

PERSONALITY TRAITS, OCCUPATIONAL STRESS, AND PERFORMANCE OF EMPLOYEES IN A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION



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Personality Traits, Occupational Stress, and Performance of Employees in a Higher Education Institution

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Abstract

This study aims to evaluate and address employees' work performance, as well as the correlation with their demographic profile, personality traits, and occupational stress. The research design includes descriptive-correlational and causal approaches, with a sample of 104 employees from Liceo de Cagayan University who were randomly selected and agreed to participate in the study. The relevant data was collected through survey questionnaires. Furthermore, the results show that most of the employees (29%) are aged between 21 and 26 years old, mostly female (81%), have completed college education (63%), and belong to the middle class with a monthly salary range of 11,000-20,000 (64%). Therefore, it can be concluded that the participants were mostly young adults, females, and belonged to the middle class. Moreover, the findings also revealed that personality traits significantly impact work performance and that employees who experienced moderate levels of occupational stress performed better. However, demographic factors such as age, gender, educational attainment, and socioeconomic status did not have a significant impact on work performance. In summary, the study suggests that work performance is positively correlated with personality traits and negatively correlated with occupational stress.

Keywords: *employees, work performance, personality traits, occupational stress, higher education institution.*

Introduction

Life can be stressful for various reasons, whether personal or work-related. If stress is not managed properly, it can lead to unproductive outcomes and even severe consequences such as depression, addiction, suicide, or death. As a school nurse, I have observed that the temperament of employees and students affects their performance as individuals who are unique and distinct from each other. Although we may have similarities in our origins, understanding and appreciating our differences is crucial. Every individual has their way of dealing with the challenges of life. Some adopt a positive approach, while others tend to be negative or neutral. It all depends on the person's ability to cope with stress. In today's rapidly evolving world, the pressure of life is increasing, which can be very stressful. To meet these demands, we must strive to do our best to achieve better results.

On the other hand, a study by Ghani, Yunus & Bahry (2016) found that certain personality traits can lead to significant or minor withdrawal from work. However, there has been limited research on how personality affects withdrawal behavior. Another study by Hwang, Lee, Park, Chang & Kim (2014) suggests that high turnover is a common characteristic of the business industry and remains one of its greatest challenges. They aimed to identify the reasons behind the high level of turnover and found that occupational stress was one of the causes. Additionally, in business, employee skills training can be divided into two main categories: hard skills and soft skills. Ibrahim, Boerhannoeddin & Kayode (2017) found that the trainer's effectiveness and the methodology used for training were important factors that affected the acquisition of soft skills. They also discovered that developing soft skills had a positive impact on employees' work performance.

Furthermore, this study aims to evaluate how workers deal with the stress they experience in their jobs and determine if a person's personality plays a significant role in managing workplace stress. By the end of this study, it is hoped that substantial insights will be gained to help address this important issue.

Research Questions

This study assessed the performance of the employees working in three (3) campuses of Liceo de Cagayan University. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of employees in terms of:
 - 1.1. age;
 - 1.2. gender;
 - 1.3. educational attainment; and
 - 1.4. socio-economic status?
2. To what extent do the participants rate their perceived personality traits as university employees?
3. To what extent do the participants rate their perceived occupational stress as university employees?
4. What is the participants' level of performance in the organization as university employees?
5. Is there a significant relationship between employees' performance and: the demographic profile, personality traits, and occupational stress?
6. Which independent variables: the demographic profile, personality traits, and occupational stress, influence the work

performance of employees in a higher education institution?

Literature Review

Participants' Age

Age is one of all the variables utilized in the statement of this study. Several of the studies give information concerning how age affects the temperament of the person.

In the study of Specht, Egloff, & Schmukle (2011), they explore a longitudinal study that aims to grasp if there is a temperament modification across the complete course of life. People change intrinsic maturation or considerable life experiences. The result shows a modification in temperament throughout life, however with a lot of pronounced changes in young and recent ages, this alteration is partially attributed to the social demands and experiences.

Gender

The study conducted by Lin, Hsu, Chen & Wang (2012) reconsider ways during which gender and temperament traits are associated with thought and insight problem-solving. The result shows that openness was correlated with thought performance, whereas emotionalism negatively correlated with insight problem-solving performance. The finding unconcealed ladies performed higher on thought, whereas men's capabilities were superior on insight downside tasks.

Educational Attainment

A recent study conducted by Fowles-Sweet & Barker (2018) examines the balance between educational integrity and leader demand. It focuses on the samples of existing clever practices within a specific institution's strategy to encourage non-standard tutorial backgrounds to achieve their potential. It is usually turning into momentous with the arrival of degree apprenticeships that introduce a spick-and-span demographic to pedagogy, World Health Organization might never have considered adult learning before.

Socio-economic Status

According to Wang, Schmitz & Dewa (2010), they explore knowledge from the longitudinal cohort of the Canadian National Population Health Survey was wont to estimate the danger of serious depressive episode (SDE) over half-dozen years by socio-economic status (SES) levels. In people who failed to add the past twelve months, participants with low education were at a lower risk of SDE, compared with those with high education, money strain was not related to SDE in participants who failed to work. Operating men who, according to low home financial gain and participants who failed to work and according to low income, had a succeeding incidence of SDE than others. SES inequalities within the risk of SDE exist within the general population. However, the inequalities might rely upon measures of SES, sex, and employment standing. These ought's thought about in interventions of reducing inequalities in SDE.

Occupational Stress

Moreover, Mazzola, Schonfeld & Spector (2011) draw from the transactional theory of stress; this study tests the assumptions created in past analysis (1) that employment and responsibility are evaluated as challenges, role ambiguity, and role conflict are evaluated as hindrances, and (2) that these appraisals mediate the connection between these stressors and outcomes such as strains, job discontent, and turnover intentions. A sample of 479 staff supported that though employment, role ambiguity, and role conflict perceived being each varying degree. Moreover, support additionally found a model during which primary appraisal partly mediates the stressor-outcome relationship. Whereas several reviews of job stress and stressor-strain relationship were conducted, such reviews generally focus entirely on quantitative information.

Work Performance

Bakker, Tims & Derks (2012) examine the role of proactive temperament in predicting work engagement and job performance. Supported the literature on proactive temperament; therefore, the job demand-resources model produce the hypothesis that staff with proactive personalities would be possible to craft their jobs and perform well. Therefore, the finding suggests that to the extent staff proactively alter their work atmosphere, they manage to remain engaged and perform well.

Methodology

Research Design

The study utilized both descriptive-correlational and causal research designs. It is descriptive- correlational because it focuses on describing the relationship between various variables. Specifically, the study aims to determine the demographic profile, personality traits, occupational stress, and work performance of the non-teaching and teaching staff at the university. Additionally, it is a causal research design because it aims to determine how independent variables such as demographic profile, personality traits, and occupational stress affect the dependent variable, which is work performance.

Respondents

The total population involved is both teaching and non-teaching employees of three different campuses of Liceo de Cagayan University. 104 employees were selected at random using proportionate stratified sampling, which is a method of sampling that considers the variance of the population by dividing it into smaller sub-groups. The selection process involved choosing 40 participants from the main campus, 30 participants from the RNP campus, and 30 participants from the PDR campus, based on the availability of employees due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Half of the participants from each campus were non-teaching staff, while the other half were teaching staff.

Instrument

This study used an adapted, modified survey questionnaire to gather data. Participants who agreed to take part in the study answered the survey. The questionnaire has three parts. The first part consists of four questions that ask for basic information about the participants. The second part has 25 items per domain and is about the participants' personality traits and occupational stress. Finally, the third part asks 20 questions about the employee's performance, using the 5-point Likert Scale. The Likert Scale is a rating system used in a questionnaire to measure people's attitudes, opinions, or perceptions. This scaling method was named after its inventor, Rensis Likert. The survey tool was answered by an option given for the demographic profile, while personality traits and occupational stress were answered using a rating scale of strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree, excellent, very good, good, fair, and poor for the employees' performance. For the negative statements of personality traits and occupational stress, the scaling procedure is reversed. The questionnaire was adapted and modified to fit the current participants, based on previous research by Digman (1990) and Cohen et al. (1983). Before the study, a pilot test was conducted to verify the reliability of the questionnaire.

Procedure

This study used specific steps to gather data. After obtaining permission from the Office of Graduate Studies, Research and Publication Office, the University President and the rest of the offices involved in this study selected a total of 104 participants from the three campuses who voluntarily agreed to participate. The participants were assured that their identities and responses would be kept confidential through a letter of consent. The researcher also explained the study's purpose, instructions, and questionnaire content in detail before the participants took the survey. After the survey was completed, the data collected was immediately recorded and analyzed.

Ethical Considerations

This research study followed ethical guidelines. The individuals who participated in this research study were fully aware that their involvement would not impact on their jobs and that they did so voluntarily.

Throughout the entire process, from data collection to publication, we strictly maintained the privacy and confidentiality of the study according to research protocol. We carefully explained informed consent to the participants and answered any questions they had to ensure they fully understood the study's purpose. Moreover, we informed the participants that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time without being asked to provide a reason.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the research findings of the data collected from the study samples. The primary source of data was obtained from the three (3) survey questionnaires and was additionally backup with an interview of the participants. The results presented the research problems stated in the study. To explain and investigate the relationships of personality traits, occupational stress, and work performance in a higher education institution. The data were collected, processed, and interpreted according to how the statement of the problem in Chapter 1 was presented.

Problem 1: What is the demographic profile of employees in terms of:

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Participants

| Category | Subcategory | Frequency (f) | Percentage (%) |
|----------|-------------|---------------|----------------|
| Age | 21–26 | 30 | 29% |
| | 27–32 | 21 | 20% |
| | 33–38 | 11 | 11% |
| | 39–44 | 18 | 17% |
| | 45–50 | 10 | 10% |
| | 51–59 | 14 | 13% |
| | Total | 104 | 100% |
| Gender | Male | 20 | 19% |
| | Female | 84 | 81% |
| | Total | 104 | 100% |



| | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|-----|------|
| Educational Attainment | Graduate Student | 17 | 16% |
| | Masters | 22 | 21% |
| | College Level | 65 | 63% |
| | High School Level | 0 | 0% |
| | Total | 104 | 100% |
| Socio-Economic Status | Higher | 21 | 20% |
| | Middle | 66 | 64% |
| | Lower | 17 | 16% |
| | Total | 104 | 100% |

Problem 2: To what extent do the participants rate their perceived personality traits as university employees?

Table 2. Mean and Standard Deviation of Participants' Personality Traits (PT)

| Indicator | Mean | Standard Deviation | Descriptive Rating | Interpretation |
|---|------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1. I easily trust other people | 3.36 | 0.835 | Neutral | Moderately Agreeable |
| 2. I make friends easily | 3.95 | 0.817 | Agree | Agreeable |
| 3. I imagine a lot | 3.75 | 0.900 | Agree | Agreeable |
| 4. I really enjoy parties and gatherings | 3.57 | 0.993 | Agree | Agreeable |
| 5. I complete tasks successfully | 4.09 | 0.712 | Agree | Agreeable |
| 6. I like to tidy up | 3.96 | 0.858 | Agree | Agreeable |
| 7. I like to take charge of situations and events | 3.40 | 0.757 | Neutral | Moderately Agreeable |
| 8. I love to help others | 4.46 | 0.709 | Agree | Agreeable |
| 9. I keep my promises | 4.15 | 0.798 | Agree | Agreeable |
| 10. I work hard | 4.44 | 0.666 | Agree | Agreeable |
| 11. I am always prepared | 3.90 | 0.782 | Agree | Agreeable |
| 12. I experience deep and varied emotions | 3.75 | 0.922 | Agree | Agreeable |
| 13. I prefer flexible work than routine work | 3.89 | 0.787 | Agree | Agreeable |
| 14. I love to have a good argument with someone | 3.40 | 0.950 | Agree | Agreeable |
| 15. I love excitement | 3.96 | 0.787 | Agree | Agreeable |
| 16. I am very spontaneous in my actions | 3.70 | 0.762 | Agree | Agreeable |
| 17. I easily get angry | 3.19 | 0.813 | Neutral | Moderately Agreeable |
| 18. I am always busy | 2.41 | 0.745 | Disagree | Less Agreeable |
| 19. I worry a lot | 2.69 | 1.062 | Neutral | Moderately Agreeable |
| 20. I manipulate others to get my own way | 3.88 | 0.978 | Agree | Agreeable |
| 21. I often feel sad | 3.25 | 1.022 | Neutral | Moderately Agreeable |
| 22. I find it difficult to approach others | 3.27 | 0.947 | Neutral | Moderately Agreeable |
| 23. I believe I am better than others | 3.56 | 0.912 | Agree | Agreeable |
| Overall Mean | 3.60 | 0.359 | Agree | Agreeable |

Problem 3: To what extent do the respondent rate their perceived occupational stress as university employees?

Table 3. Mean and Standard Deviation Distribution of Participants' Occupational Stress (OS)

| Indicator | Mean | Standard Deviation | Descriptive Rating | Interpretation |
|--|------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1. My job requires a lot of work | 4.00 | 0.750 | Agree | Stressed |
| 2. The available job description is vague | 2.88 | 0.816 | Neutral | Moderately Stressed |
| 3. I am tasked to ensure the productivity of my colleagues | 3.41 | 0.910 | Neutral | Moderately Stressed |
| 4. My assignments are monotonous | 2.86 | 1.009 | Neutral | Moderately Stressed |
| 5. My boss often gives conflicting orders at work | 3.49 | 0.955 | Neutral | Moderately Stressed |
| 6. My ideas are mostly considered and implemented | 3.26 | 0.724 | Neutral | Moderately Stressed |
| 7. My instructions are followed whenever I distribute tasks to employees | 3.24 | 0.744 | Neutral | Moderately Stressed |
| 8. I have to work with persons of my liking | 3.06 | 1.050 | Neutral | Moderately Stressed |



| | | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| 9. Higher authorities do care for my self-respect | 3.44 | 0.857 | Neutral | Moderately Stressed |
| 10. My work objectives are clear and well-planned | 4.12 | 2.950 | Agree | Stressed |
| 11. Officials do not interfere with my authority and work styles | 3.18 | 0.798 | Neutral | Moderately Stressed |
| 12. Colleagues ask for my cooperation in solving challenging work problems | 3.65 | 0.734 | Agree | Stressed |
| 13. Colleagues give due importance to my suggestions concerning employees' training programs | 3.61 | 0.660 | Agree | Stressed |
| 14. I get ample opportunities to utilize my abilities and experiences | 3.59 | 0.771 | Agree | Stressed |
| 15. This job has enhanced my social status | 3.78 | 0.836 | Agree | Stressed |
| 16. Colleagues seek for my ideas in framing important organizational policies | 3.46 | 0.800 | Neutral | Moderately Stressed |
| 17. I bear the great responsibility for the progress of this organization | 3.41 | 0.832 | Neutral | Moderately Stressed |
| 18. I sometimes have to push the limits in order to preserve group conformity | 3.34 | 0.820 | Neutral | Moderately Stressed |
| 19. Clear instructions and adequate facilities are not provided when new tasks are given to me | 3.25 | 0.973 | Neutral | Moderately Stressed |
| 20. My boss sees my position and work as irrelevant | 3.48 | 1.097 | Neutral | Moderately Stressed |
| 21. Our preferences are duly considered in appointing important posts | 3.30 | 0.695 | Neutral | Moderately Stressed |
| 22. My colleagues do cooperate with me voluntarily in solving problems | 3.52 | 0.812 | Agree | Stressed |
| 23. Employees give due significance to the official instructions and working procedures | 3.63 | 0.639 | Agree | Stressed |
| 24. Colleagues ask for my opinion in modifying work systems/instruments | 3.49 | 0.683 | Neutral | Moderately Stressed |
| 25. Excellent teamwork exists in my department/organization | 3.90 | 0.876 | Agree | Stressed |
| Overall Mean: | 3.45 | .348 | Neutral | Moderately Stressed |

Legend: Scale: 5 = 4.51–5.00, Descriptive Rating: Strongly Agree, Interpretation: Highly Stressed; 4 = 3.51–4.50, Descriptive Rating: Agree, Interpretation: Stressed; 3 = 2.51–3.50, Descriptive Rating: Neutral, Interpretation: Moderately Stressed; 2 = 1.51–2.50, Descriptive Rating: Disagree, Interpretation: Less Stressed; 1 = 1.00–1.50, Descriptive Rating: Strongly Disagree, Interpretation: Not Stressed.

Problem 4: What is the participants' level of their performance in the organization as university employees?

Table 4. Mean and Standard Deviation of Participants' Work Performance of University Employees

| Indicator | Mean | Standard Deviation | Verbal Description | Interpretation |
|--|------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1 General knowledge of the work assignment | 4.17 | 0.660 | Good | Above Standards |
| 2 Quality of work output | 4.06 | 0.694 | Good | Above Standards |
| 3 Accuracy of work | 4.08 | 0.649 | Good | Above Standards |
| 4 Making progress in the career | 4.00 | 0.776 | Good | Above Standards |
| 5 Finding improved ways to do the task | 4.13 | 0.706 | Good | Above Standards |
| 6 Working to implement new ideas | 4.00 | 0.788 | Good | Above Standards |
| 7 Developing skills needed for the job | 4.12 | 0.754 | Good | Above Standards |
| 8 Working as part of the group | 4.20 | 0.658 | Good | Above Standards |
| 9 Seeking information from others in my group | 4.05 | 0.683 | Good | Above Standards |
| 10 Reports on time | 3.99 | 0.842 | Good | Above Standards |
| 11 Willing to accept work assignment | 4.20 | 0.716 | Good | Above Standards |
| 12 Performs assigned works with less supervision | 4.15 | 0.679 | Good | Above Standards |
| 13 Communicates clearly with the group | 4.15 | 0.734 | Good | Above Standards |
| 14 Solves problem with the group | 4.11 | 0.799 | Good | Above Standards |
| 15 Follow instructions | 4.30 | 0.736 | Good | Above Standards |
| 16 Used leave without informing the head | 4.13 | 1.049 | Good | Above Standards |
| 17 Practicing tardiness | 4.06 | 1.094 | Good | Above Standards |
| 18 Took time for leisure | 3.56 | 1.113 | Good | Above Standards |
| 19 I decide for my own schedule | 3.80 | 1.155 | Good | Above Standards |
| 20 I don't think about work | 4.18 | 1.050 | Good | Above Standards |

| | | | | |
|---------------|------|------|------|-----------------|
| Overall Mean: | 4.07 | .528 | Good | Above Standards |
|---------------|------|------|------|-----------------|

Legend: Scale: 5 = 4.50–5.00, Verbal Description: Excellent, Interpretation: Far Above Standards; 4 = 3.50–4.49, Verbal Description: Good, Interpretation: Above Standards; 3 = 2.50–3.49, Verbal Description: Fair, Interpretation: Meet Standards; 2 = 1.50–2.49, Verbal Description: Poor, Interpretation: Below Standards; 1 = 1.00–1.49, Verbal Description: Very Poor, Interpretation: Far Below Standards.

Problem 5: Is there any significant relationship between employees' performance and: demographic profile, personality traits, occupational stress?

Table 5. Relationship Between Employees' Work Performance and Demographic Profile, Personality Traits, and Occupational Stress

| Variable | Correlation Coefficient | P-value | Interpretation |
|------------------------|-------------------------|---------|-----------------|
| Age | 0.090 | 0.363 | Not Significant |
| Gender | 0.083 | 0.401 | Not Significant |
| Educational Attainment | 0.151 | 0.125 | Not Significant |
| Socio-Economic Status | -0.058 | 0.559 | Not Significant |
| Personality Traits | 0.436** | 0.000 | Significant |
| Occupational Stress | 0.389** | 0.000 | Significant |

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

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

Problem 6: Which independent variables: personality traits, occupational stress, and the demographic profiles influence the work performance of the employees in a higher educational institution?

Table 6. Regression Analysis on Demographic Profile, Personality Traits, and Occupational Stress and Employees Work Performance

| Indicator | Unstandardized Coefficients (B) | SE B | Standardized Coefficients (β) | t | p-value |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Constant | 0.170 | 0.702 | 0.242 | | 0.046 |
| Age | 0.003 | 0.005 | 0.053 | 0.514 | 0.608 |
| Gender | 0.000 | 0.117 | 0.000 | 0.004 | 0.997 |
| Socio-Economic Status | 0.107 | 0.094 | 0.123 | 1.139 | 0.257 |
| Educational Attainment | 0.082 | 0.066 | 0.127 | 1.245 | 0.216 |
| Personality Traits | 0.566 | 0.131 | 0.385 | 4.314 | 0.000 |
| Occupational Stress | 0.542 | 0.134 | 0.357 | 4.050 | 0.000 |

$R = 0.560$ $R^2 = 0.314$, $F(6, 97) = 7.392$, $p = 0.05$

This study presents the modest step towards understanding the personality traits, occupational stress, and performance of the employees over 104 participants. The result of the demographic profile showed that most of the employees' are from the age bracket of 21 – 26 years old (29%), the gender that dominates is female, educational attainment is generally college level, and the salary belonged to the middle class with the average- range of 11,000- 20,000 (64%) per month. The personality traits of employees in this study were agreeable, with an overall computed mean of 3.60. They agreed in most indicators 16 out of 25, the remaining were neutral, and one disagrees, the highest mean was 4.46 while the lowest was 2.41. While, the occupational stress of employees, they felt moderately stressed with an overall mean of 3.45. Indicators revealed that 16 out of 25 were moderately stressed, the remaining agreed on being stressed. The highest mean was 4.12, whereas the lowest mean was 2.86. Furthermore, employees' performance displayed an above standard in doing their task, with an overall mean of

4.07. Indicators revealed that 25 out of 25 employees do well in doing their jobs. The highest mean was 4.30, and the lowest was 3.56. Among the independent variables, only the personality traits and occupational stress had a significant relationship to the dependent variable, which was the employees' performance. Both have a p-value of 0.000. The independent variables in this study that best predict the employees' performance were the personality traits with a beta coefficient of .556 and occupational stress with a beta coefficient of .542.

Conclusions

Consequently, the findings of this study concluded that the demographic profile such as age, sex, educational attainment, and socioeconomic status do not have a significant relationship to employees' work performance. Additionally, among the independent variables, only personality traits and occupational stress affect the most towards the work performance. Therefore, personality traits contributed a lot in handling the stresses every employee encountered, and their performance at work. As the personality traits increase, the work performance also increases, so with occupational stress.

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