



Resilience among Civil Servants: Examining the Predictability of Personality Traits and Work-life Balance

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ABSTRACT

Civil servants are increasingly exposed to high levels of stress, bureaucratic pressure, and work-related challenges that test their capacity to adapt and thrive. Studies linking personality traits and work-life balance among civil servants are lacking. Therefore, this study examines the predictive role of personality traits and work-life balance on resilience among civic servants in Ido Local Government Area (LGA) in Oyo State, Nigeria. Cross-sectional survey design was adopted while purposive sampling technique was used to select the study population. Convenience sampling technique was used to collect data from 242 participants using validated questionnaires and analysed using multiple regression to test two hypotheses that were accepted at $p < .05$ level of significance. The results revealed that personality traits and work-life balance jointly predicted resilience among study participants $R^2 = .44$, $F(4, 239) = 24.17$, $p < .05$. This suggests that all the predictor variables accounted for 44% of variance in resilience. Further analysis shows that openness to experience ($\beta = .20$, $p < .05$), extroversion ($\beta = .25$, $p < .05$) and work-life balance ($\beta = -.83$, $p < .05$) independently predicted resilience among study participants. However, conscientiousness ($\beta = -.06$, $p > .05$), agreeableness ($\beta = -.01$, $p > .05$) and neuroticism ($\beta = .11$, $p > .05$) did not independently predict resilience among study participants. The study concludes that personality traits and work-life balance are statistically significant predictors of resilience among civil servants in Ido LGA. The study recommends that personality traits screening for new employment and flexible workforce should be implemented to enhance resilience among civil servants.

INTRODUCTION

Resilience has been defined as the process of successfully adapting faced with difficult or threatening situations (Howard & Johnson, 2000), the skill of adapting to and coping with negativity (Block & Kremen, 1996; Fakorede et al., 2024), the relatively good outcome despite experiencing situations that have been shown to carry significant risk for developing psychopathology (Luthar et al., 2000; Oyeniyi et al., 2025), and the resistance of an individual despite the negative effects of difficulties (Gilligan, 2001). According to all these definitions, resilience expresses continuing to live strongly despite the hardships encountered. In the context of this study, resilience is conceived to involve coping with difficult situations, developing psychological adjustment and having life satisfaction among civil servants in the study population.

Some factors have been considered as predictors of resilience among different populations and samples. One factor considered in this study as a predictor of resilience among civil servants is personality trait which is described as a consistent behavioural pattern of an individual over time. Personality traits determine individuals' behaviours including those in the work environment (Rauthmann & Kuper, 2025). The Big Five Personality Traits of Openness to experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism (OCEAN) have been used as a working template to explain individual behaviour (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Goldberg, 1993; McCrae & John, 1992; Sev, 2019; Soto & John, 2017). Openness to experience has to do with characteristics such as imagination and insight, and those high in this trait tend to have a broad range of interests. Conscientiousness has features that include high levels of thoughtfulness, good impulse control and goal-directed behaviours. Individuals high in conscientiousness tend to be organized and mindful of details. Extraversion is characterized with excitability, sociability, talkativeness, assertiveness and high amounts of emotional expressiveness. Agreeableness has attributes such as trust, altruism, kindness, affection, and other pro-social behaviours. Finally, neuroticism is shown in individuals who experience emotional instability, anxiety, moodiness, irritability, and sadness (Komolafe et al., 2025).

The interaction and individual operation of these traits have been reported to predict individuals' behaviour in the work environment. For example, Anglim et al. (2020) revealed that individuals who scored high in conscientiousness and low in neuroticism were more likely to demonstrate higher levels of psychological and subjective well-being, traits that are closely linked to resilience. Similarly, Campbell-Sills et al. (2020) found that traits such as extraversion and openness to experience were positively correlated with resilience, while neuroticism was negatively correlated. Moreover, Oshio et al. (2018) confirmed all the big five personality traits except neuroticism as predictors of resilience quality. This means that individuals who are high in extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness tend to possess better coping mechanisms. In addition, Ercan and Işıklar (2021) confirmed that traits such as openness to experience and agreeableness aid emotional regulation, a key component of resilience. Finally, Tomyn and Cummins (2011) identified

personality as a significant predictor of subjective well-being, which is closely related to resilience, especially in diverse cultural contexts such as Australia.

The second factor considered is work-life balance which is described as sharing workers' time between work and daily leisure activities. Ilies et al. (2017) conceptualized work-life balance as the point in which an individual is equally engaged and feels fulfilled with their participation as an employee and family member. Work life balance leads to personal satisfaction of a person and well-being at work place (Vyas, 2017). It requires prioritizing between career ambition and lifestyle which includes health, spirituality, pleasure, leisure and of course family (Heathfield, 2016; Roberts et al., 2025).

Work-life balance has been increasingly recognized as a significant predictor of employees' resilience. For instance, Rashmi and Kataria (2022) established that effective work-life balance practices led to stress reduction which in turn increased the resilience factor among their study participants. In addition, Alameddine et al. (2023) who worked in the healthcare sector found work-life balance measures to help employees maintain emotional stability and adapt to workplace challenges, especially post-COVID. Moreover, Thilagavathy and Geetha (2023) who conducted a systematic review revealed that organizational support and policy interventions play a vital role in enhancing employee resilience capacity. Furthermore, Baral and Bhargava (2021) found structured work-life balance programs such as flexible work hours and remote work options to have directly improved organizational commitment and resilience among the workers. Extant study by Cegarra-Leiva et al. (2012) found indirect benefits of work-life balance to reduce burnout and increased job satisfaction, which in turn foster a resilient workforce.

Finally, gender is considered as likely to influence resilience behaviour of civil servants. Studies on gender differences on resilience have been inconsistent. For example, Kazeem (2025) and Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2010) did not find gender differences on resilience among their study participants. However in a study by Jing Sun and Donald Stewart(2004), gender was found to influence resilience among study participants. Females were found to show higher levels of resilience compared to their male counterparts.

In today's rapidly evolving and often demanding work environments, civil servants are increasingly exposed to high levels of stress, bureaucratic pressure, and work-related challenges that test their capacity to adapt and thrive. Studies that have investigated resilience among civil servants have used different predictors with varied results. Also, studies linking personality traits and work-life balance among civil servants especially in Oyo State are lacking leaving gap in knowledge to fill. Therefore, this study examines the predictive role of personality traits and work-life balance on resilience among civic servants in Ido Local Government Area(LGA) in Oyo State, Nigeria.

The paper sought to provide an answer to the question: Would personality traits and work-life balance jointly and independently predict resilience among civic servants in Ido LGA in Oyo State? The study would provide data on the predictability of personality traits and work-life balance on resilience among study participants. In addition, recruitment and selection officers in the civil

service would be informed on how to design and implement robust work-life balance programmes that would boost resilience among civil servants in Ido LGA.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Three interwoven theories of resilience have been postulated: compensatory model, the challenge model, and the protective factor of immunity versus vulnerability model (O'Leary, 1998). The compensatory model sees resilience as a factor that neutralizes exposures to risk. Kumpfer and Hopkins's (Ungar, 2004) identified optimism, empathy, insight, intellectual competence, self-esteem, direction or mission, and determination and perseverance as components of compensatory factors.

The second is the challenge model which suggests that a risk factor, provided it is not too extreme, can actually enhance a person's adaptation. In essence, the experience prepares the individual for the next challenge (O'Leary, 1998). Finally, in the protective factor model of resilience, there is an interaction between protection and risk factors, which reduces the probability of a negative outcome and moderates the effect of exposure to risk (O'Leary, 1998). Protective factors are factors that facilitate and foster resiliency. The protective factors identified included emotional management skills, intrapersonal reflective skills, academic and job skills, ability to restore self-esteem, planning skills, life skills, and problem-solving skills (Ungar, 2004).

When applied to this study, it means that workers who possessed balanced personality traits and balanced work-life would demonstrate better resilience both in the family and work environment compared to workers with unbalanced personality traits and poor work-life balance.

Hypotheses

H1 Personality traits and work-life balance would jointly and independently predict resilience among civil servants in Ido Local Government Area (LGA) in Oyo State, Nigeria.

H2 Male civil servants would significantly score higher in resilience compared to female civil servants in Ido LGA in Oyo State, Nigeria.

METODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopted cross-sectional survey design using validated questionnaires for data collection. Personality traits and work-life balance were the independent variables while resilience was the dependent variable. The study was conducted in Ido Local Government Area (LGA) in Oyo state, Nigeria. The research population comprises civil servants selected from this LGA.

Sampling Techniques

Purposive sampling technique was used to select Ido Local Government Area (LGA) in Oyo State for the study while convenience sampling technique was used to select participants for questionnaire distribution.

Participants

Descriptive statistics revealed that 128 (53%) participants were males while 114(47%) were females. In terms of age, 98 (41%) were less than 30 years of age, 112 (46%) were between the 30 and 49 years age bracket, while 32(13%) were 50 years and above. In term of educational qualification, 41 (17%) were school certificate holders, 98 (40%) were Diploma holders while 103(43%) were Higher Diploma/Degree holders. Finally, the analysis revealed that 80(33%) of the participants were in junior cadres, 124(51%) were in middle cadres, while 38(16%) were in senior/director cadres.

Instrument

Resilience was assessed using a 10-item CD-RISC by Connor and Davidson (2003) which is rated on a 5-point Likert's response format ranges from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Sample items include: "I'm able to adapt to change" and " I can achieve goals despite obstacles". The scale has been used among different populations and samples in Nigeria Fakorde et al. (2025) obtained Cronbach's $\alpha = .87$, and in this study Cronbach's $\alpha = .87$ was obtained.

Personality traits were measured with a 10-Item Personality Inventory-(TIPI) by Gosling et al. (2003). TIPI is presented in a 7-point Likert response format of 1:'disagree strongly' up to 7:'agree strongly'. Sample items include: "I see myself as dependable , self- disciplined " and "I see myself as extraverted, enthusiastic". Authors obtained Cronbach's α for respective subscale as: Extraversion($\alpha = .77$), Agreeableness ($\alpha = .71$), Conscientiousness ($\alpha = .76$), Emotional Stability($\alpha = .70$) and Openness to experience ($\alpha = .62$), and in the present study, Cronbach' α for the respective subscales are: Extroversion ($\alpha = .67$), Neuroticism ($\alpha = .68$), Openness to experience ($\alpha = .77$), Agreeableness ($\alpha = .71$) and Conscientiousness ($\alpha = .81$).

Work-life balance was evaluated using Work-life balance Scale (Brough, O'Driscoll & Biggs, 2009). It consisted of a 4-item rated on a 5-point Likert's format scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5(strongly agree). Sample items include: " I feel that the balance between my work demands and non-work activities is currently about right" and "I currently have a good balance between the time I spend at work and the time I have available for non-work activities". Authors' Cronbach's α ranges from .84 to 0.94, and in the present study Cronbach's $\alpha = .89$.

A letter of introduction was collected from the Department of Psychology, University of Ibadan to identify the researchers. The potential participants were met one-on-one in the offices, under the trees, lounge ,etc, where they were briefed of the purpose of the study and invited to participate in the study. Only those who agreed to participate in the study were given the questionnaires to fill which took less than 23 minutes. A total of 246 were successfully given out and collected on the spot. However, during screening and coding, four questionnaires had inconsistent responses and were removed leaving 242 used for the analysis.

Due process concerning the use of human participants in research was strictly adhered to. Participants were informed of the voluntary nature of the study. They were assured of the confidentiality of their responses. No incriminating data were collected from them.

Descriptive and inferential statistics were computed using IBM^R SPSS version 26. Hypotheses 1 and 2 were tested using multiple regression analysis while hypothesis 3 was tested using independent sample t-test. All hypotheses were accepted at $p < .05$ level of significance.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table1. Zero-Order Correlation of Study Variables

Variable	Mean	S.D	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Openness	7.43	2.85	-					
2. Conscientiousness	7.23	2.67	.32*	-				
3. Extraversion	8.90	2.99	-.02	.10	-			
4. Agreeableness	6.58	2.96	.27*	.23*	.15*	-		
5. Neuroticism	8.47	3.94	.10	-.01	.17*	.12	-	
6. Work life balance	12.51	2.79	.19*	.15*	.32*	.14*	.06	-
7. Resilience	24.48	7.80	.27*	.13	.38*	.13*	.22*	.53*

Note: N=200, *Significant at $< .05$

Table1 presents zero-order correlation of study variables. As shown in Table 1, there is a positive relationship between openness to experience ($r = .27$, $p < .05$), extraversion ($r = .38$, $p < .05$), agreeableness ($r = .13$, $p < .05$); neuroticism ($r = .22$, $p < .05$), work-life balance ($r = .53$, $p < .05$) and resilience among civil servant in Ido Local Government Area (LGA), in Oyo State. This implies that as openness to experience, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism and work-life balance increases, resilience also increases among study participants. However, there is no significant relationship between conscientiousness and resilience ($r = -.25$, $p > .05$) among civil servants in Ido LGA in Oyo State.

H1 Personality traits (openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism) and work-life balance will jointly and independently predict resilience among civil servant in Ido local government Oyo state was tested using multiple regression analysis and the result is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Multiple Regression Analysis of Predictors of Resilience

Predictors	β	t	p	R	R ²	F	p
Openness to Experience	.20	3.34	$< .05$				
Conscientiousness	-.06	-1.05	$> .05$				
Extraversion	.25	4.14	$< .05$.66	.44	24.17	$< .05$
Agreeableness	-.01	-.18	$> .05$				
Neuroticism	.11	1.90	$> .05$				
Work-life balance	.46	7.67	$< .05$				
N= 200, *Significant at $< .05$							

According to Table 2, the results show that personality traits (openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism) and work-life balance jointly predicted resilience among civil servant in Ido Local

Government Area (LGA) Oyo State, $R^2 = .44$, $F(4, 239) = 24.17$, $p < .05$. This suggests that all the predictor variables accounted for 44% of variance in resilience. Further analysis shows that openness to experience ($\beta = .20$, $p < .05$), extroversion ($\beta = .25$, $p < .05$) and work-life balance ($\beta = -.83$, $p < .05$) independently predicted resilience among civil servant in Ido local government Oyo state. However, conscientiousness ($\beta = -.06$, $p > .05$), agreeableness ($\beta = -.01$, $p > .05$) and neuroticism ($\beta = .11$, $p > .05$). Therefore, the result partially supported the hypothesis.

H2 Female participants would report significantly higher in resilience than male participants. The hypothesis was tested using independent samples t-test and the results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Independent Sample T-Test of Gender on Resilience

Gender	N	M	SD	df	t	p
Male	128	25.18	7.82	240	1.37	>.05
Female	114	23.82	7.65			

Note: N=200, *Significant at .05

Table 3 shows that gender has no statistically significant difference on resilience among civil servants in Ido LGA in Oyo State ($t(200) = 1.37$, $p > .05$). This implies that there was no significant difference in resilience among study participants.

The study examines the predictive role of personality traits and work-life balance on resilience among civil servants in Ido Local Government Area (LGA) in Oyo State. Two hypotheses were tested. The result supports the hypothesis that personality traits (openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism) and work-life balance would jointly predict resilience among civil servants in Ido LGA. The interaction of personality traits and work-life balance contributed 44% of variance in resilience behaviour among study participants. Personality traits and better work-life balance lead to resilience characteristics among civil servants in the study populations. This finding aligned with results obtained by Nasrum et al.(2022) when they found personality traits to contribute to resilience among government workers in Indonesia.

Furthermore, personality traits of openness to experience, extraversion and work-life balance independently predicted resilience among study participants. This means that civil servants who are open to experience and are extraverts tend to develop better resilience characteristics coupled with their significant work-life balance experience. Moreso, this suggests that personality traits associated with adaptability and self-discipline foster stronger ability to withstand and recover from job-related challenges, which is embedded in resilience quality. This result lent credence to findings by Genuba and Dura (2024) who found personality traits including emotional competence, social support, and work-life balance as strong predictors of workplace resilience among government workers in the Philippines.

Finally, the result did not support the hypothesis that female civil servants would report higher resilience than their male counterparts. This means that whether the civil servant was a male or female did not influence their resiliency. This finding corroborated those of Kazeem (2025) and Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2010) who found no gender difference in resilience among their study participants.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The results of this study support partially the hypothesis that personality traits and work-life balance would predict resilience among civic servants in Ido LGA in Oyo State, Nigeria. In addition, gender did not influence resilience characteristics among study participants.

The study proffers the following recommendations. Since personality traits, especially openness to experience and extraversion were significant predictors of resilience, the selection and recruitment department should incorporate personality traits screening to have the best workforce for the civic service administration. Because work-life balance significantly contributed to resilience, civil service administration should implement a flexible workforce that includes wellness programs and family support initiatives. This would encourage a healthy work-life balance thus enhancing individual resilience and reducing burnout. Finally, as gender did not influence resilience among study participants, the recruitment selection department should consider gender (and marital status, and years of service) when selecting civic servants for mentorship programs to build resilience.

FURTHER STUDY

One limitation of this study was the use of self-reported questionnaires which was not free of response bias, therefore, further study should include focus group discussion and performance appraisal records to triangulate self-reported data. Furthermore, further study should use more LGAs and larger sample size to enhance generalization of the study findings beyond the present LGA. Finally, further exploring social support, learned helplessness and self-efficacy would contribute more insight into the resilience quality among the study population.

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