E.1
Pro-social Behaviour	1	-.121	.039	-.044	-.99	-.366	.010
Extraversion		1	-.105	-.045	.120	.072	-245
Neuroticism			1	-.051	-.071	.053	-.008
Openness				1	.036	.039	-.071
Agreeableness					1	.096	-.040
Conscientiousness						1	.006
Emotional Intelligence.							1

The table above revealed a non significant correlation among all the variables. Pro-social behaviour did not correlate with extraversion (r= .127, P > .05); Neuroticism (r = .03, P > .05) openness to experience (r = -.044, P>05). Agreeableness (r = -.-79, p >.05). Conscientiousness (r = -.866, p >. 05) and emotional intelligence (r = .010, P > .05). Similarly each of the big five personality traits did not correlate with each other and with emotional intelligence.

Table 2: Multiple Regression Analysis of Personality Traits and Emotional Intelligence on Prosocial Behaviour.

Model	B	t-value	P – value
Extraversion	- .110	-1.514	.132
Neuroticism	.024	.334	.739
Openness to Exp.	-.44	-. 608	.544
Agreeableness	-.057	-.793	.429
Conscientiousness	-.052	-.729	.467
Emotional Inte	.000	-.002	.999

R2 = .024, F = .793, Df = 6,193

Table two above tested the seven hypotheses for the study.

The first hypothesis which stated that extraversion will have no statistical significant impact on pro-social behaviour is accepted (β = -.110, P = .132, t = -1.514) the second hypothesis which stated that neuroticism will have no statistical significant impact on pro-social behaviour is also accepted (β = 0.024, P = .739, t = .334). Similarly, hypothesis three which assumed that openness to experience will not have statistical significant impact on pro-social behaviour is upheld, (β = -.044, P =.544, t = -.608).

The fourth hypothesis is also accepted (β = .057, P = .429, t = -.793). The same non significant result also applies to hypothesis five which stated that ¬conscientiousness will not have statistical significant impact on pro-social behaviour (β = -.052, P = .467, t = -.729). The sixth hypothesis is also not significant, thus the hypothesis is accepted (β = .000, P = .999, t = -.002).

The seventh hypothesis which stated that personality traits and emotional intelligence will not have statistical significant impact on pro-social behaviour is accepted (R2 = .024, F(6,193) = .793, P = .577). Only 0.2% of the variance in pro-social behaviour is accounted for by the predictions. Therefore, personality traits and emotional intelligence do not jointly predict pro-social behaviour.

DISCUSSION

This research work investigated the influence of personality and emotional intelligence on prosocial behaviour of adolescents in Imo state. The first hypothesis which stated that extraversion will have no statistical significant influence on prosocial behaviour was accepted. This showed that extraversion did not influence pro-social behaviour. This result simply means that those who enjoy social activities and gathering and those who prefer less social stimulation understand the need to engage in pro-social behaviour. This present result is in line with the finding of George (2016) whose result indicated that extraversion had no significant influence on pro-social behaviour.

The second hypothesis was accepted implying that openness to experience did not influence pro-social behaviour of adolescents. The result was expected because mental flexibility and rigidity do no prevent social aid (Lescott, 2022). The presents study collaborates with other findings of Goldbery and Wealter (2009) that personality traits have no significant impact on pro-social behaviour.

The third finding of this study revealed that Agreeableness did not significantly influence pro-social behaviour. This finding is contrary to the findings reported by Michelle (2018). The result of this study ran contrary to the expectation of the researcher because agreeableness is a personality trait that enjoys helping others.

The fourth hypothesis which states that conscientiousness will have no statistical significant influence on pro-social behaviour was accepted. Conscientious individuals are the organized type and self discipline. Low in conscientiousness means the opposite. The result of this study showed that conscientious individuals and their

counterpart are similar in pro-social behaviour. The finding did not fall in line with the findings of Oneil and Mogege (2006) which revealed that conscientiousness predicts pro-social behaviour.

The findings of hypothesis 5 showed that neuroticism has no statistically significant influence on pro-social behaviour. This finding agrees with the findings of Mendez and Mesute (2017) who found that neuroticism has no significant impact on Altruistic behaviour.

The result of the study based on hypothesis six which stated that emotional intelligence will not have a statistical significant influence on pro-social behaviour was accepted. This simply means that individuals that are low on emotional intelligence and those that are high show no differences on pro-social behaviour. Though many experts in behavioural sciences believe that knowledge of emotion and ability to control emotions play a significant role in helping behaviour. Anyway the result of the study corresponds with the study of Clark and Parker (2002) which revealed that emotional intelligence does not predict altruistic behaviour.

The seventh hypothesis which stated that personality and emotional intelligence will not have a statistical significant influence on pro-social behaviour was accepted. The finding agrees with the study of Ryan and White (2015) which revealed that emotional intelligence and personality jointly did not predict pro-social behaviour.

Implications of the Study

The study has implications on African philosophy, parents and the entire public.It is stereotyped that certain personality traits engage in more of pro-social behaviour than others which has been proven wrong by the present study. The misconception of introverted personality traits by the public as cold, unhelpful, uncooperative etc has as well been proven wrong by this study. The present study has shown that adolescents irrespective of their personality traits can be involved in pro-social behaviour. This study also has implications in medical field that believes emotionally intelligent nurses and doctors give succour to hospital patients than their fellow counterparts. Future research should therefore examine the patterns of pro-social behaviour in normative samples. It should also examine the roles of cultural and religious differences including the effect mood, environment, residential mobility, spirituality, narcissism, life satisfaction and bystander effects on pro-social behaviour.

Recommendations

People should debunk the stereotype that says certain personality traits are good at helping behaviour than others. Government and curriculum planners should make assessment of adolescent's personality a compulsory curriculum in schools and should be mostly done by the school psychologists.

Parents should learn to compliment their children when they engage in pro-social behaviour. The reinforcement can boost pro-social tendencies. The public should be taught the benefits of emotional intelligence through the use of public symposium. The study concludes that every personality trait can engage in pro-social behaviour and

individuals emotional intelligence level does not matter when it comes to pro-social behaviour.

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