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INFLUENCE OF PERSONALITY ON OCCUPATIONAL PREFERENCE OF FINAL YEAR STUDENTS OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NASARAWA STATE, NIGERIA.

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ABSTRACT :

This study examined the influence of personality on occupational preferences of final year students of senior secondary schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. Specific variables considered under personality that includes Openness to experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism. The researcher formulated five research questions and five hypotheses to guide the study. The study adopted a descriptive cross sectional survey design with a sample size of 380 students, obtained from a population of 146,616 students in Nasarawa State. The instruments were two open-ended questionnaires, one of which was researcher-constructed questionnaire called: Big Five Personality Questionnaires (BFPQ) and the second was Akinade Vocational Interest Survey (AVIS) which was adopted. The instruments were validated by two experts from Guidance and Counselling department of Nasarawa State University, Keffi and confirmed to be valid. The instruments were also confirmed to be reliable using Cronbach Alpha. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while the hypotheses were tested using the t-test statistical tool at 0.05 level of significance. Findings of the study revealed that there is significant influence of personality on occupational preferences of final year senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State. The study recommended that government, counsellors, school heads, teachers and parents should create enabling atmosphere for students to develop self-knowledge to enhance appropriate Occupational decisions.

Keywords: Personality, occupation, occupational preference

INTRODUCTION

Human beings are different with each manifesting differences in their psychological endowments, behaviour, physical appearances, and gender, (Schmitt-Wilson & Welsh, 2012). Personality is reflected in the distinct ways people think, feel, and act to respond to situations in life (Holland, 1985; Passer & Smith, 2004; Cosmas, 2023). Similarly, people's personality difference is why they interact with others and objects in different ways. Personality traits are manifested in every human endeavour (Roe, 1956).

Holland (1997) suggested that career choice should be a reflection of personality. Hoppock (1967) also opined that occupations are chosen to meet certain needs which could be intellectual or felt attractions to certain directions. Kariyawasam and Welmilla (2020) submitted that personality is likely an essential determinant of how people would fare in their professions. Frank Parson, the father of career guidance believes that occupational decision making should be undertaken when people have achieved an accurate understanding of their individual traits- aptitudes, interests, and personal abilities (Ndi, Mimi, Lukong, Noe, Enyanga, Muke, Justine, Susan, Ettawuh, & Ekuti, 2020). In relation to the fact that personality may reflects in people's career choice or occupational preferences, Holland observed six personality types and their possible work environments as realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional types (Allison and Cossette 2007). Holland (1997) stressed that individual tend to move towards careers and work environments that are compatible with their personality inclinations. This means that career choices or occupational preferences reflect a person's self-perception in relation to ability, values and personality (Guthrie et al., 1998). In support of this view, Santrock (2006) contended that people tend to enjoy work environments that suit their personality traits and stay longer. Previous studies confirm that personality traits related significantly with occupational preferences (Alkhelil, 2016; Anake, Adigeb& Bassey, 2017).

There are many personality models, but the five-domain of personality model presented by Goldberg (1992), and Sucier and Goldberg (1998) present a peculiar understanding of personality of people in relations to their anticipatable behaviour patterns in work environments. The big five personality dimensions include: openness to experience, being imaginative, independent, and having interest in variety; conscientiousness, being prepared, cautious, and disciplined; extraversion being sociable, fun-loving, and warm; agreeableness; being sympathetic, trusting, and supportive; and neuroticism, being anxious, emotionally unstable, and self-blaming (Goldberg, 1993). Studies have confirmed positive relationship between personality type and career and occupational choices (Onoyase & Onoyase, 2009, Roberts and Robins, 2000). Some previous studies have also suggested that personality traits can influence performance and occupational directions (Sulaiman, Ishak, & Shamuganathan, 2012). Kemboi, Kindiki, and Misigo (2016) indicated that there

was a relationship between personality types, and career choice of students. Also, Zheng (2021) reported that the big five personality influenced job satisfaction by shaping individuals' work environments. Studies have also established that the five-factor personality traits had influence on the success and satisfaction of people in work environments (Zacher, Biemann, Gielnik, & Frese, 2012; Judge, Higgins, Thoresen, & Barrick, 2006). Similarly, results of studies confirmed that people with conscientiousness personality trait have positive insights about career success and job satisfaction (Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998; Stumpp, Muck, Hülshager, Judge, & Maier, 2010); and people with agreeableness, extraversion, openness to experience and conscientiousness also showed positive relationship with career success (Thomas, Lillian, Sorensen, & Feldman, 2005; Rottinghaus, Day, & Borgen, 2005). However, findings revealed that neurotic personality trait in work environment have negative effects on career success and adaptability (Boudreau, Boswell, & Judge, 2001). Furthermore, Zakaria and Yusof (2021) confirmed that respondents on big-five personality traits related to intrinsic career success compared to extrinsic career success. In another development, Sharma and Suri (2019) posited that neuroticism and conscientiousness traits significantly moderated the relationship between career decision making and career choice. These studies confirmed that the big-five personality could impact on occupational work environments and preferences.

People with openness to experience personality traits tend to be highly spatial, imaginative and creative (Howard & Howard, 1995). They are curious about things and have the ability to assess them differently (Cattell & Mead, 2008). People with this trait are open to life experiences involving knowledge-seeking, adventure, creativity, imagination and curiosity. It is also believed that individuals who are not open to experience are shallow, ordinary, simple and can exhibit traditional attitudes in their relationship towards people and work environments.

Studies have revealed that openness to experience personality trait had a positive effects on work environments (Zacher, et al. 2012; Judge, et al., 2006) and positive relationship with occupational success (Thomas, et al., 2005; Rottinghaus, et al., 2005). Similarly, Nieß and Zacher (2015) reported that openness to experience traits fostered upward job mobility to managerial and professional positions. Evidence also from Zakaria et al (2021) showed that Pearson correlation test revealed that openness to experience associated to the intrinsic career success. Thus, individuals with high score on openness to personality traits are likely to be effective in occupational choices that are in line with this personality trait.

Conscientiousness trait holders are people who tend to be cautious about their surroundings, self-controlled, self-disciplined, compact, inquiring and highly scheduled (John & Srivastava, 1981; McCrae & Costa, 1985; Burch and Anderson, 2008; Hussein, 2017). They prefer to be predictable, try to avoid risk and want to be flawless (Cattell and Mead, 2008). People without conscientious traits are not inclined to work in a concise manner in such a way that could be faultless (Goldberg, 1992). Barrick and Mount (1991) pointed out that high-level conscientiousness personality is a very significant characteristic needed in performing occupational tasks. Individuals with high score on openness to experience are more likely to show interest in the views of subordinates (Bozonelos, 2004), which could translate to effective interpersonal relationship and enhanced occupational performance.

Studies have established that conscientious personality traits had positive influence on occupational success and satisfaction (Zacher, et al., 2012; Judge, et al., 2006). In addition, studies also revealed that individuals with conscientiousness personality trait have positive insights about career success and job satisfaction (Judge, et al. 1998; Stumpp, et al., 2010). Also, Zakaria et al (2021) found that extrinsic career success showed a positive relationship with the conscientiousness dimension. These studies show that individuals with high score on conscientiousness personality traits are likely to be effective in occupational choices that align with this personality trait.

Extraversion is the personality trait which covers people who seem to be more talkative, argumentative, interactive and out spoken (Howard, et al., Cattell, et al., 2008). This trait shows the friendly, social and affectionate aspects of people who love funs, talks, and jokes (McAdams, 2008). Individuals with this characteristic care about people around them and want to be noticed (Barrick & Mount, 1991). They tend to experience positive emotions more and align to outer world rather than the self (Somer, & Goldberg, 1999). They are also active, adventurous, assertive, dominant, energetic, enthusiastic, outgoing, and sociable (John & Srivastava, 1981). Studies revealed that extraversion personality traits had a positive effect on occupational satisfaction (Zacher, et al., 2012; Judge, et al., 2006). Similarly, results of studies have established that people with extraversion demonstrated positive relationship with career success outcomes (Thomas, et al., 2005; Rottinghaus, et al., 2005). In addition, Zakaria et al (2021) showed that Pearson correlation test revealed that extraversion related to intrinsic career success. It could be deduced from studies that individuals with extraversion personality traits are likely to be effective in occupational choices that align with this trait.

Agreeableness is a personality trait shows in people that are accommodating, helping, friendly, generous and flexible (Burch & Anderson, 2008; Cattell et al., 2008). Individuals who possess this trait are friendly towards others and are social, kind, tolerant, forgiving, warm and reassuring and collaborative in nature (Goldberg, 1992; Glass, Prichard, Lafortune, & Schwab, 2013). On the flip side, people who rank low on this personality trait tend to be selfish, not caring for others concerns, unfriendly and poor in social interactions (Howard et al., 1995). People who are agreeable are said to be trustworthy, easy-going, ingenuous, self-sacrificing and modest and those on the contrary side are believed to be unfriendly, competitive, unreliable, stubborn, rude and skeptical.

Studies revealed that agreeableness personality trait had positive impact on occupational satisfaction in work environments (Zacher, et al., 2012; Judge, et al., 2006). Similarly, results of studies confirmed that people with agreeableness personality showed a positive relationship with career success (Thomas, et al., 2005; Rottinghaus, et al., 2005). In addition, Zakaria et al (2021) posited that Pearson correlation test revealed that agreeableness associated to intrinsic career success. It could be deduced from studies that individuals with agreeableness personality trait are likely to be effective in occupational choices that align with their trait.

Neuroticism personality trait is characterized by frustrations, anger, depression, stress and self-blame (Howard, et al., 1995). These personality trait holders lack emotional intelligence and they are prone to mental disorder and depression (Burch and Anderson, 2008). People with this trait usually fail to achieve success in their careers and occupational tasks (Judge et al., 1999). However, those who score low on neuroticism are more mature, cool and unlikely to over react in stressful environments (Cattell et al., 2008). People with a high level of this trait feel restless, anxious and stressed, but those with low level of it are more balanced, harmonious and able to cope with stress (Glass, Prichard, Lafortune, & Schwab, 2013; Lounsbury & Gibson, 2009). Individuals with traits are likely to use their emotional characteristics to deal with challenges or stress in their life (Kayadibi, 2019). Watson and Clark (1984) stated that those with high rank of neuroticism are prone to high tendency to emotional imbalance, leading to a deeper process of psychological stress when dealing with issues in work environment. John & Srivastava, (1981) asserted that neuroticism factors include: anxiety, hostility, depression, self-consciousness, impulsiveness, vulnerability. Studies have revealed that neurotic personality trait in work environment has negative effects

on occupational success and adaptability (Boudreau, Boswell, & Judge, 2001). In addition, Zakaria et al (2021) posited that Pearson correlation test revealed a negative relationship with the neuroticism dimension. Zheng (2021) also confirmed that emotionally unstable individuals were more dissatisfied with their jobs. Oduor, Aloka, and Nyaswa (2018) posited that neuroticism was associated to problem-solving deficits. From these reports, it could be observed that individuals with high level of neuroticism personality traits are likely to be ineffective in occupational environments. This means that counsellors need to discover students with neuroticism personality traits early so as to help them to adjust emotionally to prepare them for the world of work.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The gross under-performance in places of work of many workers today is a pointer to the fact that all is not well in the world of work of many Nigerians and Nasarawa State workers are no exception. A careful assessment of these problems may reveal that many people working in work environments that are not congruent with their personality traits could be suffering several emotional problems.

Looking closely at the challenges thrown at the society and Nasarawa State in particular, there is an urgent need to unveil the underlying issues leading to occupational challenges. Adolescence, a period where occupational preferences are formed by these students or forced on them by parents, peers or society' preferences for certain occupation and stigmatization of others is a critical stage to look into. Unfortunately, it has been observed by the researcher that majority of the final year students in many secondary schools in Nasarawa State seem not to have received career guidance to prepare them well enough to understand themselves and their personality traits that could help them to understand work environments that are congruent with them. Students are left to themselves to choose their subject combination in the senior secondary schools, decide their occupational preferences or receive counselling from probably non- professional counsellors who could not help them, but compound issues instead.

It is important to state at this juncture that the researcher has observed that there is a paucity of multifactorial research addressing the influence of personality on occupational preferences of students of senior secondary schools in Nasarawa State.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine the influence of personality on occupational preferences final year students of senior secondary school in Nasarawa State. The specific objectives are to:

1. Ascertain the influence of openness personality on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.
2. Determine the influence of conscientious personality on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.
3. Ascertain the influence of extraversion personality on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.
4. Establish the influence of agreeableness personality on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.
5. Determine the influence of neuroticism personality on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the influence of openness personality on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State?
2. What is the influence of conscientious personality on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State?
3. What is the influence of extraversion personality on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State?

4. What is the influence of agreeableness personality on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State?
5. What is the influence of neuroticism personality on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State?

STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses were tested in this study at 0.05 level of significance:

- **H0₁:** Openness to experience personality has no influence on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.
- **H0₂:** Conscientiousness personality has no influence on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.
- **H0₃:** Extraversion personality has no influence on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.
- **H0₄:** Agreeableness personality has no influence on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.
- **H0₅:** Neuroticism personality has no influence on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Wilfred and Fareo (2024) investigated the influence of personality factors on the career choice of senior secondary school students in the Yola Education Zone of Adamawa State, Nigeria. The study was guided by two research questions and two research hypotheses. The study adopted a survey research design. The population of the study was 22, 693 students while the sample was 900 students, which was selected via simple random and stratified sampling techniques. An adapted questionnaire titled “Influence of Personality Factors on Students’ Career Choice Questionnaire (IPFSCCQ)” was validated and trial tested on 30 students in Government Secondary School, Girei, with test-retest reliability showing a coefficient of 0.78. The data gathered were analysed using both descriptive statistics (of frequencies, mean and standard deviation) for answering the research questions and inferential statistics of t-test and one-way ANOVA analyses to test the null hypotheses. The findings of the study revealed that there is no significant gender difference in the specific roles of counsellors in the career choice of students in senior secondary schools in Yola Education Zone, with $t = -5.74$, when $p = 0.566$. Also, there is a significant mean difference among personality factors influencing the career choice of students in senior secondary schools ($F(2, 865) = 63.099$, $p = 0.00$). Thus, the study concludes that school counsellors and personality factors play pivotal and positive roles in influencing the career choices of students in secondary schools within the Yola Education Zone. The gaps in the study Wilfred, et al. (2024) and this study are as follows: students used as participants in the study of Wilfred, et al. (2024) were senior secondary school students in the Yola Education Zone of Adamawa State, but the present study used final year senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State. The present study unlike the study of Wilfred, et al. (2024), included the big five to examine the influence of both independent variables on the independent variable (occupational preferences).

Cosmas (2023) examined career preferences among secondary school students within personality traits of introvert-extrovert and agreeable-less agreeable. The study was a quantitative survey design. The sample size of this study included 369 Form IV students obtained from four secondary schools in Iringa Municipality, Tanzania. The selection of these schools was based on the following characteristics: first, the age of school-the schools that had been in operation longer than others within the Municipality were prioritised. Second, schools enrolling both boys and girls were also included in the sample. Third, single sex schools were also included. The sample was carefully selected with close observations of characteristics like age, gender, and grade level. Among the respondents, 43.6% were males and 56.4% were females. Then cross tabulation was run to establish students’ career preferences in relation to their personality traits. The findings revealed that 62% of the introverts, 61.9% of the agreeable, and 55.6% of the extraverts chose computation skills careers. The study recommended that the best way to make students choose career paths that match their personality traits, and academic ability, is through the establishment of a proper career and educational guidance and counselling services in schools and educate students to understand their personality traits for a proper career matching. The gaps in the study Cosmas (2023) and this study are as follows: students used as participants in the study of Cosmas (2023) were form IV students obtained from four secondary schools in Iringa Municipality, Tanzania, but the present study used final year senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State. The study of Cosmas (2023) analysed data using the descriptive statistics of percentage but this present study used descriptive statistics of frequencies, mean scores and standard deviations to answer the research questions.

Atela, Agak, and Othuon (2020) studied types of personality and their relationship with career choice among first-year B.Ed students of Maseno University, Kenya. The objectives of the study was to establish Holland personality types across gender; to determine the level of relationship between personality types and career choice in the B.Ed programmes of Maseno University. The study was guided by the Holland Code Theory (1997). Correlation and descriptive survey designs were adopted for the study. The target population consisted of the 490 first-year B.Ed students admitted in the Academic year 2011/2012 in the School of Education. The study sample consisted of 220 first-years B.Ed students drawn using proportionate stratified sampling. Data was collected by use of Questionnaire and document analysis guides. The questionnaire was piloted using 10% ($n = 49$) of the study population Pearson Product Moment correlation was used to determine reliability at alpha level 0.05. The questionnaire had an acceptable reliability index of 0.84. Quantitative data was coded and analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mode, frequency counts and percentages. Gender difference in personality types was examined using percentages and mean gender differences across personality types. Further, the degree of relationship between personality types and career choice was established using cross tabulation with chi-square test and Likelihood Ratio test. Qualitative data was transcribed into text form of emerging themes and reported. Gender was found to be strongly correlated to personality types ($X = 34.962$, $df = 5$, $p = .000$) with more males classified as realistic and investigative and more females as social type. The results of the of the chi square test likelihood ratio test showed very

high ($p < .000$) level of relationship between personality types and career choice. The study concluded that students at Maseno University could be classified into the six Holland personality types which correlate significantly with gender. The study further concluded that there is also a significant relationship ($p < .000$) between personality types and career choice. The gaps in the study Atela, et al. (2020) and this study are as follows: students used as participants in the study of Atela, et al. (2020) first-year B.Ed students of Maseno University, Kenya and adopted a correlational design, but the present study used final year senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State adopted a descriptive survey design. The study of Atela, et al. (2020) analyzed data using the chi-square inferential statistical tool, while the present study used t-test

METHODOLOGY

The study investigated the influence of personality on occupational preferences of final year students of senior secondary schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The study was guided by five objectives which were translated into five questions. Five hypotheses were tested. A descriptive cross sectional survey research design was adopted for the study. A sample 379 respondents was drawn from the population of 146,616 final year students of senior secondary schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria using multi-stage sampling procedure. The sampling techniques involved were proportionate stratified sampling, purposive sampling and simple random sampling techniques. Two instruments were used to collect data for this study, namely: Big Five Personality Questionnaire (BFPQ) and Akinade Vocational Interest Survey (AVIS). The instruments were validated by two experts from Department of Guidance and Counselling. A logical index of 0.84 was obtained for BFPQ and 0.82 for AVIS. The reliability coefficients of 0.76 and 0.88 were obtained for BFPQ and AVIS, respectively. Data collected from the field were analyzed using the descriptive statistics of mean scores and standard deviation to answer research questions while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

The results of the study are presented according to the research questions and research hypotheses..

Research Question 1. What is the influence of openness personality on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State?

The result that support the above question is provided below.

Table 1. Mean and Standard Deviation on Openness to Experience Personality and Occupational Preferences

One-Sample Statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Openness to Experience	380	16.3316	2.57255	.13197
Occupational Preferences	380	75.3737	11.44482	.58711

Table 1 shows that the mean score of 16.33 for openness to experience is less than the mean score of occupational preferences which is 75.37. Thus, it can be concluded that openness to experience has influence on occupational preferences among final year senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

Research Question 2. What is the influence of conscientious personality on occupational preferences of final year senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation on Conscientious Personality and Occupational Preferences

One-Sample Statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Conscientiousness	380	16.8789	2.45080	.12572
Occupational Preferences	380	75.3737	11.44482	.58711

Table 2 shows that the mean score of 16.88 for conscientiousness personality is less than the mean score of occupational preferences which is 75.37. Thus, it can be concluded that conscientiousness personality has influence on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

Research Question 3. What is the influence of extraversion personality on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State?

Mean and Standard Deviation on Extraversion Personality and Occupational Preferences

One-Sample Statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Extraversion	380	15.4316	2.85314	.14636
Occupational Preferences	380	75.3737	11.44482	.58711

Table 3 shows that the mean score of 15.43 for extraversion personality is less than the mean score of occupational preferences which is 75.37. Thus, it can be concluded that extraversion personality has influence on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

Research Question 4. What is the influence of agreeableness personality on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State?

Table 4. Mean and Standard Deviation on Agreeableness Personality and Occupational Preferences

One-Sample Statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Agreeableness	380	15.1447	2.79419	.14334
Occupational Preferences	380	75.3737	11.44482	.58711

Table 4 shows that the mean score of 15.14 for agreeableness personality is less than the mean score of occupational preferences which is 75.37. Thus, it can be concluded that agreeableness personality has influence on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

Research Question 5. What is the influence of neuroticism personality on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State?

Table 5: Mean and Standard Deviation on Neuroticism Personality and Occupational Preferences

One-Sample Statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Neuroticism	380	13.1211	3.74745	.19224
Occupational Preferences	380	75.3737	11.44482	.58711

Table 5 shows that the mean score of 13.12 for neuroticism personality is less than the mean score of occupational preferences which is 75.37. Thus, it can be concluded that neuroticism personality has influence on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

Hypothesis 1: Openness to experience personality trait has no significant influence on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

Table 6: T-Test of Influence of Openness Personality on Occupational Preferences

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	t	Sig.
Openness personality	380	16.3316	2.57255	379	139.77	.000
Occupational Preferences	380	75.3737	11.44482			

It could be seen from table 6 that the value of $t = 139.77$ resulted as the influence of openness personality. This value is significant because $t = 139.77$; $df = 379$; $p = 0.00 < 0.05$. Therefore, this hypothesis is rejected while the alternate hypothesis is upheld that openness personality has significant influence on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

Hypothesis 2: Conscientiousness personality has no significant influence on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

Table 7: T-Test of Influence of Conscientiousness Personality on Occupational Preferences

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	t	Sig
Conscientiousness personality	380	16.8789	2.45080	379	134.25	.000
Occupational Preferences	380	75.3737	11.44482			

It could be seen from table 23 that the value of $t = 134.255$ resulted as the influence of openness personality. This value is significant because $t = 134.255$; $df = 379$; $p = 0.00 < 0.05$. Therefore, this hypothesis is rejected while the alternate hypothesis is upheld that conscientiousness personality has significant influence on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

Hypothesis 3: Extraversion personality has no significant influence on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

Table 8: T-Test of Influence of Extraversion Personality on Occupational Preferences

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	t	Sig
Extraversion personality	380	15.4316	2.85314	379	105.43	.000
Occupational Preferences	380	75.3737	11.44482			

It could be seen from table 8 that the value of $t = 105.434$ resulted as the influence of extraversion personality. This value is significant because $t = 105.434$; $df = 379$; $p = 0.00 < 0.05$. Therefore, this hypothesis is rejected while the alternate hypothesis is upheld that extraversion personality has significant influence on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

Hypothesis 4: Agreeableness personality has no significant influence on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

Table 9: T-Test of Influence of Agreeableness Personality on Occupational Preferences

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	t	Sig
Agreeableness personality	380	15.1447	2.79419	379	105.65	.000
Occupational Preferences	380	75.3737	11.44482			

It could be seen from table 9 that the value of $t = 105.657$ resulted as the influence of agreeableness personality. This value is significant because $t = 105.657$; $df = 379$; $p = 0.00 < 0.05$. Therefore, this hypothesis is rejected while the alternate hypothesis is upheld that agreeableness personality has significant influence on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

Hypothesis 5: Neuroticism personality has no significant influence on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

Table 10: T-Test of Influence of Neuroticism Personality on Occupational Preferences

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	t	Sig
Neuroticism personality	380	13.1211	3.74745	379	13.121	3.74745
Occupational Preferences	380	75.3737	11.44482			

It could be seen from table 10 that the value of $t = 68.254$ resulted as the influence of neuroticism personality. This value is significant because $t = 68.254$; $df = 379$; $p = 0.00 < 0.05$. Therefore, this hypothesis is rejected while the alternate hypothesis is upheld that neuroticism personality has significant influence on occupational preferences among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Results are discussed based on the finding of research questions and the hypotheses tested.

The result from research question one and hypothesis one show that openness to experience personality has significant influence on occupational preferences of final year students of senior secondary schools in Nasarawa State. This finding agreed with Wilfred et al (2024), Atela et al (2020), Agbo (2022), Jemini-Gashi et al (2017) and Alkheilil (2016) who established that there was an influence of personality on career choices in their separate studies. Specifically, the present study finds a significant influence of openness to experience personality on occupational preferences of final year senior secondary school students of Nasarawa State ($t = 139.77$; $df = 379$; $p = 0.00 < 0.05$). The finding could be attributed to the fact that personality type could determine occupational preferences of individuals because one's personality should be congruent with occupation to foster occupational fulfilment. The finding of this study agrees with Atli (2017) who found that the openness to experience personality trait significantly predicted career choice. It also agrees with Owusu et al (2023) who posited that career choices related variables have strong positive significant relationship with openness to experience. The result from research question two and hypothesis two show that conscientiousness personality has significant influence on occupational preferences of final year students of senior secondary schools in Nasarawa State ($t = 134.255$; $df = 379$; $p = 0.00 < 0.05$). The finding could be attributed to the fact that personality type could determine occupational preferences of individuals because one's personality should be congruent with occupation to foster occupational fulfilment. The finding of this study agrees with Atli (2017) who showed that the conscientiousness personality trait significantly predicted career choice. It also aligns with Alkheilil (2016) who indicated a significant relationship between conscientiousness and occupational roles. It also harmonizes with Owusu, et al (2023) who found that realistic, social, enterprising and conventional occupational types have strong positive significant relationship with conscientiousness.

The result from research question three and hypothesis three show that extraversion personality has significant influence on occupational preferences of final year students of senior secondary schools in Nasarawa State ($t = 105.434$; $df = 379$; $p = 0.00 < 0.05$). The finding of this study could be attributed to the fact that personality type could determine occupational preferences of individuals because one's personality should be congruent with occupation to foster occupational fulfilment. The finding of this study agrees with Atli (2017) who postulated that extraversion personality trait significantly predicted career choice. It also aligns with Owusu, et al (2023) who observed that realistic, social, enterprising and conventional have strong positive significant relationship with extraversion. It also agrees with Cosmas (2023) who confirmed extraverts chose computation skills careers. It also aligns with Alkheilil (2016) who indicated a significant relationship between extraversion and technical roles as a career choice.

The result from research question four and hypothesis four show that agreeableness personality has significant influence on occupational preferences of final year students of senior secondary schools in Nasarawa State ($t = 105.657$; $df = 379$; $p = 0.00 < 0.05$). The finding of this study could be attributed to the fact that personality type could determine occupational preferences of individuals because one's personality should be congruent with occupation to foster occupational fulfilment. The finding of this study agrees with Atli (2017) who confirmed that the agreeableness personality trait significantly predicted career choice. It also harmonizes with Alkheilil (2016) who confirmed a significant relationship between agreeableness personality trait and occupational roles. It agrees with Cosmas (2023) who revealed agreeableness personality traits chose computation skills careers. However, this finding disagrees with Owusu, et al (2023) who indicated that career choices related variables have low statistically positive significant relation with agreeableness.

The result from research question five and hypothesis five show that self-image has significant influence on occupational preferences of final year students of senior secondary schools in Nasarawa State ($t = 68.254$; $df = 379$; $p = 0.00 < 0.05$). The finding of this study could be attributed to the fact that personality type could determine occupational preferences of individuals because one's personality should be congruent with occupation to foster occupational fulfilment. The finding agrees with Atli (2017) who confirmed that neuroticism personality trait significantly predicted career choice. It agrees with Alkheilil (2016) who established a significant relationship between neuroticism personality trait and career choice. However, this study disagrees with Owusu, et al (2023) who indicated that career choices related variables have low statistically positive significant relation with neuroticism. It also does not align with Oduor (2018) who found a statistically significant negative relationship between neuroticism Personality as opposed to the statistically significant influence of neuroticism on occupational preferences identified in this study.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it was revealed that there is influence of personality on occupational preferences of final year senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations are made;

1. It is important for educators, counselors, and parents to support students to develop their knowledge of personality in order to make good and satisfying decisions about their occupational preferences.
2. Vocational teachers in secondary schools should relate teaching topics in a way that can help students to relate the understanding they have about their personality traits to occupational choices
3. Government and policy makers should make adequate provision for career guidance in all senior secondary schools so that students can be positively influence on how to make career choices in line with their personality.
4. Students are to be encouraged to seek guidance from career counselors or professionals who can help them to properly align their personality traits to occupational preferences to suit them.

5. School administrators should support career counselling and create career programmes that help students know themselves and their personality mix to guide their occupational preferences.

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