

A Personality-Based Approach to Understanding Achievement Motivation in Professionals

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the present study is to explore the link between personality and achievement motivation in working personnel. 103 participants (41 female, 62 males) were assessed on AMS & TIPI and Regression analysis was conducted along with other descriptives using SPSS. Result shows that 'Emotional stability' is a significant positive predictor of 'hope for success' and 'Agreeableness', 'Emotional stability', 'Openness to experiences' are significant negative predictors of 'fear of failure' in working personnel. So, Emotional stability or the opposite pole- Neuroticism is a common significant predictor of both types of achievement motivation.

Keywords: personality, achievement motivation, working personnel, emotional stability.

INTRODUCTION

Achievement motivation is typically one's striving to engage in such behaviors that will lead them to success or set them up for failure. Achievement motivation can be defined as an individual's ability to building up their skills and behave in a way that will lead them to their highest potential. Achievement focuses on competence or success while motivation is the aspect that energizes or pushes the individual in reaching that competence or success. According to Maehner et.al, it can be defined as behavior on skill tasks or simply, tasks where an individual have the believe that their competence affects the outcomes. David McClelland, in his theory of needs, conceptualized achievement motivation where he suggested that individuals with high achievement motivation have a strong desire to succeed and are motivated by the need for personal accomplishment rather than external rewards. They prefer tasks that are moderately challenging, as these provide the opportunity to showcase their competence. The word Personality came from a Latin word "Persona" which means "mask". It refers to a combination of characteristics, traits, behaviors, as well as thought patterns that defines the way an individual constantly perceives and reacts to their environment and relationship. It encompasses of everything from, how we think, perceive ourselves to how we look on others. It is shaped by a number of factors such as genetics, upbringing, experiences and environment and is often considered to be stable over time. Raymond Cattell defines personality as the prediction of what a person will do or how a person will perform in a given situation. According to G.W. Allport personality is the way a person's psycho-physical, i.e, body and mind works together to shape the way how they uniquely react as well as adapt to the surroundings. The big five factors of personality as stated by Costa & McCrae are Openness to experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism whose opposite pole is Emotional Stability. A study by Hart et al., (2007) stated that 'Conscientiousness', 'openness' and 'Extraversion' have a direct or positive correlation with 'intrinsic achievement motivation' while 'Extraversion', 'conscientiousness', 'neuroticism' are positively correlated with 'extrinsic achievement motivation'. 'Agreeableness' showed negative correlation with 'extrinsic achievement motivation'. Another research conducted by Freund et al., (2011) showed 'openness', 'conscientiousness', 'neuroticism' can predict the current 'achievement motivation' correctly. Research conducted by Rahman (2014) studied how big five personality factors effect achievement motivation across both the genders. For women Extraversion, conscientiousness and openness correlated with

achievement motivation while for men agreeableness and conscientiousness had a correlation with achievement motivation. Research conducted by Richardson et.al. (2009) to identify university students Grade Point Average by measuring Big Five Personality traits and Achievement motivation. It showed that the effect of Conscientiousness on Grade Point Average is fully mediated by achievement motivation for both female and male students. Research conducted by Lather et.al. (2016) to understand the Big Five Personality dimensions of students pursuing professional education and their entrepreneurial achievement motivation. The study showed that entrepreneurial achievement motivation is highly dependent on conscientiousness and is a function of it. Creating a structured environment with clear goals and policies may motivate students to be more disciplined, organized, proactive about learning and being an entrepreneur.

The objective of the present study is to explore the impact of personality factors on hope for success (approach tendency) & fear of failure (avoidance tendency) of the working personnel.

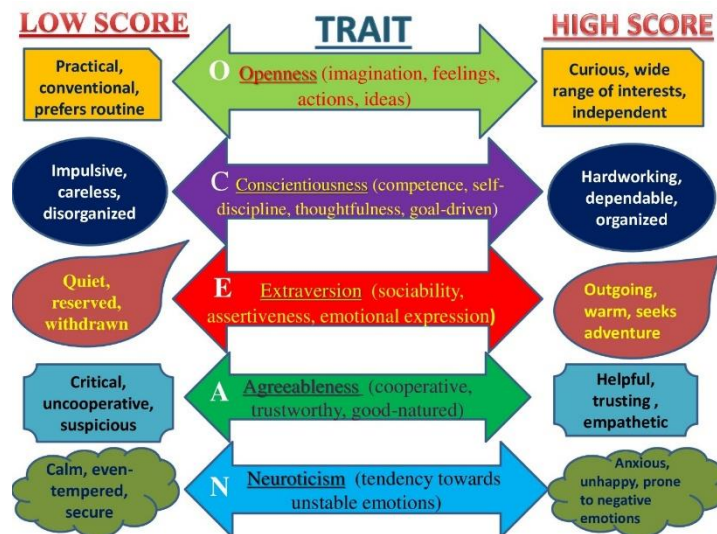


Figure: 1

METHOD

Sample: 103 working personnel selected using purposive sampling technique.

Characteristics of the sample: The sample includes 41 females and 62 males. The mean age of the sample is 34.46 years. It includes the employed population of India above 18 years having occupations like services, self-employed, freelancer, business, assistant, etc. The participants willingly participated in the study.

Inclusion criterion of the sample:

- People presently employed.
- People who are adults.
- Participants recognizing themselves as male or female.
- Having minimum twelve years of basic education & proficient in English language.
- People willing to participate in the study.
- People belonging to the Indian nationality.

Exclusion criterion of the sample:

- People presently unemployed.
- People who are not adults.
- Participants other than male or female.
- Not having minimum twelve years of basic education & not proficient in English language.
- People not willing to participate in the study.
- People not belonging to the Indian nationality.

Instruments:

- The Achievement Motives Scale (AMS): for assessing achievement motivation.
- The Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI): for assessing personality.
- IBM-SPSS: for quantitative data analysis.

Procedure:

As per the research problem, the study commenced with a comprehensive literature review and necessary methodologies. Appropriate standardized reliable and valid scales were selected for data collection, conducted using questionnaire leading to statistical data analysis. Finally, result was interpreted to draw conclusion.

Statistical Analysis & Discussion

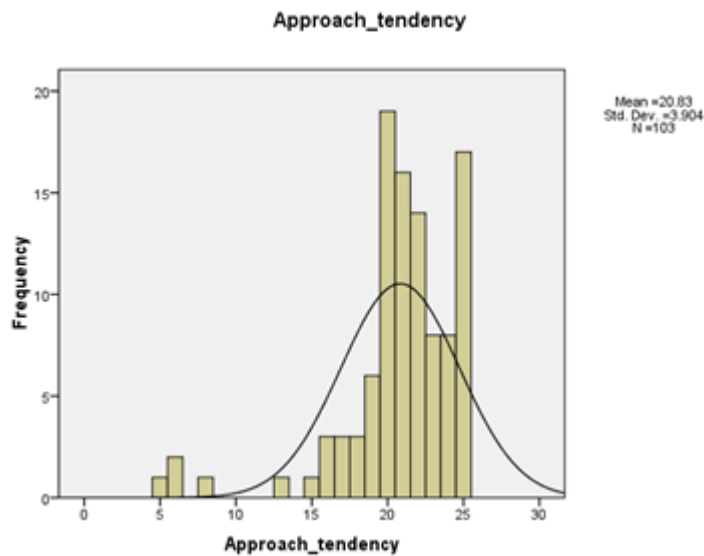


Figure: 2

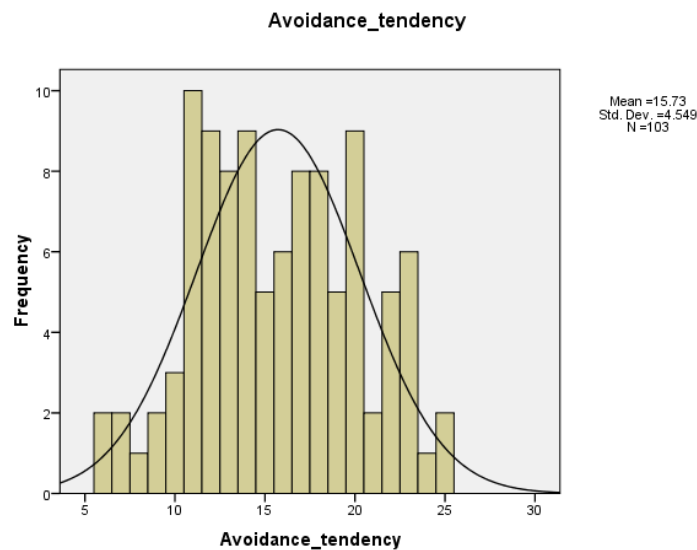


Figure 3:

Table 1: The descriptive statistics

Descriptive Statistics											
	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Extraversion	103	11	3	14	9.11	.272	2.765	-.124	.238	-.315	.472
Agreeableness	103	12	2	14	10.22	.255	2.589	-.379	.238	-.008	.472
Conscientiousness	103	12	2	14	10.55	.266	2.700	-.467	.238	-.320	.472
Emotional_stability	103	12	2	14	9.50	.268	2.722	-.289	.238	-.137	.472
Openness_to_experiences	103	12	2	14	10.48	.257	2.604	-.942	.238	.881	.472
Approach_tendency	103	20	5	25	20.83	.385	3.904	-2.064	.238	5.860	.472
Avoidance_tendency	103	19	6	25	15.73	.448	4.549	.047	.238	-.734	.472
Valid N (listwise)	103										

As per table-1, the sample size of the present study is (N=103). In the study among the Big five personality factors (openness to experiences, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, emotional stability) all factors having the same difference between their highest and lowest score except Extraversion, whose range (difference between highest and lowest score) is a bit less. Among the Approach tendency (hope for success) and Avoidance tendency (fear of failure), “Approach tendency (hope for success)” variable is having a slightly greater range. Among the Big five personality factors, the highest mean score is of “Conscientiousness” and the lowest mean score is of “Extraversion”. Among the Approach tendency and Avoidance tendency, the former is having the greater mean score. Here, the skewness values are majorly between -2 to +2 & the kurtosis values are between -7 to +7, hence, the data can be considered as normal distribution (Hair et al. & Bryne 2010).

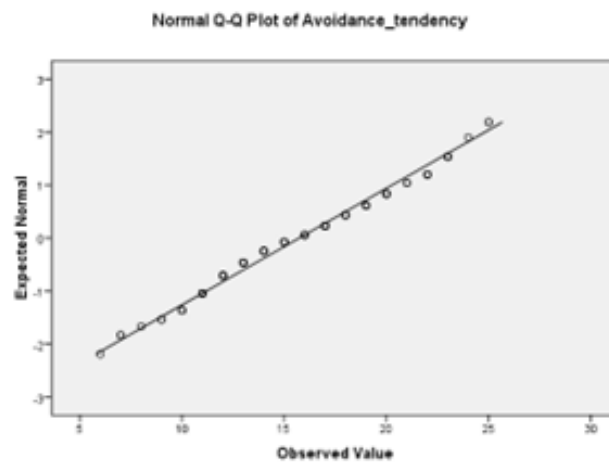


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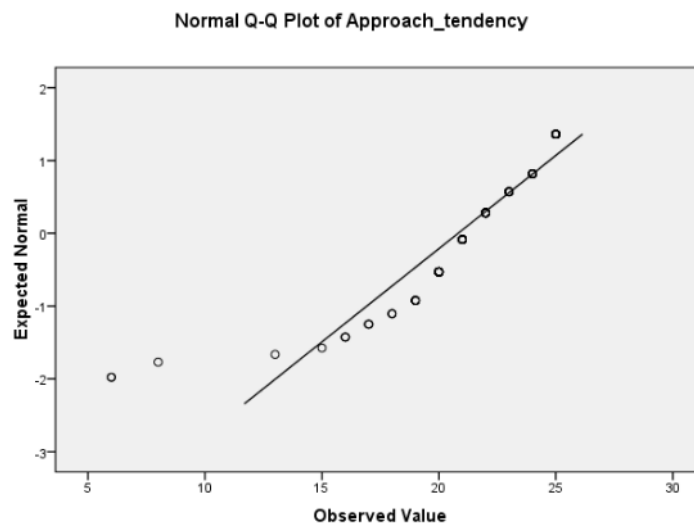


Figure 5:

Table 2: Regression analysis

Table 2: Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	11.682	2.245		5.204	.000
Extraversion	.033	.136	.023	.244	.808
Agreeableness	.236	.151	.156	1.561	.122
Conscientiousness	.123	.144	.085	.855	.395
Emotional stability	.413	.143	.288	2.880	.005
Openness to experience	.115	.150	.077	.767	.445

a. Dependent Variable: Approach tendency

Table2 indicates one unit/index of increment in ‘Emotional stability’ may lead to 0.413 ($P < 0.05$) increase in the ‘hope for success’, indicating ‘Emotional stability’ as a positive predictor of ‘approach tendency or hope for success’. A study by Zafar et al., (2021) also revealed similar finding. Thus, high Neuroticism reduces the hope for success.

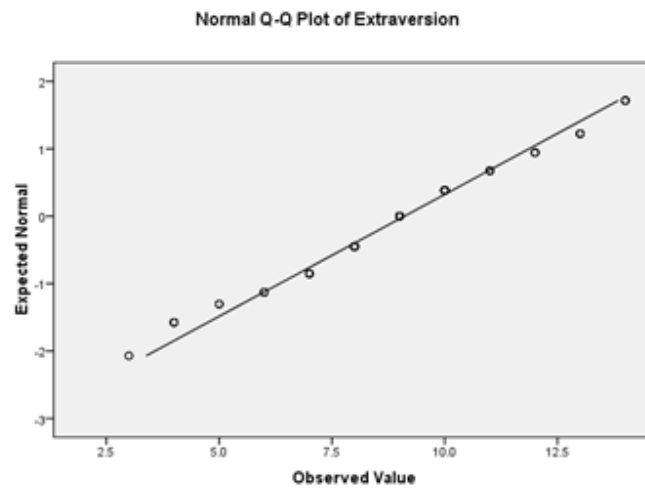


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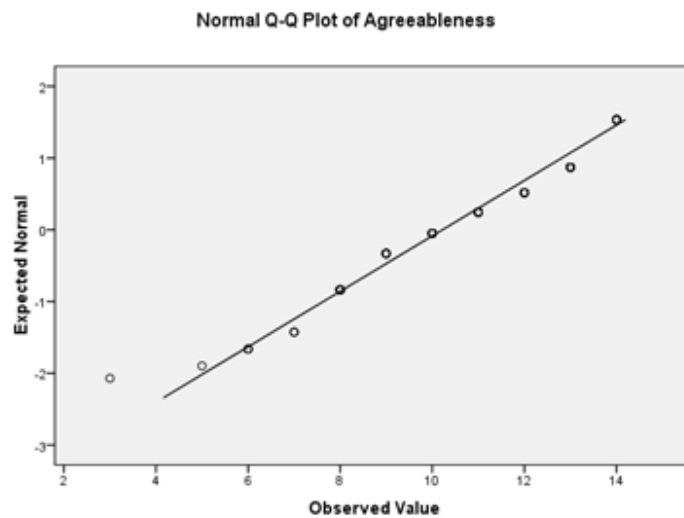


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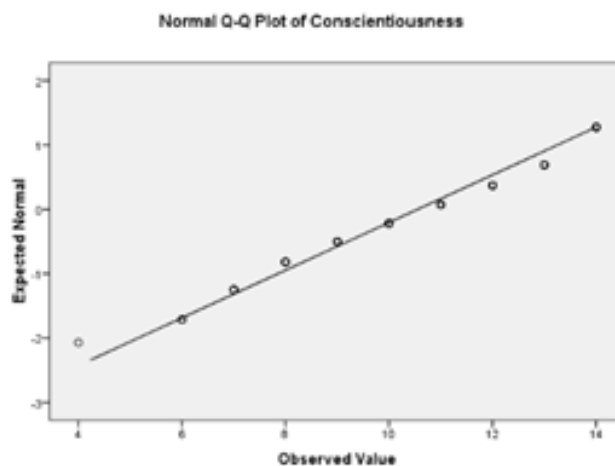


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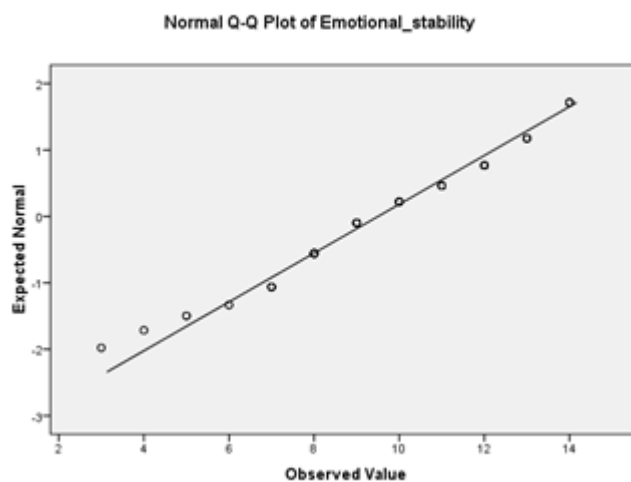


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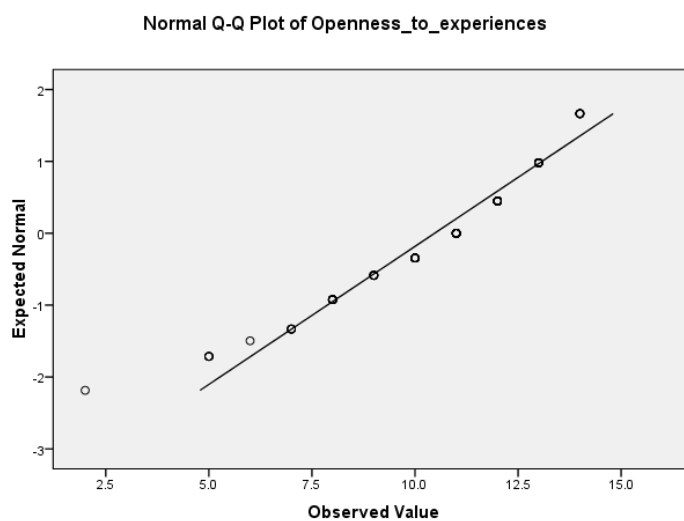


Figure 10:

Table 3: Regression analysis

Table 3: Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	24.792	2.600		9.536	.000
Extraversion	.231	.157	.141	1.471	.144
Agreeableness	-.372	.175	-.212	-2.124	.036
Conscientiousness	.000	.166	.000	-.005	.996
Emotional stability	-.349	.166	-.209	-2.103	.038
Openness to experience	-.386	.174	-.221	-2.215	.029

a. Dependent Variable: Avoidance_tendency

Considering Table3, one unit/index of increment in ‘Agreeableness’ may lead to 0.372 ($P < 0.05$) decrease in the ‘fear of failure or avoidance tendency’. The finding is in accordance with the finding of a study, “The relation between learning styles, the Big Five personality traits and achievement motivation in higher education” (Busato, 1998). One unit/index of increment in ‘Emotional stability’ leading to 0.349 ($P < 0.05$) decrease in the ‘fear of failure or avoidance tendency’. A study by Markiewicz (2017) revealed similar findings. So, high Neuroticism increases the fear of failure. Also, one unit/index of increment in ‘Openness to experience’ may lead to 0.386 ($P < 0.05$) decrease in ‘fear of failure or avoidance tendency’ is in accordance with a study on college students (Fathima et al., 2022).

CONCLUSION

Emotional stability is a positive predictor of hope for success (approach tendency) but Agreeableness, Emotional stability and Openness to experience are negative predictors of fear of failure (avoidance tendency) in working personnel. Hence, Neuroticism is a common significant predictor of both hope for success & fear of failure among professionals.

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