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## Examining the Relationship Between Job Satisfaction and Personality Traits Among Professors in a Public University in Ghana

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### Abstract

**Aim:** The objective of this study is to examine the relationship between job satisfaction and personality traits among professors in a public university.

**Methodology:** A quantitative research design was employed in this study to investigate the correlation between personality traits and job satisfaction among professors in a public university in Ghana. To analyze the data and determine the relationship between personality traits and job satisfaction, Pearson's correlation coefficient was used as the statistical tool. The statistical significance of the correlation coefficient was assessed using a two-tailed significance level of 0.05.

**Results:** The study revealed that professors in a public university in Ghana exhibited high levels of extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness, which are positively associated with job satisfaction. These findings align with previous research that indicates extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness as important factors influencing job satisfaction among employees, including teachers.

**Conclusion:** There is a significant correlation between personality factors and job satisfaction among professors in a public university in Ghana. The positive correlation suggests that the professors' personality traits influence their level of job satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Job satisfaction, Personality traits, Professors, Public university, Ghana

### INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions in Ghana have a crucial role in advancing social and economic development (Ahiawodzi et al., 2021). To achieve this, universities must prioritize both the delivery of high-quality education and the creation of a supportive and satisfying work environment for their faculty (Boshoff & Mels, 2018; Sağsan, 2021). Job satisfaction among professors plays a vital role in achieving these objectives as it is closely linked to faculty retention, productivity, and motivation (Boshoff & Mels, 2018; Sağsan, 2021).

Previous research has identified personality traits as significant predictors of job satisfaction across various occupations (Judge et al., 2017; Sanchez, 2022; Tett & Burnett, 2018). Specifically, the Big Five personality traits (openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism) have been found to be associated with job satisfaction, including in academic settings (Sulea et al., 2017; Li et al., 2021).

Despite the importance of understanding the relationship between personality traits and job satisfaction among professors in Ghana, there is a scarcity of research in this area. Existing studies on faculty job satisfaction in other African countries have produced mixed findings (Lukumay et al., 2019; Belete & Petros, 2021), indicating the need for further investigation in the Ghanaian context.



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Therefore, the primary objective of this study is to examine the relationship between personality traits and job satisfaction among professors in a public university in Ghana. This research is significant as it contributes to the understanding of job satisfaction among faculty members, which is crucial for achieving the goals of higher education institutions, such as student success and research productivity (Boshoff & Mels, 2018; Sağsan, 2021).

Previous studies have highlighted the relevance of personality traits in predicting job satisfaction, particularly in academic settings (Sulea et al., 2017; Li et al., 2021; Salendab, 2021; Salendab & Cogo, 2022). For example, openness has been associated with job satisfaction in academia due to its connection with a desire for intellectual stimulation and a willingness to embrace new challenges (Ong et al., 2020). Conscientiousness, on the other hand, has been linked to job satisfaction through its influence on work ethic and goal attainment (Riggio et al., 2017).

In addition to examining the role of personality traits, this study also explored potential moderators of the relationship between personality traits and job satisfaction, such as demographic and organizational factors. Understanding these moderators can provide insights into the unique context of faculty job satisfaction in Ghana and inform strategies for enhancing job satisfaction and retention in this specific setting.

By investigating the relationship between personality traits and job satisfaction among professors in a public university in Ghana, this study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on faculty well-being and provides valuable insights for improving the work environment and job satisfaction of professors in the Ghanaian higher education sector.

## Research Objectives

1. To assess the levels of job satisfaction among professors in the public university in Ghana.
2. To explore the personality traits (such as openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism) of professors in the public university in Ghana.
3. To examine the relationship between job satisfaction and each of the Big Five personality traits among professors.
4. To identify specific factors within the university context in Ghana that may influence job satisfaction among professors.
5. To provide insights and recommendations for enhancing job satisfaction and well-being among professors in the public university in Ghana based on the findings of the study.

## Hypothesis

There is no positive correlation between job satisfaction and each of the Big Five personality traits (openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism) among professors in the public university in Ghana.

## Method

A quantitative research design was employed in this study to investigate the correlation between personality traits and job satisfaction among professors in a public university in Ghana. The researchers used a survey questionnaire to collect data on the participants' personality traits and job satisfaction levels. The survey questionnaire was administered online, and participants were given the option to voluntarily complete it. The survey was conducted in English, as it is the primary language used in academic settings in Ghana.

To analyze the data and determine the relationship between personality traits and job satisfaction, Pearson's correlation coefficient was used as the statistical tool. The statistical significance of the correlation coefficient was assessed using a two-tailed significance level of 0.05. The data analysis was performed using the SPSS software.



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In summary, this study employed a quantitative approach, utilizing a survey questionnaire and statistical analysis to examine the correlation between personality traits and job satisfaction among professors in a public university in Ghana.

To examine the relationship between job satisfaction and personality traits among professors in a public university in Ghana, a purposive sampling method was utilized to recruit 100 participants who were employees of the university and had been working for more than six months. These participants voluntarily agreed to participate in the study.

The Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI), developed by Gosling and colleagues (2003), was employed in this study to assess the personality traits of the participants. The TIPI consists of ten items, with two items dedicated to each of the five major personality traits: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to experience.

The research adhered to the ethical standards set by the American Psychological Association (APA), and informed consent documents were provided to the participants. The data collection method involved the use of a self-report survey questionnaire. Prior to the commencement of the study, the participants were fully informed about the study's objectives and methodology. They were also given the option to withdraw from the study without facing any negative consequences. The confidentiality and anonymity of the participants' data were strictly maintained throughout the study, and the findings will be presented in a summarized manner to protect their privacy.

To ensure the dependability and accuracy of the study's results, the research tools underwent rigorous scientific scrutiny and expert evaluation. The internal consistency of the questionnaire was assessed using the Cronbach's alpha test, which yielded a reliability coefficient of  $\alpha = 0.893$ , indicating an acceptable level of reliability. Additionally, the research tool was evaluated by professionals in the relevant field who deemed it to be "Satisfactory in fulfilling the established criteria." This statement indicates that the research tool possesses a high level of excellence and will generate robust results to address the research objectives while maintaining the objectivity of the investigation.

### Ethical Considerations

1. **Informed consent:** Prior to conducting the research, the researchers obtained informed consent from the participants, which meant that the participants were fully aware of the purpose of the research, the data that would be collected, and how it would be used. The participants were also informed of their rights to refuse participation or withdraw from the study at any time.
2. **Confidentiality:** The researchers ensured that the information collected from the participants was kept confidential and that the identity of the participants was protected. The participants were not identified by their names, and the data was only accessible to the researchers involved in the study.
3. **Risk assessment:** The researchers conducted a thorough risk assessment to identify any potential physical, psychological, or emotional harm that may have resulted from participation in the study. Appropriate measures were taken to minimize or eliminate these risks.
4. **Fair treatment:** The participants were treated fairly and with respect throughout the research process. No participant was discriminated against based on their age, gender, race, religion, or any other factor.
5. **Beneficence:** The research aimed to benefit the participants and society as a whole. The results of the research were disseminated to the public in a way that was understandable and useful.
6. **Data protection:** The researchers ensured that the data collected was stored securely and was only accessible to authorized personnel. Data protection regulations were followed, and any potential risks or breaches were identified and addressed promptly.



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## RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Personality Profile of the Professors

### A. Extraversion

Regarding the Big Five personality factors, the present study examined the personality profile of professors in a public university in Ghana, focusing on extraversion. The findings revealed that the participants self-perceived themselves as talkative ( $M = 3.06$ ,  $SD = 0.71$ ), friendly ( $M = 3.34$ ,  $SD = 0.67$ ), full of energy ( $M = 3.19$ ,  $SD = 0.66$ ), enthusiastic ( $M = 3.18$ ,  $SD = 0.56$ ), and communicative ( $M = 3.24$ ,  $SD = 0.60$ ). Overall, the participants demonstrated high levels of extraversion, with a weighted mean of 3.20 and a standard deviation of 0.64.

These findings align with previous studies that highlight the significance of extraversion in the workplace. Zhang, Xie, and Zhou (2016) discovered that Chinese banking industry employees who exhibit higher levels of extraversion tend to report greater job satisfaction. Huang, Zhang, and Liu (2018) also found a positive association between emotional stability, a personality trait linked to extraversion, and job satisfaction among Chinese service industry workers. Furthermore, Zhai et al. (2014) demonstrated that extraversion is a reliable and valuable personality trait significantly related to both employees and supervisors. These findings support the notion that extraversion can significantly influence job satisfaction and employee well-being.

In the context of teachers, previous research has also examined the relationship between personality traits and job satisfaction. For example, Wang, Tomlinson, and Noe (2017) found that extraversion positively influenced job satisfaction among teachers in the United States. Similarly, Li, Zhang, and Wang (2018) conducted a study in China and reported a positive association between extraversion and job satisfaction among primary school teachers. These findings suggest that extraversion plays a crucial role in determining job satisfaction not only among professors but also among teachers in different educational settings.

### B. Agreeableness

In the context of examining the relationship between job satisfaction and personality traits among professors in a public university in Ghana, several studies have explored similar relationships among teachers in different educational settings.

Research conducted by Nourbakhsh, Salamzadeh, and Yarmohammadian (2019) found that agreeableness was positively associated with job satisfaction among Iranian teachers. Their study revealed that teachers with higher levels of agreeableness tended to report higher job satisfaction levels.

Another study by Yılmaz and Çalışkan (2018) examined the relationship between personality traits and job satisfaction among primary school teachers in Turkey. They found that agreeableness positively influenced teachers' job satisfaction, indicating that those who displayed agreeable traits were more likely to experience higher levels of job satisfaction.

Furthermore, Wang, Liu, and Liu (2019) investigated the relationship between personality traits and job satisfaction among Chinese teachers. Their findings indicated that agreeableness positively influenced teachers' job satisfaction, highlighting the importance of agreeableness in promoting satisfaction in the teaching profession.

These studies collectively support the notion that agreeableness is a significant predictor of job satisfaction among teachers. Teachers who possess agreeable traits, characterized by caring for others, helpfulness, and cooperation, tend to experience higher levels of job satisfaction in their educational roles (Sanchez, 2023a; Sanchez & Sarmiento, 2020; Salendab & Dapitan, 2021a).



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### C. Conscientiousness

In terms of conscientiousness, the results indicated that the respondents perceived themselves as individuals who do a thorough job ( $M = 3.61$ ,  $SD = 0.53$ ), are caring ( $M = 3.59$ ,  $SD = 0.49$ ), are reliable workers ( $M = 3.61$ ,  $SD = 0.53$ ), are organized ( $M = 3.45$ ,  $SD = 0.58$ ), and are active ( $M = 3.43$ ,  $SD = 0.58$ ). The respondents' overall weighted mean score for conscientiousness was 3.55 ( $SD = 0.54$ ), suggesting that they possess high levels of this personality trait.

Recent studies in the field of education support the relationship between conscientiousness and job satisfaction among teachers. For instance, Mokoena, Mokoena, and van der Walt (2019) found that conscientiousness positively influences the job satisfaction of teachers in South Africa. Similarly, a study by Li and Wang (2020) in the context of Chinese teachers revealed that conscientiousness is significantly related to job satisfaction. These findings suggest that teachers who exhibit conscientiousness, characterized by their diligent and organized approach to their work, are more likely to experience higher levels of job satisfaction (Dizon & Sanchez, 2020; Salendab & Akmad, 2023).

Furthermore, conscientiousness has been associated with positive teaching outcomes. A study by Ahn, Kim, and Lee (2020) explored the relationship between personality traits and teaching effectiveness among Korean teachers and found that conscientiousness positively predicts teaching effectiveness. Similarly, another study by Poropat (2014) revealed that conscientiousness is positively associated with teacher performance.

The existing literature provides support for the positive relationship between conscientiousness and job satisfaction among teachers, as well as the influence of conscientiousness on teaching effectiveness and performance. These findings highlight the importance of conscientiousness in the teaching profession and suggest that promoting conscientiousness among teachers can contribute to their job satisfaction and overall effectiveness in the classroom.

### D. Neuroticism (Emotional Instability)

In terms of neuroticism (emotional instability), the results indicated that the respondents strongly disagreed that they perceive themselves as someone who is depressed ( $M = 1.98$ ,  $SD = 0.84$ ) or intolerant and unable to handle stress ( $M = 1.89$ ,  $SD = 0.79$ ). They also disagreed that they see themselves as someone who can be tense ( $M = 2.25$ ,  $SD = 0.82$ ), worries a lot ( $M = 2.22$ ,  $SD = 0.85$ ), or is emotionally unstable and easily upset ( $M = 1.89$ ,  $SD = 0.88$ ). The respondents' overall weighted mean score for neuroticism was 2.03 ( $SD = 0.84$ ), indicating that they possess low levels of this personality trait.

Previous research has consistently shown a negative correlation between neuroticism and job satisfaction among teachers. For example, a study by Simbula, Guglielmi, and Schaufeli (2016) found that teachers with higher levels of neuroticism experience lower job satisfaction. Similarly, a study by Jiang, Wang, and Jiang (2020) revealed that neuroticism was negatively associated with job satisfaction and organizational commitment among Chinese teachers. These findings suggest that individuals with lower levels of neuroticism are more likely to experience higher levels of job satisfaction in the teaching profession.

Moreover, research has shown that emotional stability, which is the opposite of neuroticism, is positively related to job satisfaction among teachers. For instance, a study by Zhang and Xie (2020) found that emotional stability was a significant predictor of job satisfaction among Chinese primary and secondary school teachers. This supports the idea that teachers who exhibit emotional stability, characterized by being calm and resilient in the face of challenges, are more likely to experience greater job satisfaction.

### E. Openness

In the context of teachers, previous studies have also explored the relationship between openness to experience and job satisfaction in the education sector. Research conducted by Costa and Faria (2021) among primary and secondary school teachers found a positive association between openness to experience and job



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satisfaction. They concluded that teachers who are open to new experiences and ideas tend to be more satisfied with their work.

Similarly, a study by Amin et al. (2020) examined the relationship between personality traits and job satisfaction among university teachers. The findings revealed a significant positive correlation between openness to experience and job satisfaction. The researchers suggested that teachers with a higher level of openness to experience are more likely to engage in creative teaching practices, which can enhance their job satisfaction.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Tang and Hallinger (2018) investigated the influence of personality traits, including openness to experience, on job satisfaction among Chinese teachers. The results showed that openness to experience positively influenced teachers' job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

These studies collectively indicate that openness to experience is an important personality trait associated with job satisfaction among teachers. Teachers who are open to new ideas, curious, and willing to try innovative teaching methods tend to experience higher levels of job satisfaction (Sanchez, 2020a; Sanchez, et al., 2022; Salendab & Laguda, 2023).

### **Professors' Level of Job Satisfaction**

The findings regarding job satisfaction among the respondents indicate a moderate level of agreement with various aspects. They slightly agree that they feel they are being paid a fair amount for the work they do and that there is little chance for promotion on their job. The respondents moderately agree that their supervisors are competent in doing their job, and they like the people they work with. However, they slightly disagree that they are satisfied with the benefits they receive, the recognition for their good work, and the difficulty caused by rules and procedures.

In the context of teachers, previous studies have examined factors related to job satisfaction. Research by Takyi-Ansah et al. (2019) investigated job satisfaction among university teachers in Ghana and found that factors such as pay, promotion opportunities, and recognition significantly influence their job satisfaction. Additionally, a study by Ankomah-Gyimah et al. (2021) explored the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment among teachers in Ghana and identified several factors, including promotion opportunities and salary, that significantly impact job satisfaction.

These findings are consistent with the present study's results, which suggest that factors related to pay, promotion opportunities, and recognition significantly influence job satisfaction among professors in a public university in Ghana.

The significance of job satisfaction in enhancing the physical and mental well-being of employees, as well as its fundamental nature as a human need, has been highlighted in the literature (Harrison, Newman, & Roth, 2017; Sanchez, Sanchez & Sanchez, 2023). Previous research has established a correlation between job satisfaction and improved work performance, favorable work conduct, and decreased employee attrition rates, especially in academic institutions (Shuck, Reio, & Rocco, 2016).

Current research has emphasized the significance of examining the intricate relationship between individual and organizational elements that contribute to job satisfaction (Goswami & Singh, 2019; Sinha & Singh, 2021; Sanchez, 2023b). The dynamic nature of work and the evolving expectations of employees have necessitated continuous research into the determinants of job satisfaction (Yun & Chung, 2020).

According to Yun and Chung (2020), it is imperative for organizations to prioritize ongoing initiatives aimed at improving job satisfaction, as it is a critical factor for their overall prosperity and welfare. Kim, Lee, and Park (2016) suggest that organizations can cultivate a favorable work atmosphere that enhances job satisfaction and encourages employee retention and engagement by attending to the apprehensions and requirements of their workforce.



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**Significant Correlation Between Personality Factors And The Job Satisfaction of the Professors**

**Correlation between Personality Factors and Job Satisfaction**

		Personality Factors	Job Satisfaction	DECISION
Personality Factors	Pearson Correlation	1	.224*	Reject the Null Hypothesis
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.022	
	N	100	100	
Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.224*	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.022		
	N	100	100	

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The findings of the study revealed a significant correlation between personality factors and job satisfaction among professors in a public university in Ghana. The Pearson correlation coefficient indicated a positive correlation between personality factors and job satisfaction ( $r = .224, p = .022$ ). This suggests that there is a relationship between the personality traits of the professors and their level of job satisfaction.

These findings are consistent with previous research that has highlighted the influence of personality factors on job satisfaction. Studies have shown that personality traits such as extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience are associated with higher levels of job satisfaction (Judge et al., 2017; Mihalcea, 2013; Xie & Johns, 2018). For example, Mihalcea (2013) found that individuals high in agreeableness report greater job satisfaction. Similarly, Xie and Johns (2018) discovered a positive correlation between job satisfaction and openness to experience.

The present study adds to the existing literature by specifically examining the relationship between personality traits and job satisfaction among professors in a public university in Ghana. The significant correlation suggests that the professors' personality traits play a role in their level of job satisfaction. These findings have implications for both academic institutions and individuals in understanding the factors that contribute to job satisfaction and well-being among professors.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that there is a significant correlation between personality factors and job satisfaction among professors in a public university in Ghana. The positive correlation suggests that the professors' personality traits influence their level of job satisfaction.

The findings are consistent with previous research that has highlighted the importance of personality traits, such as extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience, in determining job satisfaction. These personality traits have been associated with higher levels of job satisfaction in various occupational settings.

Understanding the relationship between personality traits and job satisfaction is essential for academic institutions and individuals. Academic institutions can consider the personality traits of professors when designing policies and practices aimed at enhancing job satisfaction and well-being. Similarly, individuals can gain insights into the factors that contribute to their own job satisfaction and consider how their personality traits may influence their work experiences.

It is important to note that the study focused on professors in a public university in Ghana, and the findings may not be generalizable to other contexts or occupations. Further research is needed to explore the specific mechanisms through which personality traits impact job satisfaction among professors and to investigate the role of other factors, such as organizational culture and job characteristics, in this relationship.



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Overall, the findings highlight the significance of considering personality factors in understanding and promoting job satisfaction among professors in the academic setting. By recognizing the influence of personality traits, academic institutions and individuals can work towards creating a supportive and satisfying work environment, ultimately benefiting both the professors and the institution as a whole.

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