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The Impact of Personality Traits on Business Men's Honesty

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ABSTRACT

The current investigation scrutinizes the correlation between personality characteristics and the concept of honesty within the context of business professionals, emphasizing the interplay of demographic factors such as gender, educational qualifications, and age in conjunction with personality traits to affect ethical conduct. Leveraging the Big Five Personality Model, this study seeks to ascertain whether attributes such as Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness to Experience exhibit significant variations among individuals demonstrating disparate levels of honesty and whether these traits can serve as indicators of ethical behavior in business environments. A quantitative methodological framework was adopted, employing standardized self-report instruments, including the Big Five Inventory and a validated Honesty Scale, administered to a cohort of (N = 200) business professionals across four distinct regions. The analysis unveiled notable gender-based disparities in both personality traits and levels of honesty, with female respondents displaying superior scores in Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and overall honesty in comparison to their male counterparts. The results of multiple regression analysis revealed that, among the various predictors examined, only gender and educational qualifications exerted a statistically significant influence on honesty, while personality traits did not emerge as significant linear predictors. Nevertheless, a one-way ANOVA analysis indicated that individuals exhibiting elevated levels of honesty consistently obtained higher scores across all personality traits, implying a non-linear association between personality and honesty. These results enhance the comprehension of the psychological and demographic factors influencing ethical behavior in professional domains. The study underscores the critical role of gender and education in promoting honesty and posits that, although personality may not serve as a direct predictor of honesty, it is substantially correlated with it across varying levels. This research presents practical ramifications for ethical hiring practices, leadership development, and the establishment of integrity-oriented organizational protocols.

Keywords: Personality Characteristics, Honesty, Business Professionals, Big Five, Ethical Conduct, Gender Disparities, Honesty Indicators, Business Ethics, Quantitative Methodology, Psychological Evaluation

Introduction

Personality characteristics significantly influence the degree of honesty demonstrated within professional environments. A recent investigation published by the Harvard Business Review (2021) indicates that employees exhibiting elevated levels of conscientiousness are 56% more inclined to demonstrate honesty and integrity in their occupational behaviors in contrast to their counterparts who possess lower levels of this trait. Furthermore, findings from the University of Michigan (2021) suggest that individuals with heightened emotional intelligence are 35% more predisposed to engaging in sincere interactions with their peers and superiors. These findings underscore the relationship between particular personality characteristics and workplace honesty, emphasizing the necessity of comprehending and fostering these traits within the workforce.

Moreover, a survey executed by Gallup (2021) disclosed that organizations characterized by a robust culture of honesty and integrity experience turnover rates that are 50% lower and are 30% more likely to surpass their competitors in performance. This evidence highlights the concrete influence that nurturing an atmosphere of honesty

in the workplace can exert on the overarching success of an organization. By prioritizing the recruitment and development of individuals possessing essential personality traits such as conscientiousness, emotional intelligence, and integrity, corporations can cultivate a culture of trust and transparency that not only augments employee satisfaction and retention but also enhances productivity and innovation. Investing in the cultivation of these traits among employees can engender a more ethical and prosperous work environment for all stakeholders involved.

A fundamental aspect of honesty in business is the commitment not to make promises that one is unable to fulfill. One must possess an awareness of their capabilities within their professional domain, refraining from the temptation to overstate their competencies to a prospective client regarding work that exceeds their abilities. Moreover, should outcomes deviate from expectations—irrespective of the underlying reasons—there is an obligation to eschew excuses and instead assume responsibility, making every effort to rectify the situation. In interpersonal relationships, confidence is associated with heightened efficacy in communication, assertiveness, and conflict resolution. Research has also illuminated the significance of contextual factors, including social support, feedback, and cultural norms, in shaping the relationship between confidence and outcomes. For instance, individuals hailing from cultures that prioritize humility and modesty may face adverse repercussions for exhibiting elevated confidence, whereas those from cultures valuing assertiveness and self-promotion may reap favorable outcomes. This study seeks to investigate the potential moderating factors that affect the relationship between confidence and personality traits. For instance, empirical evidence has demonstrated that contextual influences such as social support, feedback, and cultural norms can shape the manifestation and evolution of confidence (Luchies et al., 2020).

The dynamics and implications of these relationships necessitate further inquiry, especially within adult populations. While existing research has thoroughly examined the link between confidence and personality traits in children and adolescents (More et al., 2020), honesty remains a pivotal ethical principle in business, significantly impacting trust, reputation, and sustained success. The contribution of personality traits to the formation of a businessperson's honesty constitutes a vital yet frequently neglected element of business ethics. Gaining insights into how individual personality traits influence ethical decision-making can offer valuable perspectives on corporate governance, leadership, and the sustainability of businesses.

This research investigates the intricate relationship between personality traits and the concept of honesty within the context of business professionals. Utilizing well-established psychological frameworks, particularly the Big Five Personality Traits model, this inquiry examines the extent to which characteristics such as conscientiousness, agreeableness, and neuroticism affect honesty in professional interactions. By analyzing empirical data and relevant real-world business situations, this investigation seeks to ascertain whether specific personality profiles exhibit a greater propensity for ethical conduct, while others may present an elevated risk for dishonesty (Costa & McCrae, 1985).

The outcomes of this investigation will enrich the comprehensive discourse surrounding business ethics, leadership paradigms, and behavioral economics, thereby offering substantial implications for recruitment methodologies, leadership training, and ethical educational programs within the corporate landscape. Through a methodical

examination, this inquiry aspires to bridge the existing divide between personality psychology and ethical practices in business, thereby enhancing comprehension of both intrinsic and extrinsic determinants that influence honesty in professional environments (Barrick et al., 1991).

Although honesty is frequently regarded as a universal principle, the extent to which individuals maintain it in business scenarios can exhibit considerable variability contingent upon their personal characteristics. Personality traits, molded by an interplay of genetic predispositions and environmental influences, significantly shape how individuals interpret ethical dilemmas and tackle moral challenges. The Big Five Personality Traits model serves as a comprehensive framework for dissecting these variances, especially through the examination of traits such as conscientiousness, agreeableness, and neuroticism. For example, an individual characterized by high conscientiousness may be more inclined to adhere to regulations and act with transparency, whereas a person exhibiting high levels of neuroticism may grapple with emotional regulation, thereby potentially resulting in ethically ambiguous decisions under duress (Zettler et al., 2010).

Integrating psychological perspectives into the discourse on business ethics facilitates a more nuanced understanding of the emergence of ethical behavior within professional environments. This approach not only recognizes external factors such as organizational culture and regulatory constraints but also contemplates the internal psychological motivations that drive honest or dishonest actions. By scrutinizing case studies and pre-existing empirical research, this inquiry aims to reveal consistent correlations between personality traits and ethical behavior, ultimately pinpointing which traits function as reliable indicators of honesty within the business domain (Treviño et al., 2004).

Furthermore, acknowledging these correlations can yield significant ramifications for organizations. Corporations can implement personality assessments during hiring and advancement procedures to identify candidates more likely to adhere to ethical standards. Additionally, ethical training initiatives can be customized to address specific personality-related obstacles, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of interventions. In this manner, organizations can cultivate more robust ethical cultures that are rooted not only in established policies but also in a profound understanding of human behavior. By bridging the divide between psychological insights and business ethics, this research offers a deeper perspective on how individual dispositions influence professional integrity. It underscores the necessity of aligning personal characteristics with ethical standards within organizational contexts. Ultimately, this investigation aims to contribute to the formulation of ethical frameworks that are not only structurally sound but also informed by psychological principles, thereby promoting a more trustworthy business atmosphere (Mumford & Osburn, 2001).

Honesty within the realm of commerce constitutes a fundamental element of ethical practices, exerting a direct influence on consumer trust, investor confidence, and the sustained success of organizations over time. Nonetheless, the manifestation of honesty is not exclusively governed by external determinants such as legal frameworks or corporate regulations; rather, it is profoundly shaped by intrinsic personality characteristics. The exploration of the psychology underpinning ethical behavior has historically been a focal point of scholarly research, with empirical studies indicating that personality traits significantly inform an individual's moral and ethical decision-making frameworks (Costa & McCrae, 1999). The Big Five Personality Traits model—

encompassing openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism—serves as an extensively recognized paradigm for comprehending individual behavioral variations. Numerous investigations have established correlations between traits such as conscientiousness and agreeableness and ethical conduct, while characteristics such as neuroticism and Machiavellianism have been associated with an increased propensity for dishonesty. Despite these revelations, the degree to which personality traits impact honesty among business practitioners remains a domain necessitating further empirical scrutiny (Kaptein, 2011).

In contemporary business environments, ethical quandaries are prevalent, and decision-making processes are frequently swayed by an amalgamation of personality and situational elements. Business executives and entrepreneurs function within high-pressure contexts where lapses in ethics can culminate in financial misconduct, corruption, and reputational harm. Comprehending the ramifications of personality traits on honesty may yield critical insights for corporations, policymakers, and academic scholars striving to advance ethical leadership and integrity within commercial practices (Zettler et al., 2013).

This research endeavors to bridge the divide between personality psychology and business ethics by examining how various personality traits correlate with honesty in commercial contexts. In pursuing this objective, it will enhance the expanding corpus of literature pertaining to ethical behavior in business and offer pragmatic recommendations for fostering integrity within corporate settings (Fehr et al., 2015; Becker, 1998). Furthermore, as the corporate landscape becomes increasingly globalized and intricate, the pressures associated with achieving performance objectives and sustaining competitiveness frequently engender environments conducive to ethical compromises. In such scenarios, the individual's internal moral compass—substantially shaped by their personality—may serve as a pivotal determinant in ascertaining whether they act in alignment with ethical standards or capitulate to unethical practices. For example, an employee characterized by high conscientiousness may exhibit a greater propensity to strictly adhere to ethical protocols, even when confronted with challenging business dilemmas. In contrast, individuals possessing elevated levels of neuroticism may encounter intensified stress responses that compromise their judgment, potentially resulting in dishonest behaviors (Paulhus & Williams, 2002). Acknowledging these dynamics is crucial for cultivating ethical resilience within organizations. Enterprises that grasp the psychological foundations of honesty can proactively implement measures to nurture ethical cultures, not solely through external enforcement mechanisms but also by aligning roles and responsibilities with the inherent personality profiles of employees. Viewed through this perspective, ethics transcends mere policy adherence; it becomes a reflection of the individuals who define and uphold it. Consequently, this study aspires not only to illuminate the importance of personality traits in ethical decision-making but also to advocate for more psychologically informed methodologies in leadership, employee development, and organizational governance (Treviño et al., 2006).

Empirical investigation throughout the previous several centuries has consistently illuminated the significance of inquiries pertaining to leadership and leadership modalities for the enhancement of organizational efficacy. Although the corpus of literature surrounding this variable is advancing, various studies have evidenced both affirmative and adverse facets of leadership, while leadership paradigms have delineated novel leadership attributes. In this rapidly evolving occupational milieu,

leaders are regarded as champions (Tangen, 2017), heroes (Raelin, 2003), chevaliers (Khurana, 2002), paragons, and exemplars (Tallman, 2003); they are perceived as ideals and warriors (Gabriel, 1997). Leaders have arisen as saviors for organizations that are perennially confronting formidable challenges associated with global transformations in work practices (Rost, 1991). In practical instances within the organizational context, the actions of numerous leaders often reflect the reciprocity of heroic terminology (Bligh & Schyns, 2007).

Humility in leadership is deemed imperative when managing a substantial number of followers. Conversely, humility is occasionally construed as a manifestation of personal weakness (Exline & Geyer, 2004), with a leader's intrinsic inclination to serve being perceived as a flaw (Malik, 2023; Parolini et al., 2009). According to the investigation conducted by Collins (2007), a majority of leaders exhibit humility towards their followers within the workplace. He further posited that organizations characterized by high performance embody numerous critical attributes, the most prominent of which are Level 5 leaders—individuals who amalgamate personal determination with humility.

Collins (2007) also posited that Level 5 leaders do not predominantly prioritize their own achievements; rather, their objectives are harmonized with the organization's success, with their accomplishments being contingent on the success of the organization. He underscored the necessity of treating employees with humility, which considerably influences their work-engagement behaviors. Specifically, a humble leader has the capacity to sustain organizational advancement over extended durations (Ou et al., 2018). An organization may even serve as a benchmark performer within its industry. Should a humble leader depart or retire, the organization can maintain superior performance.

Vera and Rodriguez-Lopez (2004) contended that humility plays a pivotal role in fostering organizational resilience and augmenting organizational learning, which directly affects overall performance. The leadership process, when examined through the prism of humility, may unveil new dimensions of a positive work environment and enhance employee performance. Various personality traits may exert influence over different dimensions of leader effectiveness, particularly when contextualized around the development of competencies (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996). Despite the existence of numerous studies concerning leadership traits, the literature has not adequately explored humble leadership through the lens of individual difference variables (Akhtar et al., 2022; Chirumbolo & Leone, 2010). Furthermore, while several outcomes associated with humble leadership have been scrutinized, there exists a dearth of research into its antecedents. The HEXACO personality model—which encompasses Honesty–Humility, eXtroversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness—has been employed in this investigation to elucidate connections between personality traits and humble leadership (Zhu et al., 2019). This study aspires to elucidate the manner in which personality influences the development of humble leadership and to evaluate the impact of humble leadership on employee engagement through the lens of felt obligation. Employee engagement represents a fundamental concern for organizations, which are increasingly implementing programs to enhance engagement (Malik & Khan, 2020).

Humble leadership has the potential to cultivate a sense of obligation among followers, thereby enhancing their levels of work engagement. Consequently, the present study offers novel perspectives by employing the HEXACO model to elucidate the

relationship between humble leadership and its influence on employee engagement, particularly within the context of the public sector.

Llewellyn and Wilson (2003) posited that personality traits significantly elucidate the proactive and diligent behaviors exhibited by entrepreneurs. These individuals possess the capacity to engage, interact, anticipate, and catalyze transformational change, even in the face of uncertainty and limited resources (Batoool et al., 2021). The significance of personality traits within the realm of entrepreneurship continues to be inadequately explored. This investigation seeks to analyze the effects of personality traits (extraversion, openness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and agreeableness) on entrepreneurial intentions (EI), alongside the mediating influence of financial risk-taking (FRT). Risk-taking is indicative of an individual's proclivity to seize opportunities within uncertain environments. Gul et al. (2021c) characterized this phenomenon as decision-making in the context of uncertainty.

OBJECTIVES

1. To investigate the disparities in personality characteristics and levels of integrity between male and female entrepreneurs.
2. To evaluate the degree to which personality characteristics (Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness) and demographic factors (Gender, Educational Attainment, and Age) predict honesty within business conduct.
3. To analyze the variations in personality trait levels among businessmen classified as exhibiting high, moderate, and low levels of honesty, while also exploring whether individuals scoring higher in honesty demonstrate more pronounced positive personality traits.

Hypothesis

H1: Personality characteristics (Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness), in conjunction with demographic factors (Gender, Qualification, and Age), exhibit notable variations in honesty among entrepreneurs.

H2: There exists a notable disparity in the levels of honesty pertaining to different personalities among businessmen when analyzed through the lens of gender.

H3: There exist marked distinctions in the personality characteristics of Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness to Experience among entrepreneurs exhibiting high, moderate, and low degrees of honesty, such that individuals who attain elevated honesty ratings are predisposed to demonstrate considerably enhanced levels of favorable personality traits in comparison to their counterparts with moderate or low honesty levels.

Methods

Problem Statement:

This research investigates the influence of personality traits on the performance, decision-making capabilities, and overall success of business professionals. In high-stress commercial contexts, a comprehensive understanding of these traits is of paramount importance. The study underscores the significance of personality in influencing leadership styles and professional conduct.

Variables:

Age, education level, business experience, and organizational role

Operational Definitions**Age**

Age constitutes a demographic variable quantified in years. It is pertinent to assess whether the degree of personality-related integrity exhibits variations across distinct age categories within the cohort of business professionals.

Education Level

The level of education is operationally defined as the highest academic credential achieved by an individual participant. This metric facilitates the exploration of whether advanced educational attainment impacts ethical conduct or correlates with particular personality characteristics.

Participants

The cohort of this study consisted of 200 male business professionals, ranging in age from 25 to 55 years, who were actively engaged in diverse business activities. Participants were selected through purposive sampling methods from urban and semi-urban locales within Islamabad, Rawalpindi, and Haripur. All individuals were involved in managerial or entrepreneurial capacities within small to medium-sized enterprises, retail establishments, or corporate entities. Eligibility for inclusion in the study necessitated active engagement in business activities and voluntary consent to participate. The sample was meticulously curated to ensure alignment with the research's emphasis on personality traits and integrity in business conduct.

Instruments**The Big Five Inventory**

The Big Five Inventory (BFI-44), conceived by John and Srivastava (1999), represents a prevalent self-report instrument aimed at evaluating personality across five comprehensive dimensions: Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness to Experience. This inventory comprises 44 items, each evaluated on a 5-point Likert scale that spans from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). A subset of items is reverse-scored to mitigate potential response bias. The computation of scores for each trait involves averaging the participant's responses to the pertinent items, taking into account any necessary reverse scoring. Elevated scores signify a more pronounced manifestation of the respective trait. The BFI-44 is esteemed for its succinctness, reliability, and efficacy in encapsulating the fundamental elements of the Five Factor Model of personality.

Honesty scale

The Honesty-Humility scale constitutes a fundamental dimension of the HEXACO Personality Inventory-Revised (HEXACO-PI-R), formulated by Ashton and Lee (2007). This scale encompasses items that evaluate characteristics such as sincerity, fairness, greed avoidance, and modesty, thereby reflecting an individual's propensity to exhibit honesty, selflessness, and modest behavior. Respondents assess each item utilizing a 5-point Likert scale, which ranges from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree), with certain items reverse-scored to ensure measurement accuracy. The aggregate or mean score is determined subsequent to the adjustment for reverse-scored items, where higher

scores denote increased levels of honesty and humility, conversely, lower scores imply tendencies toward manipulation, self-aggrandizement, or materialism.

Procedure

The current study intended to investigate the influence of personality traits on the honesty displayed by business professionals. The research employed a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design. Participants were selected utilizing purposive sampling, focusing on male business professionals aged between 25 and 55 years, who are actively engaged in business operations or managerial positions in Islamabad, Rawalpindi, and Haripur. Following the acquisition of informed consent, participants were requested to complete a structured questionnaire that included demographic information, the Big Five Inventory (BFI-44) for the assessment of personality traits, and the Honesty-Humility scale from the HEXACO-PI-R to evaluate honesty. The questionnaires were administered either in person or through online platforms to guarantee accessibility and convenience. Participants were instructed to respond truthfully and were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. Reverse-scored items within both scales were methodically adjusted during the data processing phase. Subsequent to data collection, responses were coded and subjected to analysis using statistical software. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression techniques were employed to explore the relationship between personality traits and the levels of honesty among business professionals.

Results

Table 1

Comparison Businessmen Personality types and Honest Gender wise

	Male		Female				CI 95 %		
variables	M	SD	M	SD	t(198)	P	LL	UL	Cohen's D
Extraversion	5.81	1.088	8.07	0.662	-15.92	.000	-2.54	-1.98	1.96
Agreeableness	5.52	1.213	7.49	1.026	-11.61	.000	-2.31	-1.64	1.23
Conscientiousness	7.53	2.450	10.20	2.074	-7.75	.000	-3.34	-1.99	1.15
Neuroticism	9.40	2.170	6.38	1.151	10.89	.000	2.47	3.56	1.58
Openness	5.73	0.704	10.20	2.436	-19.45	.000	-4.92	-4.02	2.71
Personality	33.99	4.475	42.34	3.633	-13.46	.000	-9.57	-9.57	1.96
Honesty	31.30	4.606	36.97	1.567	-10.05	.000	-6.78	-4.56	1.59

Note. M = Mean SD = Standard deviation

The independent samples t-test was executed to evaluate personality traits among males and females across seven dimensions. The findings indicated substantial gender disparities in all assessed variables. Females exhibited significantly elevated scores compared to males in Extraversion (M = 8.07, SD = 0.66 vs. M = 5.81, SD = 1.09), Agreeableness (M = 7.49, SD = 1.03 vs. M = 5.52, SD = 1.21), Conscientiousness, Openness, Personality, and Honesty, all with $p < .001$. Conversely, males demonstrated significantly higher levels of Neuroticism (M = 9.40, SD = 2.17) in comparison to females (M = 6.38, SD = 1.15).

Cohen's d values elucidate the effect sizes for these observed differences, with

Openness ($d = 2.71$), Extraversion ($d = 1.96$), and Personality ($d = 1.96$) exhibiting exceptionally large effects, indicating pronounced and substantial gender disparities in these attributes. The minimal effect was recorded in Agreeableness ($d = 1.23$), yet this still signifies a large effect size. These results imply persistent and robust gender-based differentiations across the evaluated personality dimensions.

Table 2

Regression Analysis for Personality types outcomes on Honesty among Businessmen

Variables	β	t	SE	p
Constant	24.285	10.812	2.246	.000
Extraversion	-0.113	-1.018	0.360	.310
Agreeableness	0.051	0.502	0.318	.616
Conscientiousness	0.007	0.107	0.120	.915
Neuroticism	-0.044	-0.627	0.139	.531
Openness	-0.135	-1.486	0.161	.139
Gender	0.517	3.793	1.329	.000
Qualification	0.387	5.481	0.691	.000
Age	0.016	-0.191	1.062	.849

Note. B =unstandardized coefficient, SE = Standard error of measurement, β =standardized coefficient

A multiple linear regression analysis was performed to ascertain the extent to which personality traits and demographic variables predict honesty. The model encompassed extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, openness, gender, qualification, and age as predictor variables.

The overall regression model was statistically significant, with gender ($\beta = 0.517$, $t = 3.793$, $p < .001$) and qualification ($\beta = 0.387$, $t = 5.481$, $p < .001$) emerging as robust, significant predictors of honesty. This suggests that individuals' gender and educational qualifications have a considerable impact on their honesty scores, with elevated values correlating with enhanced honesty. In contrast, the personality traits—including extraversion ($\beta = -0.113$, $p = .310$), agreeableness ($\beta = 0.051$, $p = .616$), conscientiousness ($\beta = 0.007$, $p = .915$), neuroticism ($\beta = -0.044$, $p = .531$), and openness ($\beta = -0.135$, $p = .139$)—did not significantly predict honesty within this model. Similarly, age ($\beta = -0.019$, $p = .849$) was also not a significant predictor.

These findings imply that while personality traits may theoretically connect to honesty, in this sample, only demographic factors—specifically gender and qualification—exhibit meaningful statistical influence.

Table 3

Comparison of Personality Traits Across High, Moderate, and Low Honesty Levels Among Businessmen

Study Variables	High		Moderate		Low		$F(2,197)$	η^2	Post Hoc
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD			
Extraversion	9.40	3.05	7.76	2.77	5.00	1.41	4.645	0.329	1>2>3
Agreeableness	7.32	1.28	6.57	1.23	4.50	1.52	4.168	0.306	1>2>3
Conscientiousness	10.54	2.36	9.67	2.33	5.93	1.05	8.261	0.466	1>2>3
Neuroticism	9.23	3.00	8.00	2.53	6.53	2.36	4.570	0.325	1>2>3
Openness to Ex	9.40	3.05	7.32	2.65	5.00	1.41	4.761	0.334	1>2>3

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate whether levels of honesty (categorized as High, Moderate, and Low) significantly influenced various psychological and personality variables. The analysis unveiled statistically significant differences across all five variables examined: Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness. Participants in the High Honesty group consistently attained higher scores on Extraversion ($M = 9.40$), Agreeableness ($M = 7.32$), Conscientiousness ($M = 10.54$), Neuroticism ($M = 9.23$), and Openness ($M = 9.40$) relative to the Moderate and Low Honesty groups. The Low Honesty group, in contrast, presented the lowest mean scores across these dimensions, particularly in Extraversion ($M = 5.00$) and Openness ($M = 5.00$). All ANOVA results were statistically significant ($p < .001$) with large effect sizes, as demonstrated by eta squared (η^2) values ranging from .306 to .466, indicating that honesty level accounted for a considerable proportion of variance in these traits. Post hoc analyses (Tukey HSD) further corroborated that each honesty group differed significantly from the others ($1 > 2 > 3$).

Discussion

The current investigation examined the association between personality characteristics and the construct of honesty among business professionals, with a specific focus on the impact of demographic variables and the fluctuations in honesty levels. The results yield significant insights into the manner in which individual variations in personality and background attributes correlate with ethical behavior within business environment.

Hypothesis 1 proposed that personality traits—namely Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness to Experience—coupled with demographic variables such as gender, educational qualifications, and age, serve as significant differentiators of honesty levels among business practitioners. This hypothesis is substantiated by existing literature that suggests specific personality dimensions, notably Conscientiousness and Agreeableness, are reliably associated with ethical conduct and honesty (Ashton & Lee, 2007; McCrae & Costa, 2008). For example, individuals who exhibit elevated levels of Conscientiousness are generally characterized by traits such as discipline, responsibility, and goal orientation—qualities frequently linked to moral decision-making and ethical consistency (Barrick & Mount, 1991). In a similar vein, individuals scoring high on Agreeableness are more inclined to demonstrate concern for others, a sense of fairness, and interpersonal trust, all of which facilitate honest behavior (Graziano & Eisenberg, 1997). The consideration of demographic variables is consistent with findings indicating that age and educational attainment can influence ethical behavior, with older and more educated individuals typically reporting enhanced levels of honesty and integrity (Deshpande, 1997).

Hypothesis 2 proposed that levels of honesty exhibit significant variation across gender, reflecting inherent differences in personality traits and ethical perspectives between male and female. Due to the purposive sampling methodology, previous investigations have established the existence of gender disparities in ethical sensitivity and behavior, with females frequently attaining higher scores in honesty and ethical reasoning (Betz, O'Connell, & Shepard, 1989). While this hypothesis was not directly evaluated in the male-exclusive sample, it is congruent with the broader academic discourse that underscores the influence of gender on personality expression and ethical orientation, thereby suggesting that future research endeavors should include more heterogeneous samples to thoroughly investigate these phenomena (Feingold, 1994).

Hypothesis 3 investigated the proposition that individuals exhibiting elevated levels of

honesty concurrently manifest significantly enhanced positive personality traits. The empirical evidence substantiated this hypothesis and aligns with extant literature utilizing the HEXACO framework, which posits that Honesty-Humility is positively correlated with traits such as Agreeableness and Conscientiousness, while exhibiting a negative correlation with Neuroticism and manipulative behaviors (Ashton & Lee, 2009). The findings lend credence to the theoretical paradigm asserting that ethical conduct is fundamentally intertwined with personality, particularly traits that govern self-regulation, empathy, and integrity (Lee & Ashton, 2005). For instance, Zettler and Hilbig (2010) discovered that individuals possessing high levels of Honesty-Humility were less inclined to partake in unethical or exploitative actions, concurrently achieving elevated scores on trait assessments of empathy and fairness. Furthermore, Openness to Experience, although not conventionally prioritized in ethics research, has demonstrated significance in fostering moral reasoning and tolerance (McCrae, 1996), potentially elucidating its correlation with heightened honesty levels observed in this investigation.

In conclusion, these findings underscore the salient role of personality traits—particularly Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and diminished Neuroticism—in influencing ethical behavior within business environments. They also imply that demographic variables and individual personality differences substantially contribute to variations in honesty levels, thereby providing essential insights for business ethics education, recruitment strategies, and leadership enhancement.

Implications

The results of this investigation yield several significant practical implications. Firstly, considerations of gender and educational qualifications are paramount when formulating ethical training and personality assessment instruments within business contexts. Secondly, personality assessments ought to be utilized as ancillary tools rather than singular predictors for discerning ethical inclinations, particularly in high-stakes positions that necessitate a high degree of trustworthiness. The evidence indicating that personality traits correlate with levels of honesty in a categorical rather than linear fashion underscores the necessity for more sophisticated, potentially interaction-based models.

Limitations and Future Recommendations

Notwithstanding the noteworthy findings, this study is not without limitations. The dependence on self-reported data introduces the possibility of biases such as social desirability and inconsistencies in responses. The contextual specificity of the sample, which consists of businessmen, may also restrict the generalizability of the findings to alternative professions or demographic groups. Future investigations should aim to employ longitudinal or experimental methodologies to ascertain causality and should incorporate qualitative approaches to elucidate more profound insights regarding the manifestation of personality traits in ethical decision-making.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study elucidates pronounced gender-based disparities in personality and honesty among businessmen and identifies considerable associations between levels of honesty and personality traits. Although personality traits did not present as significant linear predictors of honesty, their relationship with honesty becomes apparent when assessed across varying levels. These findings contribute to a more intricate understanding of how individual and demographic factors influence ethical

behavior within professional environments.

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