RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONALITY MAKE-UP AND PREFERENCE FOR OFF-THE-JOB ACTIVITIES AMONG EXECUTIVES

BY

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Abstract

The aim of the present investigation was to identify the personality traits of executives and study their relationship to the preferred and non-preferred off-the-job activities. The sample consisted of 39 Bank personnel. In order to address the dominant personality traits the EPPS was employed. An inventory consisting of 60 various pursuits was prepared to determine the preferred and non-preferred activities. A relationship between certain people personality traits and non-preferred off-the-job activity (gambling, day-dreaming and star gazing) was revealed by chi-square analysis, indicating thus that these executives rather prefer to indulge in constructive work. Thus, the present study indicates a relationship between certain off-the-job activities and the personality make-up of executives.
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Introduction

Samuel Johnson, the great man of letters once said, "Tell me what a man does in his leisure and I will tell you what sort of man he is" thereby emphasizing on the importance of activities during an individual's leisure time and its relation to the personality structure. The need to be concerned about such a relationship is, firstly, that time for leisure is a personal problem affecting everyone and secondly, because the quality of leisure conditions the quality of our civilization. The way in which individuals spend their leisure time influences their mental and physical make-up and also their job performance (Fisk, 1964). In order to perform any job effectively, the individual in any profession requires a certain combination of different personality traits. Different occupations demand various personality traits to be present in an individual's repertoire of behaviour. Similarly, individuals from various occupations may also differ in their preference for leisure activities, and on the other hand they may also dislike certain activities.

There has been some attempt to determine the combination of personality traits essential for various occupations. For instance, Deb (1968) studied the personality traits of engineers and identified seven important traits - extraversion, dominance, absence of neuroticism, sociability, self-sufficiency, self-confidence and intelligence. Patil and Manerikar (1974) studied the executive

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group and found them to be active, ambitious, relaxed, social, rational, self-confident, somewhat anxious and depressed. Hundal and Singh (1975) determined the personality characteristics and motives of farmers. Henney (1979) Eysenck (1967) and Cattell (1970) have studied personality traits of the executive group. Cattell (1970) found the group to be outgoing, more intelligent, venturesome, shrewd and experimenting. Ghosh and Menerikar (1974) and Dwivedi (1969) have attempted to reveal the personality characteristics of Indian Managers. Sen's study (1976) attempted to relate personality characteristics and choice of off-the-job activities in a group of Bank Managers.

The present paper aims to identify the personality traits of executives and explore its relationship to the preferred and non-preferred off-the-job activities of the executives.

Method

Sample

Thirty-one bank personnel, ranging from the ranks of Section Manager to Branch Manager, who were taking a management course in the Department of Business Management, University of Calabar, were taken as subjects for the present study. Their ages ranged from 41 - 50 years. Regarding educational qualification, twenty six subjects were graduates, six postgraduates and seven matriculates.

Selection of Tools

In order to assess the dominant personality traits of the executives, the EPPS (Edward Personal Preference Scale, 1954) was used. The EPPS provides measures of 15 personality variables; Achievement, Deference, Order, Exhibition, Autonomy, Affiliation, Intraception, Succorance Dominance, Abasement, Nurturance, Change, Endurance, Hetro-sexuality and Aggression. In addition to the 15 variables, the EPPS provides a measure of consistency as well.

In order to determine off-the-job activities, an inventory was prepared (Sen, 1976) consisting of 60 items of different possible pursuits. Sixty leisure activities listed alphabetically were: Arts and Crafts/Painting, Bird Watching, Boating, Camping, Clubs, Collecting Antiques/Vintage Cars, Collecting Stamps and Coins, Conversation, Cooking, Crossword Puzzle/Quiz, Cycling/Horse-riding, Dancing, Day-dreaming, Debating, Diving, Driving, Entertaining People, Fishing, Flying, Gambling, Gardening, Gymnastics/Physical Training, Hitch-hiking, Home-making/household chores, Hunting, Indoor Sports/Games, Keeping Diaries, Keeping Pets, Letter-writing, Listening to music, Listening to Radio/TV programmes. Mountaineering, Movies/Plays, Outdoor Sports, Palmistry/Astrology, Photography, Picnics, Play with Children, Racing Cars/Horses/Motorbikes, Reading, Recording daily/monthly expenditure, Reviewing past memories, Sewing/Knitting, Shopping, Sight-seeing, Singing/Playing on musical instruments, Skating, Sleeping/Taking rest, Social Work, Star-gazing, Studying for further Education, Swimming, Teaching Children, Travelling, Visiting Religious Places, Visiting relatives/friends/parties, Walking, Watching Sports, Workshop/Tinkering with Gadgets, Writing.

The off-the-job activities schedules were scored by assigning the weights of 4, 3, 2, 1 and 0 which correspond to different degrees of likeness i.e. like very much, like, undecided, dislike, and dislike very much. The mean scores for this group on each of the 60 leisure activities were then determined and the items securing a mean score of 3(like) or more than 3(like very much) were sorted out. The last few items which secured a mean of 1.99 dislike or less were sorted out as the most dislike activities. Each of the sorted liked and dislike activities were ranked.

The liked off-the-job activities as indicated by the executive group in order of preference was Reading, Camping, Driving, Entertaining People, Sight-seeing, Clubs, Listening to Music, Outdoor Sports, Art and craft/Painting and Play with Children. The most disliked off-the-job activity in order of dislike was - Gambling, Day-dreaming, Sewing/Knitting and Star-gazing.

Table 2:   *Leisure activities liked and disliked by the executives*

Ranking of Preferred Off-the-Jobs (Descending Order) Activity in Rank Order	Ranking of Non-Preferred Off-the-Job (Descending Order) Activity in Rank Order
1. Reading	1. Gambling
2. Camping	2. Day-Dreaming
3. Driving	3. Sewing/Knitting
4. Entertaining People	4. Star-gazing
5. Sight-seeing	
6. Clubs	
7. Listening to Music	
8. Outdoor Sports	
9. Arts and Craft/Painting	
10. Play with Children	

In order to determine the relationship between the five prominent personality traits (Dominance, Intraception, Endurance, Achievement and Order) and the liked off-the-job activities (Reading, Camping, Driving, Entertaining People, Sight-seeing, Clubs, Listening to Music, Outdoor Sports, Arts and Crafts/Painting and Play with Children) and disliked activities (Gambling, Day-dreaming and Star-gazing), further analysis was carried out. The chi-square was computed for each of the preferred and non-preferred activities under each of the five personality traits. For each of the preferred and non-preferred activities separate chi-square values were computed using three categories, namely (a) Liked and Most Liked Activity, (b) Undecided, and (c) Disliked and Most disliked Activity. However, the frequency tables for each of the ten preferred activities revealed that the category of "Most Liked" and "Liked" had almost consumed the total frequency leaving either zero or at the most three frequencies in either one or on both of the rest two categories, namely (b) and (c). An example is cited below. These overwhelming frequencies under category (a) offset the need for computing any chi-square value as such for any of the preferred activities. Table 4 shows the chi-square values for each personality trait with each of the three disliked activities (Gambling, Day-dreaming and Star-gazing). Since the sample group consisted of males,

ir total dislike for a dominantly feminine leisure activity such as Sewing/Knitting is clearly understood. Therefore, no chi-square was computed for this disliked activity.

ble 3: *Frequency table for ten preferred activities under the personality trait achievement (n = 27)*

	Liked and Most Liked Activity (a)	Undecided (b)	Most Disliked and Disliked Activity (c)
ading	26	0	1
amping	27	0	0
riving	26	1	0
ntertaining People	27	0	0
ght-seeing	26	1	0
lub	26	1	0
istening to Music	27	0	0
utdoor Sport	26	1	0
rts and Crafts/Painting	24	3	0
ay with Children	27	— 0	0

Table 4: Chi-square values for each of the five personality traits in relation to each of the three most non-preferred off-the-job activities

Personality Trait	Disliked Leisure Activity		
	1. Gambling X^2	2. Day-dreaming X^2	3. Star-gazing X^2
1. Dominance	20.162**	30.865**	4.108
2. Intraception	18.252**	29.312**	5.687
3. Endurance	15.50**	30.071**	2.00
4. Achievement	20.667**	37.556**	4.222
5. Order	9.70**	34.73**	(df=1)100

**p < 01, *p < 05, df = 2.

Discussion

The present study indicates that the following personality traits are characteristic of the executives - Dominance, Endurance, Achievement and Order. Regarding the role of an executive, Davis (1949) as reported by Shartle (1956) indicates three functions of the executive, viz, planning, organizing and controlling. The traits intraception, achievement, order, dominance and endurance are related to this aspect. The importance of dominance in the business services seems to indicate a particular type of performance, as that of a leader. That is, to be a leader in groups to which one belongs, to persuade and influence others, to supervise and direct the actions. The decision-making responsibility rests with the executive. A related concept is Order, that is, these men like to make

plans before starting a complex task, to have things organized and keep things in an orderly fashion.   Shartle (1956) had emphasized planning as one of the 14 activities of the executive. These three traits are essential for a successful executive. Dasgupta (1968) has emphasized on the ability of an executive to plan, decide and be responsible for coordination and supervision.   This group of executives also indicates the personality traits intraception, they realize the importance of understanding human nature.   One has to observe others, understand their problems and put one's self in another's place.   It is essential to understand the interpersonal aspects of human relationships so as to promote individual adjustment in the group.   The executive can achieve co-ordination by having an analytical frame-work. Sen (1976) also found similar prominent traits in defence personnel namely, dominance, order, intraception.   This seems to indicate that certain personality traits are common to certain occupations.   Deb (1968) has also found similar personality traits together with self-sufficiency, self-confidence for the engineering profession.

The other two related personality traits as revealed for this group are Achievement and Endurance.   To be a successful executive one must accomplish tasks of significance, to be able to tackle difficult problems etc.   McClelland *et al.* (1953) have shown close relationship between need for achievement and success at the management level.   Three findings will suggest the trend of McClelland's studies: (a) Successful management executives showed higher need for achievement than did a random national sample of men of the same age and education but in other occupations. (b) Managers show a higher need for achievement than do other professionals of the same age, and (c) most significant is the reported relation between need for achievement and success in a profession.   McClelland also identified the following trait - the willingness to assume individual responsibility for decisions.   The high need-Achiever find both challenge and a possible source of reward in the responsibility of making decisions.   For him, it is an opportunity for achievement. The present study also found the same results.   Related to the trait of Achievement is Endurance, the ability to keep at a job until finished, to work for long hours etc.   It is not only essential to have a high achievement level but also the ability of endurance to complete the task at hand.
The off-the-job activities for this group should include both indoor and outdoor activities.   The most preferred activity is Reading, i.e. interest in literary activities, which not only may provide an individual with some relaxation, but is also a means of increasing knowledge.   Other preferred indoor activities are entertaining people, visiting clubs, play with children, indicating a need for social relationships.   Arts and Crafts and listening to music are also the preferred off-the-job activities.   The liked outdoor activities are - camping, driving, sight-seeing and outdoor sports. Sen's study (1976) revealed similar leisure activities for defence officers; in addition other off-the-job activities were also preferred, these were - listening to radio, watching TV, movies, or plays, picnics and conversation.   The most disliked activities were - gambling, day-dreaming, sewing/Knitting and star-gazing.

A definite relationship between the off-the-job activities and personality traits was revealed by this executive group.   The results indicated that individuals with certain prominent personality traits prefer ceratin off-the-job activities and certainly dislike certain off-the-job activities.   Thus the executive who has the following personality traits - Dominance, Intraception, Endurance, Achievement and Order tends to prefer leisure activities which are constructive in nature (i.e.

leading, Arts and Craft/Painting, Outdoor Sports, Driving and Camping) and dislike off-the-job activities which do not bring about self-fulfilment (i.e. Gambling, Day-dreaming). Thus, this group of executives show a strong need to do something constructive and worthwhile, which is related to the personality trait of need for achievement. The contributing factor may be discipline - the training or mode of life in accordance with rules. Elsewhere, Opal and Sen (1980) observed that Day-dreaming is a pastime popular only among certain adolescents.

The results of the present study show a relationship between off-the-job activities and certain personality traits of the executive group. The executive who has the personality traits of Dominance, Intraception, Endurance, Achievement and Order would prefer to indulge in constructive work even after the office hours. Further, results also indicate that by virtue of these personality traits, these executives will prefer certain activities and strongly dislike non-constructive off-the-job activities. The prominent personality traits as indicated by the present study are similar to the findings of previous studies (Eysenck, 1967; Cattel, 1970; Sen, 1976; Deb, 1978). The studies also indicated that the personality trait "Affiliation, in the present study did not reach the criterion point. It is worthwhile mentioning that all these studies did not use the same personality test, i.e. Cattell (1970) used the 16 P.F., Eysenck (1967) - MPI and Sen (1976) used the EPPS to determine the prominent personality traits of executives; similar prominent personality traits have been revealed by all the different personality tests. Thus certain common traits seem to be essential in occupations related to the authority position.

Implications For Mental Health Among Executives

It is pertinent to emphasis that emotional or mental stress of modern living causes marked personality change, brooding, irritability, unreasonable outbursts, hallucination, and inability to function on one's job. Emotional stress makes a person behave oddly and erratically. It deprives the individual of the ability to make decisions and stick to it. These results showed the executives to have engaged in profitable leisure time there by exhibiting healthy personality traits devoid of maladjustment.

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