

PERSONALITY TRAITS AND ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION OF VETERINARY STUDENTS IN HARYANA

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ABSTRACT

Personality traits play an important role in influencing the number of would-be entrepreneurs. Successful entrepreneurs are agreeable, open, conscientious, confident and creative. A study was conducted in Lala Lajpat Rai University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences (LUVAS) to ascertain the relationship of personality traits with entrepreneurial intention of students. Personality measured using the big five factor personality inventory and entrepreneurial intention was ascertained with help of Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire (EIQ) already developed by Linan and Chen (2009). Response from a total number of 180 students was obtained using a questionnaire. Contrary to popular findings the personality traits were not seemingly influencing the entrepreneurial intention of respondents in the present study. Extraversion was positively and significantly associated with the entrepreneurial intention of respondents. Other traits like conscientiousness, openness, neuroticism and agreeableness were not significantly associated with the entrepreneurial intention scores of the respondents. A variety of probable reasons like varying conceptualization of entrepreneurship, perception of veterinary science as being associated with public sector and clinical practice only, were conjectured as the probable reasons. Other factors like lack of veterinary graduates have walked the path of entrepreneurship, cultural influence, family values, individual expectations, etc. were also proposed as contributing to the findings. Further studies to uncover the underlying causes are suggested.

Keywords: Entrepreneurs, Entrepreneurial intention, Extraversion, Personality, Veterinary students

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Entrepreneurship has been pointed out as a key contributor to sustained economic growth and development as it not only creates employment, but increased spending in markets, knowledge transfers, employment and innovation (Meyer and Jongh, 2018). Recently, the Government of India has launched entrepreneurship development programmes such as 'Start up and Stand up India Initiatives' with a vision that enabled the talent of India to dream of ideas, put them in action, and convert them into game changing ventures. The idea of becoming an entrepreneur is increasingly more attractive to students because it is seen as a valuable way of participating in the labor market without losing one's independence (Barros, 2015 and Teixeira and Forte, 2017). A number of students get enrolled in veterinary profession every year, but the government employment is shrinking at faster rate. Veterinary sector offers significant potential for entrepreneurship in various disciplines such as animal husbandry management and practices, livestock feed and fodder technology, livestock product technology and small animal practices and the success of such professional largely depend on the exploitation entrepreneurial opportunities.

Various psychological and sociological theories have also been proposed in the field of entrepreneurship. Theory of personality traits is the largest explanatory factor and personality traits affect entrepreneurial intention more than work values do (Olmos and Castillo, 2015). Literature is abound with many empirical studies

that have revealed the importance of personality traits in entrepreneurship (Zhao *et al.*, 2010; Saeed *et al.*, 2013, Israr and Saleem, 2018). Keeping these facts in view, a study was conducted in LUVAS to ascertain the relationship of personality traits with entrepreneurial intention of students.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The measurement of personality poses a challenge given the variety of dimensions and qualitative nature of the underlying traits. The five-factor model of personality proposed by Costa and McCrae (1992) had organized a vast variety of personality variables into a small set of personality traits for meaningful behavioral research. Many researchers (Bazkiaei *et al.*, 2020 and Laouiti *et al.*, 2022) have widely used the big five personality traits in determining the entrepreneurial intention of individual. These are extraversion, conscientiousness, openness, neuroticism and agreeableness and have been successfully measured using the big five personality inventory developed by John and Srivastava (1999) in numerous studies. The present study also relied on the same for personality assessment. Likert scale with 5 point continuum of strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree with 1 to 5 scores for positive statements and 5 to 1 score for negative statements was used for personality traits scores. For assessing entrepreneurial intentions of the students, the EIQ developed and validated by Linan and Chen (2009) was

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used. Similarly, a seven point continuum Likert scale was used for assessing entrepreneurial intention scores.

All the students at College of Veterinary Sciences, LUVAS were taken as universe for the sample. A sample of 30 students (sex disaggregated) from each class of graduation and 30 students from post-graduate programme were drawn randomly using simple lottery method. The selected respondents were explained the purpose of study and given questionnaire. The researcher herself collected all the filled questionnaire. Response from a total number of 180 students was obtained. Keeping in view the objectives of the study, the data was suitably tabulated and subjected to appropriate statistical analysis like mean, frequency, standard deviation, Z test, ANOVA and regression analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Entrepreneurial intention

The overall average score of respondents indicated modest entrepreneurial intention with mean score 24.11 with observed score range 6-42 indicating wide variability among respondents (Table 1). It can thus be concluded that there are many factors affecting the entrepreneurial intention other than common factors like professional education, university climate, etc. These factors may include psychological and personal factors as has been widely reported.

Surprisingly, the personality traits were not seemingly influencing the entrepreneurial intention of respondents in the present study as the R square value was found to be 0.079 in regression analysis. A variety of probable reasons can be suggested for the results obtained. For example, the conceptualization of entrepreneurship may have varied amongst respondents for the field of veterinary science is generally associated with public sector and clinical practice is generally conceptualized as entrepreneurial venture. Also, not many veterinary graduates have walked the path of entrepreneurship which would have set example for others to emulate. There can be cultural influence, family values, individual expectations, etc. that may have contributed to lack of association between the two. Yet, the findings of the study are discussed below:

a) Extraversion

Extraversion describes the extent to which people are assertive, dominant, energetic, active, talkative, and enthusiastic (Costa and McCrae, 1992). The minimum score obtained by the respondents was 16 while the maximum was 37. The overall average score of respondents indicated moderate extraversion with mean

Table 1. Summary of entrepreneurial intention and personality traits scores of respondents

Sr. No.	Variable	Possible range	Observed range	Mean scores	Std. dev.	Standard error
1.	Entrepreneurial intention	6-42	6-42	24.11	9.54	0.702
2.	Extraversion	8-40	16-37	26.75	4.63	0.345
3.	Conscientiousness	9-45	15-45	30.79	4.94	0.368
4.	Openness	10-50	22-45	35.27	4.19	0.312
5.	Neuroticism	8-40	12-40	22.60	5	0.377
6.	Agreeableness	9-45	17-45	32.16	4.51	0.336

Table 2. Correlation coefficient between variables scores and entrepreneurial intention score of respondents

Sr. No.	Independent Variables	Correlation coefficient
1	Extraversion	0.1702
2	Conscientiousness	0.1278
3	Neuroticism	-0.1487
4	Openness	0.1897
5	Agreeableness	0.0045

score 26.75 (Table 1). Half of the respondents (53.8%) scored moderate in extraversion scores (Table 3). Extraversion, was positively and significantly associated (p value <0.05) with the entrepreneurial intention of respondents (Table 3). Previous studies have determined that extraversion is related to entrepreneurial intention amongst university graduates (Saeed *et al.*, 2013 and Bhat, 2018). Similarly, Antoncic *et al.* (2015) suggested that people who have no intention of entrepreneurship tend to score lower in extraversion and somewhat higher in agreeableness than other people. People scoring lower on extraversion traits (i.e., talkative, bold, and energetic) may be highly unlikely to become entrepreneurs in comparison to other people who score higher on extraversion. It is known that extraverted individuals tend to be more social and can use such a personality characteristic to enhance relationships crucial for business survival and growth. As an entrepreneur, one must constantly build and maintain a network of relationships with suppliers, customers, employees and other stakeholders. It is only logical to suggest that an entrepreneur is expected to spend considerable time in direct interpersonal relationships.

b) Conscientiousness

Conscientiousness indicates an individual's degree of organization, persistence, hard work, and motivation in the pursuit of goal accomplishment which is required in entrepreneurship (Zhao and Seibert, 2006). The overall conscientiousness score of respondents was moderate with mean value 30.79 and observed range 15-45 (Table 1). A majority of respondents (73.3%) were moderate in conscientiousness in the present study. However, when the respondents were divided into three categories based on

Table 3. Mean entrepreneurial intention scores of respondents classified on the basis of personality traits scores

Sr. No.	Variable		Number of respondents (percentage)	Entrepreneurial intention scores Mean±SD	F value (Calculated/table)
1	Extraversion	Low (16-23)	45 (25)	21.22±7.31	3.44*/3.04
		Moderate (24-30)	97 (53.8)	24.72±9.46	
		High (31-37)	38 (21.11)	26.26±10.57	
2	Conscientiousness	Low (15-24)	20 (11.1)	23.15±7.98	1.19/3.04
		Moderate (25-35)	132 (73.3)	23.8±9.39	
		High (36-45)	28 (18.6)	26.64±9.96	
3	Openness	Low (22-29)	12 (6.67)	20.5±8.61	1.05/3.04
		Moderate (30-37)	109 (60.5)	24.24±10.9	
		High (38-45)	59 (32.8)	24.7±9.62	
4	Neuroticism	Low (12-22)	91 (50.5)	25.13±10.26	1.17/3.04
		Moderate (23-32)	85 (47.3)	23.32±8.28	
		High (33-43)	4 (2.2)	20.2±8.99	
5	Agreeableness	Low (17-26)	17 (9.4)	21.47±10.62	0.78/3.04
		Moderate (27-36)	134 (74.44)	24.49±9.16	
		High (37-45)	29 (16.11)	24.27±9.58	

Note: * Significance at 0.005% level.

their conscientiousness scores for further analysis, the conscientiousness scores of respondents were not significantly influencing their entrepreneurial intention scores suggesting that the two were unassociated (Table 3). Contrarily, Zhao and Seibert (2006) earlier suggested that entrepreneurs differ from those in managerial positions on four of the five fundamental dimensions of personality where conscientiousness is the potent predictor of entrepreneurship. Perhaps, the respondents were motivated towards entrepreneurship but were yet to face real detailed planning given they were still in the pursuit of education.

c) Openness

Openness is related to the extent to which individuals are open to fantasies, aesthetics, feelings, as well as novel actions, ideas and values (Costa and McCrae, 1992). The overall openness scores of respondents was moderate with mean value 35.27 and the minimum score obtained by the respondents was 22 while the maximum was 45 (Table 1). A majority of respondents (60.5%) were moderate in terms of openness (Table 3). Individuals high in openness to experience are imaginative, broad minded, creative and artistically sensitive. These characteristics are thought to be salient for starting a new venture such that entrepreneurial ideas for new products or services begin with creativity and innovative thinking. Studies on openness and entrepreneurial intention, business creation, success and entrepreneurial status have confirmed the positive effects (Zhao *et al.*, 2010). But in the present study, entrepreneurial intention scores were not significantly associated with

their openness scores as there was no significant difference between the entrepreneurial intention scores of three categories of respondents classified on the basis of openness scores (Table 3). It can be hypothesized here that the differences in terms of openness will get reflected only when the respondents walk the path of entrepreneurship.

d) Neuroticism

The overall average score of neuroticism trait was low with mean value 22.6 and observed range 12-40 (Table 1). Neuroticism refers to individual differences in negative emotional response to threat, frustration, or loss. Individuals high on neuroticism tend to experience a number of negative emotions including anxiety, hostility, depression, self-consciousness, impulsiveness, and vulnerability (Costa and McCrae, 1992). In the present study, almost a half of respondents (50.5%) scored low on neuroticism (Table 3). People who score low on neuroticism can be characterized as self-confident, calm, even tempered, and relaxed as required for venturing. The neuroticism scores of respondents were insignificantly negatively correlated with their entrepreneurial intention scores (Table 2). Also, there was no significant difference between the entrepreneurial intention scores of three categories of respondents classified on the basis of neuroticism scores (Table 3). Neuroticism represented individual differences in adjustment and emotional stability. The present findings were consistent with the earlier hypothesis that respondents are yet to walk the path of entrepreneurship and therefore the insignificant association.

e) Agreeableness

It refers to the trust in other individuals, straight forward and honest communication, altruistic and cooperative behavior, compliance rather than defiance, modesty and humility, as well as tender, sympathetic attitude (Costa and McCrae, 1992). A majority of respondents (74.44%) scored moderately in terms of agreeableness (Table 3). The agreeableness scores of respondents were not significantly correlated with their entrepreneurial intention scores (Table 2). Also, there was no significant difference between the entrepreneurial scores of three categories of respondents classified on the basis of agreeableness scores (Table 3).

CONCLUSION

Extraversion, was positively and significantly associated with the entrepreneurial intention of student. Finally, it is concluded that the personality traits do not seemingly have direct bearing on the entrepreneurial intention of veterinary science students though their relationship with successful entrepreneurship in general is well established. Further studies to uncover the underlying causes are suggested.

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