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# Perceived Effect of Personality Traits on Information Seeking Behaviour of Postgraduate Students in Universities in Benue State, Nigeria

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## 1.0

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the study

Information plays significant role in our various personal lives. This is due to a universal assumption that man was born innocent and should actively seek knowledge for survival (Heinstrom, 2003). Individuals need information to work properly and improve their daily performance. Information can be defined as data value in planning, decision making and evaluation of any programme. It is data that have been subjected to processing functions capable of answering user's query be it recorded, summarized or simply collected that would help in decision making (KOC University Library Glossary, 2014). Information can be found in books, journals, magazines, public and private sector documents. It could be published for mass circulation or unpublished and restricted to confidential matters. It could also be results of research that are made available to colleagues in form of reports, books articles and non-printed materials such as CD-ROM. These are expected to be used in solving peculiar needs. According to Nishat and Ahmad (2008), the awareness, possession and appropriate use of accurate information ensure students effectiveness in their academic endeavours and make them to be conscious of their learning environment. Thus, there is need for students to be conversant with growth in the concept of information and information seeking behaviour.

Information seeking behaviour is a broad term which involves a set of actions that an individual takes to express information need, seek information, evaluate and select information and finally use this information to satisfy his information needs. Information seeking behaviour can be defined as an individual's way and manner of gathering and sourcing for information for personal use, knowledge updating and development. Esew, (2015) defined information seeking

behaviour as the purposive seeking due to consequence of the need to satisfy goals. Uhegbu (2007) also described information seeking behaviour as the way in which information users conduct themselves when searching for information. Information seeking behaviour is important because it shows the attitude of students when in need of information and enable them find solutions to problems. Apata and Samuel (2010) in their own view defined information seeking behaviour as a fundamental human process closely related to learning and problem solving. While, Ekoja (2010) stated that the process of seeking information vary from one individual to another according to age, gender, level of education, occupation, location and culture. Therefore, there seems to be no common information seeking behaviour among individuals. Consequently, information seeking behaviour is the tendencies, approaches and recognition of information need which propels the use of information services and resources. Mostofa (2013) posited that information seeking behaviour is the utterance, gesture, zeal or any other attributes displayed by students in an effort to acquire knowledge. Nwobasi, Uwa and Ossai-Onah (2013) noted that information seeking behaviour could be expressed in various forms such as reading printed materials, asking friends and colleagues, communication with others through online to research and experimentation. Scholars such as Heinström, (2003); Halder, Roy & Chakraborty, (2010); and Gul, Shah, Mahajan and Tun-Nisa, (2014) identified relevance difficulties, time pressure, critical thinking, accidental information discovery, efforts used in information seeking as the different dimensions of information seeking behaviour of individuals. Information seeking has often been compared to a rational problem solving process where a gap in knowledge triggers a conscious search for information. In most cases, some students may plan and structure their searches, while others gather information in a more flexible and spontaneous fashion (Solomon,

in Ajiboye, & Tella (2007). Students differ in their personal values, retrieve and process information differently; their personality trait is different, so also their understanding.

Personality traits are abstract concept which integrates aspects of what a person is like. These aspects include emotions, motivations, thoughts, experiences, perceptions, and actions. The conceptual meaning of personality traits is multifaceted, encompassing a wide spectrum of internal, mental process that influence how a person acts across different situations. Personality traits reflect people's characteristic pattern of thoughts, feelings, and behaviours. Allport in Owuh (2011) defined personality traits as that which an individual really is, it is internal "something" that determine the nature of the person's interaction with the world. Burger, (2010) regarded personality traits as the individual unique way of making sense out of life experiences. Similarly, Bandura in Chahau (2006) view personality traits as a complex pattern in which persons, behaviour and situation continually influences each other. Personality traits represent those distinct qualities that makes an individual stand out from others. Different studies in psychology have shown that five broad dimensions could be used to describe individual differences in human behaviour. The dimensions are classified as openness to experience, agreeableness, neuroticism, conscientiousness and extroversion.

Extroversion is the personality trait of seeking fulfilment from sources outside the self or in community. Those high on extroversion tend to be very social while low extroverts will prefer keeping to themselves. Conscientiousness is the personality trait of been honest and hardworking. Those high on this trait prefer following rules and like been neat and tidy while those low may be messy and are not always straightforward.

Agreeableness is the personality trait of individuals that easily adjust their behaviour to suit others. Individuals high on agreeableness are often polite and are usually nice to others while those low on this trait are often competitive and challenging. Openness to experience is the personality trait of seeking new experience and intellectual pursuits. Open individuals can daydream a lot while those low on this trait can be very down to earth. These dimensions were further subdivided into facets, for example, a conscientious student is expected to be competent, ordered, dutiful, achievement-striving, self-disciplined and deliberate. Extroverts are expected to be warm, gregarious, assertive, active; excitement seeking and have positive emotions. Also, agreeable student is expected to have trust, straightforward, compliant, tenderminded, modest and altruist. Neuroticism is expected to be anxious, angry; hostile, depressed; self-conscious, impulsive and vulnerable. Openness to experience students are expected to fantasize, aesthetic; feel, active; have ideas and values. It is through the study of individual differences that the qualities that distinguish one person from other can be understood.

Educators, researchers and psychologists have constantly search for variables that will predict students' behaviour and their relationship with academic achievement and personality traits have been recognized as one of the determining factors on how people learn. Some students tend to prefer learning environments consistent with their own personality type preference. Besides, personality traits could have a direct impact on the brain. It could influence detection, encoding, storage, retrieval as well as integration of information according to Case in Halder, Roy, & Chakraborty, (2010). This shows that personality traits could influence attitude and behaviour in an information seeking context. Researchers have also found that students vary in their ability to find and retrieve information in structured information environments (Eweniyi & Ogunsanya, 2006). Halder, Roy and Chakraborty (2010) in their study of influence of personality

traits on the information seeking behaviour of students revealed all the five dimensions of personality traits to correlated with information seeking behaviour of students. In another study by Gul et al. (2014) on influence of personality traits on information seeking behaviour of research scholars found the big-five personality traits dimensions to influence information seeking behaviour of research scholars. Again, Heistrom (2003) study on five personality dimensions and their influence on information seeking behaviour revealed five personality dimensions to also correlate with information seeking behaviour of Master Degree students in Finland. Thus, recognition of individual differences and their effect on information seeking behaviour could assist librarians, information scientists and other stake holders in information positioning and delivery process. It can also enhance the importance of individual differences in information provision processes. In this study, the researcher intends to investigate the perceived effect of personality traits on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state with emphasis on the big-five personality dimensions (extroversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, openness to experience and neuroticism). This knowledge will assist information scientists in improving information service delivery.

Postgraduate students are students who have finished their bachelor degree or higher national diploma programme and are undergoing studies for more advanced programme. The postgraduate students include students who are running programmes in postgraduate diploma, master degree programmes, Ph.D programmes and post-doctoral degree programmes. This group of students when seeking for information are often anxious, curious, confident, and sometimes are influenced by negative emotions such as anger, depression, worries when seeking information (Al-Samarraie et al., 2016). These also affect the quality of information retrieved. Gul et al. (2014) noted that personality traits affect students' information seeking behaviour and

retrieval in academic settings. Similarly, lack of confidence in individuals' seeking skills, insecurity, anxiety, lack of access to information and trust in information sources were listed as factors that can affect students' information seeking behaviour in research activities.

Librarians and information scientists are concerned about the effect of personality traits on postgraduate student's information seeking behaviour; in terms of information retrieval ability and information use of postgraduate students. The extent to which personality traits affect their information seeking behaviour has become a subject of controversy and debate. This is because identifying the effect of personality traits on postgraduate student's information seeking behaviour will help the librarians to provide quality information service to the postgraduate students. What then is the effect of personality traits on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state? Limited research in this area revealed that the effect of personality traits on information seeking behaviour is not adequately documented especially in Universities in Benue State and this has created a gap in knowledge which prompted this study. It is against this background that this present study seek to find out the perceived effect of personality traits on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Personality traits play essential roles in student's information seeking behaviour. It helps to determine individual differences in academic settings. Hence, it contributes positively towards students' academic performance and achievement because effective personality traits help in encoding, detecting and processing of information for improved academic performance. It also helps to coordinate student's behaviour among colleagues. In spite of these, it has been observed

that personality traits could have negative consequences on student's information seeking behaviour. For example, negative emotions can make a student to avoid colleagues in academic settings. Some student's inability to socialize with others can also be due to personality traits. For instance, if a student is low on extroversion trait, he/she finds it difficult to socialize and often referred to as reserve in social situations. This implies that a student who is low on extroversion may not be able to retrieve all the needed information due to his reserve nature. It could be stated that identifying student's personality traits and how it affects information seeking behaviour will go a long way in assisting librarians in information service delivery. Consequently, the need to study different traits will be useful to postgraduate student's information seeking behaviour. It will enable librarians understand the unique pattern of feelings and thoughts of postgraduate students to enhance research activities.

The researcher observed that librarians and information providers sometimes find it difficult to carry out core duties due to lack of knowledge of individual differences and how this affect information seeking behaviour of students. Students on the other hand sometimes get discouraged in information seeking process when they find themselves among colleagues with different personality traits. If these identified challenges persist, this could lead to students ignoring the use of library. Also, Literatures relating to this study were scanty and no similar study has been carried out in Universities in Benue State, to the best of knowledge of this researcher and these create a gap that this study intend to fill. Therefore, the study intends to investigate perceived effect of personality traits on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in Universities in Benue State.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The study investigated perceived effect of personality traits on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in Universities in Benue State. Specifically the study sought to:

1. identify information seeking behaviours of postgraduate students in Universities in Benue State.
2. determine the extent to which extroversion affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in Universities in Benue State.
3. ascertain the extent to which conscientiousness affects information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in Universities in Benue State.
4. determine the extent to which agreeableness exerts influence on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in Universities in Benue State.
5. ascertain the extent to which openness to experience affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in Universities in Benue State.
6. determine the extent to which neuroticism affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in Universities in Benue State.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What are the information seeking behaviours of postgraduate students in Universities in Benue State?
2. To what extent does extroversion affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in Universities in Benue State?

3. To what extent does conscientiousness affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in Universities in Benue State?
4. To what extent does agreeableness affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in Universities in Benue State?
5. To what extent does openness experience affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in Universities in Benue State?
6. To what extent does neuroticism affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in Universities in Benue State?

### **1.5 Research Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. Extroversion does not significantly affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state.
2. Conscientiousness does not significantly affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state.
3. Agreeableness does not significantly affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state.
4. Openness to experience does not significantly affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state.
5. Neuroticism does not significantly affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The result of the study would be useful to librarians, library users, researchers, government, stakeholders, and universities.

To the librarians, personality traits of library users would be revealed. Understanding the personality traits in relationship to information seeking behaviour to the library users would position the librarians to deliver information services to users. To the library users, the finding of this study would be useful to them such that when their personality traits are revealed and information is properly delivered to them, it would enhance their research in academic activities. Again, knowledge on their individual differences would enable them to improve in their information search skills as they would learn the right sources to contact when seeking information.

To the researchers, this research study would add to their existing knowledge on effect of personality traits on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students. To the government and stakeholders, knowledge on individual differences would help them in designing and providing better information seeking resources to assist academic libraries base on individual differences. To universities, this research study would put them in the position to provide a better information seeking atmosphere and information resources to match individual differences.

More so, to the library management, identifying personality traits and its implication on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students would be beneficial to the library administration. These benefits would be inform of training the library staff in the techniques and skills of identifying personality traits of postgraduate library users and indeed all the library users. This would enhance timely and the high rate of information service delivery to library users in general and postgraduate students in particular.

## **1.7 Scope of the Study**

The study investigated the perceived effect of personality traits on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in Universities in Benue State. These universities are Federal university of Agriculture, Makurdi, Benue state university, Makurdi and university of Mkar, Gboko. The study focused on information seeking behaviour and personality traits in the areas of extroversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, openness to experience and neuroticism.

The study was limited to registered postgraduate students library users of Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi, Benue State University Makurdi, and University of Mkar Gboko.

## **1.8 Operational Definitions of Terms**

The following terms are defined operationally as used in the work.

**Personality Traits:** This refers to the characteristics of an individual that account for consistent patterns of feeling, thinking and behaviour.

**Information Seeking Behaviour:** In this study refers to the sum total of all activities undertaken by students to collect, utilize, and process any kind of information needed for their studies.

**Postgraduate Students:** In this study refers to students who have completed their university degree or higher national diploma program and are pursuing studies for a more advanced qualification.

## **2.0**

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter presents the literature review for this study under the following:

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.2 Conceptual Framework

2.3 Review of Related Empirical Studies

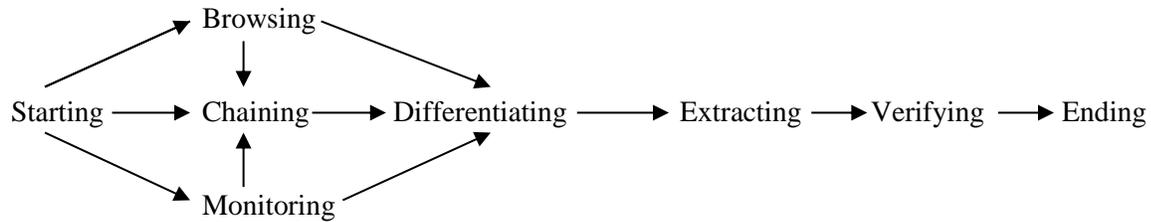
2.4 Summary of Literature Review

### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

Ellis (1989) model of information seeking behaviour forms the overall framework of this study while the theoretical basis for the study of personality traits in this study will be the big-five personality theory.

#### **Ellis Model of Information Seeking Behaviour**

Information seeking model was propounded by David Ellis in 1989. The model postulated that detailed interrelation or interaction of features in any individual's information seeking pattern will depend on the unique circumstances of information seeking activities of the person concerned at that particular point in time. Ellis information seeking model elaborated on the different behaviour involved in information seeking. Elli (1989) maintained that this different behaviour constitute a single set of stage which he called "features". He describes the features of information seeking activities as generic and then expanded on the different stages involved in information seeking.



**Fig. i: Ellis Information Seeking Behaviour Model**

- Starting: the means employed by users to begin seeking information, for example, asking knowledgeable colleagues.
- Chaining: following footnotes and citations in known material or “forward” chain from known items through citation indexes.
- Browsing: semi-directed or semi-structured searching
- Differentiating: using known differences in information sources as a way of filtering the amount of information obtained.
- Monitoring: keeping up-to-date or current awareness searching.
- Extracting: selectively identifying relevant material in an information source.
- Verifying: checking the accuracy of information.
- Ending: tying up loose ends’ through a final search.

In Ellis explanation of the model, it is clear that starting must initiate a process and that ending must end it. In relation to this study therefore, it can be said that when a postgraduate student is in need of information, the student can as well follow the same stages as demonstrated by Ellis model. That is, the student has to initiate the feature of starting the search and end with ending after information has been retrieved. The relationship between Ellis model of information seeking behaviour and this present study is that it laid emphasis on individual information seeking pattern and explained that, at every information seeking stage, there is usually an expected behaviour by the student. The behaviour could determine the quality of information that can be retrieved.

## **The Big-Five Personality Traits Theory**

The big five personality theory was propounded by Tupes and Christal in 1961. The theory postulates that human actual behaviour could be predicted and explained if grouped into five broad dimensions. These dimensions were listed as openness to experience, conscientiousness, extroversion, agreeableness and neuroticism. The big five model included also many facet scale for each of the five domain. These facets are different characteristics and could be used to measure individual behaviour under each domain. For instance, open person have general appreciation of art, emotional, adventurous, have unusual ideas, imagination and are curious. People who are high on this trait are intellectually curious, open to emotion, sensitive for beauty and willing to try new things. Conscientiousness is the tendency to display self-discipline, strive for achievement against measures or outside expectations. Highly conscientious people have preference for planned rather than spontaneous behaviour. Extroversion is the tendency to be social, active, assertive and energetic. This trait is marked by pronounced engagement with the external world. Agreeableness is the tendency to be considerate, kind, generous, trusting and trustworthy and willing to compromise interests with others. Neuroticism on the other hand is the tendency to experience negative emotions such as anger, anxiety, sadness, vulnerability and depression. Those who score high on neuroticism are often emotionally active and vulnerable to stress.

In the big five personality theory each of the big five personality traits contains two separate, but correlated aspect reflecting a level of personality bellow the broad domains but above the many facet scales that are also part of the big five. These aspects are volatility and withdrawal for neuroticism; enthusiasm and assertiveness for extroversion; intellect and openness for

openness for experience; industriousness and orderliness for conscientiousness and compassionate and politeness for agreeableness.

Relating this theory and Ellis information seeking model, it could be assumed that the big five personality traits go a long way to affect individuals' information seeking behaviour due to personality differences. In relation to this study therefore, postgraduate students in universities in Benue state can also be categorized under the big five personality dimension and this will affect their information seeking behaviour to an extent. Thus, for every stage or unique circumstances of information seeking by postgraduate students, different traits come to play.

## **2.2 Conceptual Framework**

### **2.2.1 Personality Traits**

Personality traits are differences between the behaviour, characteristics of two or more individuals. It is that pattern of characteristics, thought, feelings and behaviour that distinguishes one person from another and that persist over time and situation. According to Rychman in Hienstrom (2014), personality traits are sum total of biological based and learnt behaviour which forms the persons unique responses to environmental stimuli. Personality traits are very important mechanism that guides individual's behaviour and every individual is said to have distinctive personality trait. Personality traits can manifest in individuals attitude, emotions, perceptions, thoughts, learning styles, interaction with others and in information seeking process. In information seeking process, personality traits are likely to influence the attitude and behaviour of users (Gul et al, 2014). There exist relationships between personality traits as the motivation for information, information habit, pattern of information seeking and the nature of cognitive, affective and social utilization of information are formulated by the interaction of the

inner traits and personality dimension of the information seekers (Tidwell and Sias, 2005). Researchers in psychology have shown that there are five broad domain or dimension of personality traits often referred to “the big-five” that could be used to explain individuals’ behaviour. The big-five is often classified as extroversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, neuroticism, and openness to experience (Gul et al. 2014).

Extroversion is the dimension of personality trait that reflects the extent to which individuals are socially inhibited. People who are high on this trait are outgoing and impulsive, have many social contacts and actively take part in group activities. In contrast, people who are low on extrovert trait are quiet, retiring, introspective and prefer solitary activities. Extroverts have also been defined to be energetic, gregarious, assertive, active, excitement seeking, have positive emotions and the tendency to seek stimulation and the company of others (Ayodele, 2013).

Conscientiousness is a dimension of personality trait that is associated with the extent to which people are achievement-oriented. Conscientiousness is the tendency to show self-discipline, competence, ordered, act dutiful, and aim for achievement (Ayodele, 2013). Conscientious persons are ambitious, hardworking, efficient and competent. They tend to persevere in the face of setback or difficulties and strive for excellence on whatever goals they pursue. Individual low on this trait are often lazy, undependable and careless. They tend to quit when faced with obstacles.

Agreeableness is a dimension of trait that is concerned with individual difference among people in their tendency to be cooperative, generous and sympathetic. Agreeableness is the tendency to be compassionate, straightforward, have trust, tender minded, and cooperative rather than been suspicious and antagonistic towards others (Ayodele, 2013). Individuals high on this trait are trusting, good-natured, helpful and interpersonally supportive. On the other hand,

individual low on agreeable trait are often skeptical, mistrustful, rude, suspicious and unsympathetic in their approach to dealing with others.

Neuroticism is a dimension of personality trait that reflects individual differences among people in their perspective of negative emotions. Neuroticism is the tendency to easily experience unpleasant emotion such as anger, anxiety, fear, guilt, depression, impulsive, and vulnerable. People who are high on this trait tend to be worried, unsecured, self-conscious, and generally distressed. On the other hand, people who are low on this trait dimension tend to be relaxed, calm, self-satisfied and rather unemotional.

Openness to experience is a dimension of personality trait that reflects the extent to which people differ in their tendency to be imaginative, artistic, and creative. Openness to experience is the tendency to be emotional, appreciation for art, adventurous, imaginative, and curious (Ayodele, 2013). People high on this trait view themselves as being complex, independent, analytical, liberal, unconventional and having broad intellectual and aesthetic interests. On the other hand, people low on this trait describe themselves of being simple, conforming, non-analytical, conservative and down-to-earth.

Different researchers have shown that personality traits affect students' information seeking behaviour and the role of the big-five is noteworthy (Laidra, Pullman and Allik, 2007; O'Connor and Paunonen, 2007; Paropat, 2009). In a study by Gul et al. (2014), extroversion have been found to have effect on the information seeking behaviour of students in enthusiasm, activeness and the confidence character of extroverts trigger their efforts when seeking information. In their findings, extroverts are more diverse and wider in their information search and use more resources (formal and informal) available for seeking information. They are also more critical in selecting the relevant document from the bulk of information retrieved. Gregarious students will

go through the information to select the authentic ones before using the information. Conscientiousness has also been found to affect student's information seeking behaviour. Conscientious students could be very competent, disciplined, achievement striking and are also found to make extra effort when seeking information to get required information. This particular trait of an individual is related to general willingness to work hard in an organized and efficient way which triggers the use of effort in information seeking (Heinstrom, 2014). Openness to experience has also been found to have positive influence on student's information seeking behaviour. Students open to experience are found to be more curious, willing to learn, and experience new things in their search process. They also put in more efforts to get the required information whereas students with low openness to experience use the least possible efforts in their information seeking and prefer to retrieve only a few precise documents. Agreeable students are more critical in choosing the relevant information. They can go through the information to get the best and authentic one. Neuroticism on the other hand has been found to have negative effect on students' information seeking behaviour. Students with neuroticism have tendency of anger, anxiety, depression and are often found to have negative influence on information seeking behaviour (Halder, Roy & Chakraborty, 2010). This negative influence or neurotic tendencies of students could act as a barrier to successful information seeking and retrieval.

### **2.2.2 Information Seeking Behaviour**

Information seeking behaviour is a broad term encompassing the way individual articulate information needs, seek, evaluate, select and use information. Information seeking behaviour refers to those activities a person engage in when identifying his or her own need for information, searching for such information in any way and using or transferring of information

(Warren, 2008). It can also be referred to as the totality of human behaviour in relation to the sources and channels of information, including both active and passive information seeking and information use. International Encyclopedia of Information and Library Science (2010) defined information seeking behaviour as the complicated form of actions, which people slot in, when seeking information of whatever kind for whatever reason. Thus, In the course of seeking information, the individual may interact with manual information systems such as newspaper or a library or with computer-based systems such as the Internet-world wide web. Information seeking is a conscious effort to acquire information because of the need for individuals to fill in the gap in their state of knowledge. In relation to this study therefore, it can be deduced that information seeking behaviour is the purposive seeking for information as a consequence of a need to satisfy some goals.

According to Uloma and Adedamola (2011), information seeking involves personal reasons for seeking information, the kind of information which is been sought and the way and sources from which the needed information is been sought. Information seeking is a system that depends on activities where a seeker's action is influenced by access to information from trusted sources. The study of information seeking behaviour of university students has been a significant and eventful issue for the last few decades. This is due to explosion and continues increase in the number of available information and there sources. In the present era, information sources are diverse ranging from traditional to unprecedentedly growing web resources. There is also complexity in users' preferences and use of different kind of information resources. Therefore, one needs to know how, why, and when users uses the resources to get the required information (Gaur and Sharma, 2010).

In other to understand the information seeking behaviour of an individual, it is important to extend the focus to users' psychological process. That is, if one wants to know the variability and pattern of information seeking, one has to understand the users' psychological characteristics as search behaviour evolves from the interaction of the two (Wilson in Gul et al. 2014). There are evidences that personality traits could have positive significant influence on information seeking behaviour (Heinstrom, 2003 and 2014; Halder, Roy and Chakraborty 2010; Gul et al. 2014 and Lotfi et al. 2016). Studies by Heinstrom, (2003) and Gul et al. (2014) adopted the Information Seeking Behaviour Inventory (ISBI) to measure the effect of personality traits on individual's information seeking behaviour. The ISBI covered relevant difficulties, time pressure, critical information judgment, effort, accidental information discovery, and retrieving information from previous knowledge. These studies showed positive relationship between personality traits and information seeking behaviour. In information seeking process, personality traits is an important psychological factor that guides and affect students' behaviour even among postgraduate students in universities in Benue state. Personality traits can affect the quality of information that can be retrieved by the students. It can also determine how successful the process of information seeking could be. For example, some students may abandon their task along the line due to level of anxiety, anger, insecurity and so on. These personality characteristics can act as barrier to successful information search. On the other hand, students who are hardworking and willing to achieve success will put in more effort when seeking information.

### **2.2.3 Extent to which Extroversion Affect Information Seeking Behaviour of Students**

Extroversion is characterized by individual's tendency to be active, assertive, sociable, energetic, adventurous, and communicative. It is believed that extroverts psychic energy usually

flow outward and students who are high on extroversion would participate in information seeking process more than those with low extroversion. Again, students with high extroversion is often perceived as attention seekers and domineering while low extroversion can cause a reserved, reflective personality which can be perceived as self-absorbed. Previous studies have suggested that extroversion has significant effect on student's information seeking behaviour. De Vries, Van Den Hooff and De Ridder, (2006) found extroversion to positively influence information seeking behaviour of university students. A recent study by Wang, Noe and Wang (2014) found that extroverts would seek information even when not necessary. A logical explanation of their findings may be related to the assumption that students who are high on extroversion will gain more knowledge than those that are low on extroversion as suggested by Barrick, Parks, and Mount, (2005). According to Halder, Roy and Chakraborty (2010), extrovert students are more purposeful in their information need and their search zeal was found to be high. They are often found to be actively using, sharing and exchanging information to the maximum, a characteristic of high information seeker (Heinstrom, 2003). Extrovert students usually have an enthusiastic, active and confident character and are characterized by quick solution and use of social abilities which are reflected in their information seeking. Thus, they encounter fewer obstacles in their information seeking process. Enthusiasm, activeness and confident character of extrovert students tend to trigger their efforts in information seeking. They would also want to seek much information without being very methodical in their quest for it. Onwuegbuzie in Gul et al. (2014) revealed that extrovert students are more diverse and wider in their information search and use most of the resources available for seeking information. Students with high extroversion can be more critical in selecting the relevant documents from the bulk of information retrieved and would tend to go through it critically to select the authentic

ones before actually using it. Gul et al. (2014) noted that when an extrovert gets limited time to complete an assigned task, he/she gets affected as they are very enthusiastic towards their work. Same can be said about postgraduate students in universities in Benue state as they also vary in their characters and behaviour. The extroverted students could be enthusiastic, active, assertive, sociable, energetic and as well be affected by some factor when seeking information. Factors like relevant difficulties, time pressure, critical information judgment, effort put in to seeking information, accidental information discovery, and retrieving information from previous knowledge as noted by Heinstrom, (2003) and Gul et al. (2014) in their studies could also affect postgraduate students in Universities in Benue state. These factors could also go a long way to determine the quality and relevancy of the information retrieved.

#### **2.2.4 Extent to which Conscientiousness Affect Information Seeking Behaviour of Students**

Conscientiousness is the characteristics of the individuals who are reliable, dutiful, organized responsible, goal oriented, and hard working. Students who are high on conscientiousness are found to be strong willed, determined to achieve, have self-control, persistent and willing to work hard. Students who are high on conscientiousness are often perceived to be stubborn and obsessed while low conscientiousness is associated with flexibility and spontaneity but can also appear as sloppiness and lack of reliability. Halder, Roy and Chakraborty (2010) affirm highly conscientious students to be high information seekers and due to their submissive, methodical and disciplined nature, they come across fewer obstacles in their information seeking process. Being very organized and efficient, conscientious students feel alarm and tensed when seeking information. It is also believed that the more conscientious a student is, the more competent, dutiful, orderly and responsible he/she become. In a study by

Halder, Roy & Chakraborty (2010), conscientiousness was found to correlate with information seeking behaviour.

Conscientious students are determined scrupulous, punctual and reliable. This dimension of trait facilitates positive information seeking in a student. Conscientious students are generally achievement oriented and motivated to perform well in their information seeking process. They, moreover, have the self-discipline and dutifulness that this often requires (O'Connor & Paunonen, 2007). Conscientious students are efficient in organizing their studies and managing their time (Bidjerano & Dai, 2007). This methodical way to study also plays out in an information seeking context. A common search approach for conscientious students is structured and organized seeking with a distinct focus on high quality sources (Heinstrom, 2003). In addition, the trait triggers behaviour that support learning processes, such as persistence and high study morale. Conscientious students tend to work industriously on their tasks and be careful to fulfil task requirements (O'Connor and Paunonen, 2007). Conscientious students have similarly been found to be active information seekers who invest effort in pursuit of relevant information (Heinstrom, 2003; Halder, Roy and Chakraborty, 2010). They may even collect information, which turns out to be superfluous for their goals, such as passing a test, just to make sure they do not miss out on anything essential (Ishida, 2005). Conscientious students have also demonstrated high academic morale when it comes to ethical information use. They are unlikely to resort to e-dishonesty such as plagiarism and falsification (Kwon & Song, 2011). Thus, due to the dutifulness, orderliness and disciplined nature students who are high on conscientiousness feel fewer obstacles when seeking information.

These features can as well apply to postgraduate students in universities in Benue state as the students vary in their personality traits. In seeking information, high level conscientious

student may tend to be very competent, disciplined, achievement striving and often seeing to put more effort when seeking information. Factors like relevant difficulties, time pressure, critical information judgment, effort put in to seeking information, accidental information discovery, and retrieving information from previous knowledge as noted by Heinström, (2003) and Gul et al. (2014) in their studies could also affect the postgraduate students in their information seeking process.

### **2.2.5 Extent to which Openness to Experience Affect Information Seeking Behaviour of Students**

Openness to experience is that big-five personality trait dimension which is characterized by individual active imagination, intellectual curiosity, aesthetic sensitivity, vivid imagination and independent judgment. Cabrera, Collins and Salgado (2006) revealed that openness to experience is a dominant personality trait dimension that influence information seeking behaviour because it reflect an individual's originality and curiosity disposition which in most cases influence them to seek insight from other people. Thus, it is expected that individuals high on openness would most likely to develop ideas than others with low openness. Heinström (2003) affirm that high openness to experience lead to a broad and invitational information attitude. The more critical and open student prefer to retrieve a broad range of information rather than a few precise ones. Also, the creative and curious nature of openness to experience student makes them feel panicky and disheartened when they have limited time available to complete their task.

Opened students tend to feel excited when they seek information (Halder, Roy and Chakraborty, 2010; Urguhort, 2011 and Heinström, 2014). Openness to experience students with intellectual curiosity tend to be process oriented and enjoy exploring texts that bring them ideas

and insight. Students who are high on openness trait are also likely to evaluate retrieved information more critically before actually using it in their work. The critical and open students prefer to retrieve a broad range of information rather than a few precise ones. Openness to experience trait can as well apply to postgraduate students in universities in Benue state. The more a student is open to experience, the more he/she is affected by such factors like relevant difficulties, time pressure, critical information judgment, effort put in to seeking information, accidental information discovery, retrieving information from previous knowledge and barrier in information seeking process. Thus, the creative and curious nature of open students could make them feel panicky and disheartened when they have limited time to retrieve information.

#### **2.2.6 Extent to which Agreeableness Affect Information Seeking Behaviour of Students**

Agreeableness is a personality traits dimension that is characterized by individuals who are helpful, decent, courteous, generous, cheerful and co-operative. Halder, Roy and Chakraborty, (2010) are of the view that people who have agreeable qualities are less egoistic and are found to be high on their zeal for information seeking. Due to their motivation, they are found to be diverse in their search patterns and use maximum of their information sources. Furthermore, agreeable students are more likely to meet deadline as they are likely to get the desired work done in stipulated time. They get anxious when they are not able to retrieve information to complete their task on time. Previous studies have shown that people who are high on agreeableness never hesitate to share their information, experiences and best practices. Matzler, Renzi, Muller, Hertling and Mooradian (2008) in their study found that agreeableness has significant influence on student's information seeking behaviour.

Agreeable students are more critical when choosing relevant information. They go through the information thoroughly to get the best and authentic ones. Students who are high on

agreeableness will be more willing to engage in information seeking process. The agreeable qualities can as well apply to postgraduate students of universities in Benue state. In seeking information, the agreeable students are more likely to meet deadline. This attitude in them is reflected in their behaviour when they experience time pressure, they also get anxious when they are not able to retrieve information and try to judgment every information critically. They put as much effort as possible when seeking information and retrieving information from previous knowledge as well.

### **2.2.7 Extent to which Neuroticism Affect Information Seeking Behaviour of Students**

Neuroticism encompasses various negative dispositions namely sadness, nervousness and worriedness (Lofti, Muktar, Ologbo and Chiemeké, 2016). It also involve negative emotions like anger, anxiety, depression and they all have negative influence on information seeking behaviour. Probably students who are high on neuroticism would not achieve success when seeking information due to these negative emotions. Negative emotions act as barrier to students' successful information seeking. This is because a student who is in control of his/her emotions is usually calm, relaxed, and easy or less neurotic, can satisfy information retrieval urge and can resolve most of the obstacles coming his/her information seeking process.

According to Heinström (2003), negative emotions consume energy and distract concentration due to the fact that a high level neurotic student does not critically evaluate the information before actually using it. The characteristics of neurotic trait can also apply to postgraduate students in universities in Benue state. Students high in neuroticism trait display anxiety, depression, anger, fearfulness and insecurity mood in public. They may not have enough time to critically analyse and evaluate document before retrieving and using it due to their

neurotic tendencies or negative emotions. Students with negative emotions are also often distracted and lack concentration.

### **2.3 Related Empirical Studies**

A number of empirical studies have been carried out in the areas of relationship between personality traits and students information seeking behaviour. Among these studies is the work done by Halder, Roy and Chakraborty (2010) on the influence of personality dimension on the information seeking behaviour of students in higher educational institution in India. The study made use of personality variables such as neuroticism, extroversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness. Eight (8) hypotheses were formulated and tested. Six hundred (600) university students made up the sample size and three instruments were used for data collections which are General Information Schedule (GIS), Information Seeking Behaviour Inventory (ISBI), and NEO-Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI). Data collected was analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that all the dimensions of personality traits correlated with information seeking behaviour of students and made significant influences.

The reviewed study and present study are relevant in all dimensions but differ in the area of study. The reviewed study had no research questions but the present study has raised six (6) research questions which gave the study a direction and these research questions are to be answered with the use of mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) and standard deviation (SD). The reviewed study also raised eight hypotheses which was tested with Pearson Product Moment Correlation while the present study raised five hypotheses and tested with Chi-square at 0.05 level of significance. The reviewed study examined the influence of personality dimension on the information seeking behaviour on students in higher educational institution in India while the present study has

investigated the perceived effect of personality traits on information seeking behaviour on postgraduate students in universities in Benue state.

Gul, Mahajan, Shah and Tun-Nisa (2014) carried out a research on the influence of personality traits on information seeking behaviour of research scholars affiliated with the department of Botany, university of Kashmir, India. The study made of the big-five personality dimensions which are neuroticism, extroversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness and openness to experience to measure the information seeking behaviour of research scholars. Fifty two (52) university research scholars made up the sample size and questionnaire was used for data collection. The questionnaire included forty four (44) items to measure personality traits and sixteen (16) items to measure information seeking behaviour. Data collected was analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation at 0.05 level of significance.

The findings revealed that all the big-five personality trait dimensions correlated with information seeking behaviour. The reviewed study is relevant to this present study nearly in all dimensions except in the area of study, research questions. The reviewed study and the present study differ in the use of statistical tool. The reviewed study used Pearson Product Moment Correlation while the present study has used Chi-square to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Again, the reviewed study examined the influence of the influence of personality traits on information seeking behaviour on research scholars while the present study has investigated perceived effect of personality traits on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state. However, their findings can as well apply to university students

Lotfi, Muktar, Ologbo and Chiemeke (2016) carried out a research on the influence of the big-five personality traits dimensions on knowledge sharing among academic staff in a public university in Malaysia. The study made use of the big-five personality traits to measure knowledge sharing. One hundred and thirty three (133) academic staff made up the sample size and questionnaire was used for data collection. Data collected was analysed using multiple regression analysis through the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software version 21.

Findings revealed that personality traits dimensions correlated with knowledge sharing among individuals. Their findings can as well be applied to university students. The reviewed study is relevant to this present study in the area of personality traits variables used, used survey research design and questionnaire to collect data. Both studies are similar in the use of mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) and standard deviation (SD) to answer research questions. However, the reviewed study and present study differ in the area of study. The reviewed study measured the big-five personality trait dimensions on knowledge sharing among academic staff in a public university in Malaysia while the present study has investigated perceived effect of personality traits on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state.

In a related study carried out by Heinström (2003) on five personality dimension and their influence on information behaviour of master degree students at Abo Akedemi University, Finland. The study made use of the five personality dimensions such as neuroticism, extroversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness to measure information behaviour of students. Five (5) research questions were raised. Three hundred and five students made up the sample size and questionnaire was used to collect data. Data collected

was analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that the five personality dimension correlate with information behaviour of students.

The reviewed study is similar to the present study in nearly all dimensions but differ in the area of the study and the study also differ in statistical tool used. The reviewed study used Pearson Product Moment Correlation to test the hypotheses while the presents study has tested the hypotheses using Chi-square at 0.05 level of significance. The present study has raised six (6) research questions which gave the study a direction and these research questions were answered with the use of mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) and standard deviation (SD).

Heinstrom (2014) in another of his study on spanning information behaviour across the stage of learning task – where do personality and approach to study matter? The study was on students from three high schools in Tampere, Finland. The study made use of three personality dimensions which are conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience together with approach to study to measure information behaviour of students. Two (2) research questions were raised, two hundred and nineteen (219) students from three senior high schools made up the sample size and questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. Data collected was analysed using regression analysis. Findings revealed that personality traits and approach to learning correlated with information behaviour of students. it also revealed that students individual traits influences different aspect of their learning related information behaviour from information need to information use.

The reviewed study and this present study are relevant nearly in all dimensions except that the reviewed study measured just three of the personality dimensions on information behaviour of students in Finland but the present study has investigated perceived effect of

personality traits on information behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state. The reviewed study analysed data using Regression analysis while the present study has analysed data using Chi-square at 0.05 level of significance. The reviewed study has raised two research questions but the present study has raised six research questions and raised five hypotheses and these gave the study a direction. The research questions were answered with the use of mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) and standard deviation (SD) while the hypotheses were tested using Chi-square at 0.05 level of significance.

Hydegard (2009) carried out a research on personality traits and group-based information behaviour: an exploratory study on three (3) voluntary groups of ten (10) Royal School of Library and Information Science students in Denmark. The study made use of the big-five personality dimensions to measure how personality traits can influence information seeking behaviour in a group situation. Ten (10) Library and Information Science students made up the sample size. The study was guided by three (3) research questions. Three instruments were used for data collection which was questionnaire, diaries and interview. Data collected was analysed using t-test at 0.05 level of significance.

The findings revealed that in a group work situation, personality traits do not have much influence but tended to be more present in individual work situation or responsibility. The reviewed study is relevant to this present study because it measured the big-five personality dimensions on group-based information behaviour. The reviewed study and the present study differ in the area of study. The reviewed study has investigated three groups of Library and Information Science students in Denmark while the presents study investigated postgraduate students in universities in Benue state. The reviewed study used correlational research design while the present study used survey research design. The reviewed study has raised three

research questions while the presents study has raised six to be answered using mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) and standard deviation (SD). The reviewed study has used three instruments to collect data while the present study used one instrument which is the questionnaire to collect data from respondents. The reviewed study tested hypotheses using t-test while the present study has tested hypotheses using Chi-square at 0.05 level of significance.

Al-Samarraie, Eldenfria and Dawoud (2016) carried out a research on the impact of personality traits on users' information seeking behaviour, information processing and management of graduate students in University Sains Malaysia. The study explored the big-five personality traits on student's online information seeking behaviour. Seventy five (75) graduate students made up the sample size. The study was guided by three (3) research questions. Data was collected in a computer lab at the centre for instructional technology and multimedia with the aid of laptop, eye-tracking device and software, and internet connection. Data collected was analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

Finding revealed that personality traits correlated with online information seeking behaviour of students. The reviewed study and the present study are similar in the use of big-five personality trait dimensions to measure library user information seeking behaviour. However, the reviewed study and the present study differ in area of the study. The reviewed study raised three research questions which was answered using mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) and standard deviation (SD) while the present study has raised six research questions which guided the study and was answered using mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) and standard deviation (SD). Thus, there is similarity in the use on mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) and standard deviation (SD) to answer research questions. Again, the reviewed study and the present study differ in statistical tools. The reviewed study collected data from a computer centre with the aid of laptop, eye-tracking device and software, and internet connection while the present

study collected from postgraduate students in universities in Benue state through the use of questionnaire. The reviewed study analysed data collected using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) while the present study analysed hypotheses using Chi-square at 0.05 level of significance.

Based on the review of existing literature on the perceived effect of personality traits on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students, it has been discovered that nearly all the studies have used the big-five personality trait dimensions to examine the relationship that exist between individual's personality traits and information seeking behaviour. It has also been observed that there is no existing document or research that has been carried out on this problem in universities in Benue State. For instance, five personality dimensions and their influence on information seeking behaviour on master degree students was carried out in Abo Akedemi University, Finland by Heinstrom (2003). The influence of personality traits on the information seeking behaviour of research scholars affiliated with the department of Botany was carried out in University of Kashmir, India by Gul et al. (2014). More so, the influence of personality dimensions on the information seeking behaviour of students in higher educational institutions was carried out in India by Halder, Roy & Chakraborty (2010). For this reason, the present study has investigated the perceived effect of personality traits on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in Universities in Benue State. Thus, examining personality traits would clarify how the different dimensions of personality traits affect students' information seeking behaviour in academic settings.

## **2.4 Summary of Literature Review**

A number of literatures relating to this study were reviewed under the following subheadings: Theoretical framework considered Ellis model of information seeking behaviour and the Big-Five personality trait theory. Ellis information seeking model implied that different behaviours are involved in information seeking and features of information seeking activities are generic which expand on different stages. The big five personality traits model implied that human actual behaviour could be predicted and explained if grouped into five broad dimensions such as openness to experience, conscientiousness, extroversion, agreeableness and neuroticism. This also included many facets scale for each of the five domains which shows that information seeking and the big-five model are applicable to research because they are stages that guides a student's information seeking process and to access quality information resources, one has to go through these stages. Thus, personality traits determine the amount of information resources that can be retrieved by students when seeking information.

Concepts of variables in this study were also discussed. It revealed that distinctive personality traits are important mechanism that guides individual behaviour. This will result in positive impact on research performance of students. The review also presented the contributions of other researchers who carried out related studies on how personality traits affect students' information seeking behaviour within and outside Nigeria. The literature focused on the general overview of information seeking process and personality traits as an important psychological factor that guides and affects students' information seeking behaviour. It highlighted the types of personality traits to include: openness to experience, agreeableness, neuroticism, conscientiousness and extroversion. It also highlighted that the process of seeking information

vary from one individual to another according to age, gender; level of education, occupation; location and culture.

Empirical studies relating to this research were reviewed such as influence of personality dimension on the information seeking behaviour of students in higher educational institution in India, influence of personality traits on information seeking behaviour of research scholars affiliated with the department of Botany, university of Kashmir, India, five personality dimensions and their influence on information behaviour of master degree students at Abo Akedemi University, Finland. Though research evidence from the reviews showed that there has been previous research works carried out in the areas of effect of personality traits on information seeking behaviour of students but none of the reviewed work captured all the variables in this topic. The reviewed studies showed that personality traits affect students' information seeking behaviour in an academic setting. It is evident from the review that considerable literatures exist on effect of personality traits on information seeking behaviour of university students. However, since no research has been carried out on the perceived effect of personality traits on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state, this prompted the researcher to carry out this study in order to fill the gap that exist between personality traits and information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state.

### **3.0**

## **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter presents research method and techniques the researcher employed in this study. The method includes: research design, area of study, population of the study, sample and sampling technique, instrument for data collection, validation of the instrument, reliability of the instrument, method of data collection and data analysis technique.

### **3.1 Research Design**

This study employed survey research design. Survey research design is one that involves the collection of data from a sample of elements drawn from a well-defined population through the use of a questionnaire. This design is suitable for this study because the study will seek the opinion of a representative sample of registered postgraduate students library users on perceive effect of personality traits on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state using a structured questionnaire and generalize the findings on the entire population of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state.

### **3.2 Area of Study**

The area of study was Benue state. Benue state is one of the 36 states in Nigeria. It is located in the middle belt and share boundaries with Nasarawa in the North, Taraba in the North East, Cross-River in the South West, Ebonyi, and Enugu in the South East and Kogi in the North Central. It is populated with four universities (one federal, one state university located in the state capital, one private university located at Mkar, Gboko, and one Open University which has many branches across the state). The study chose Universities in Benue state because there is no available literature on the perceived effect of personality traits on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in university in Benue state. More so, been a staff in one of the

universities under study, one need to know students behaviour when they seek information especially in the library.

### **3.3 Population of the Study**

The population for this study was comprised of three hundred and seventy three registered postgraduate students library users (373) for 2015/2016 and 2016/2017 of the universities under study (FSI Library, BSU Library, and Chief Asom Bur Learning Resource Centre). This is categorized as follows: registered postgraduate library users, University of Agriculture, Makurdi 156 (FSI Library, FUAM), registered postgraduate library users, Benue State University 181 (BSU Library) and registered postgraduate library users, University of Mkar 36 (Chief Asom Bur Learning Resource Centre). (See appendix, C. page 86).

### **3.4 Sample and Sampling Techniques**

To select the respondents, the entire population of 373 registered postgraduate students library users from the universities under study was used. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), a researcher can choose to study the entire population because the size of the population that has the particular set of characteristics that he/she is interested in is small and may be manageable. Hence, there was no sampling for this study because the population is small and was effectively managed by the researcher. Three universities was used for this study which were purposively selected based on variable of interest to the researcher which are universities offering postgraduate program.

### **3.5 Instrument for Data Collection**

The research instrument used for data collection was John & Srivastava, (1999) “Questionnaire on The Big-Five Trait Taxonomy” (QTBFT) which was adapted by the researcher and titled “Questionnaire on the Perceived Effect of Personality Traits on Information

Seeking Behaviour of Postgraduate Students in Universities in Benue State” (QPEPTISBPSUBS). The questionnaire was divided into six sections labelled A, B, C, D, E and F. Section A contains seventeen (17) items soliciting information on the types of information seeking behaviours of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state and the response pattern was Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD). Section B contains six (6) items seeking information on the extent to which extroversion affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state, and the response pattern was Very Great Extent (VGE), Great Extent (GE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE). Section C contains six (6) items seeking information on the extent to which conscientiousness affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state, and the response pattern was Very Great Extent (VGE), Great Extent (GE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE). Section D contains six (6) items seeking information on the extent to which agreeableness affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state, and the response pattern was also Very Great Extent (VGE), Great Extent (GE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE). Section E contains six (6) items seeking information on the extent to which openness to experience affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state, and the response pattern was Very Great Extent (VGE), Great Extent (GE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE). Section F contains six (6) items too seeking information on the extent to which neuroticism affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state, and the response pattern was Very Low Extent (VLE), Low Extent (LE), Great Extent (GE), and Very Great Extent (VGE). This brought the total number of items in section A-F to forty seven (47). (Appendix A. page 79).

### **3.6 Validation of the Instrument**

Face and content validity of the instruments was carried out by four experts, comprising one (1) lecturer from Psychology Department, Benue State University, Makurdi, one (1) lecturer from Guidance and Counselling Department, University of Agriculture, Makurdi, one (1) lecturer from Test and Measurement Department, college of Agricultural Science Education, University of Agriculture, Makurdi and one (1) lecturer from Library and Information Science Department, University of Agriculture, Makurdi.. The questionnaire was given to these experts and they edited the instrument, removed irrelevant questions, reviewed and added to the number of items and made necessary suggestions. Their corrections and suggestions were: there is no need for “I” for research question one on the instrument since the study is a perception study, the scale of measuring the opinion of the students was also changed, one of the validates suggested that grammatical error be checked and the instrument needed improvement. There corrections and suggestions were effected and the total number of items was increased to 47 items from the initial 45 items.

### **3.7 Reliability of the Instrument**

To ascertain the reliability of the instrument for this study, thirty (30) postgraduate students who were not part of the main study were trial tested. The thirty postgraduate students were drawn from University of Ibadan, Oyo state which has the same characteristics of students as those under study. Cronbach Alpha method was used to determine internal consistency of the questionnaire items and a reliability coefficient of 0.82 was obtained (APPENDIX D. Page 87). Cronbach alpha is appropriate because it provides reliability estimate for instrument with items scored polytomously on a continuum base of Very Great Extent (VGE), Great Extent (GE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE) and Strongly agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D)

and Strongly Disagreed (SD). The commonly accepted rule is that an  $\alpha$  of 0.6 - 0.7 indicates acceptable reliability while 0.8 or higher indicates good reliability. Based on this result, the instrument was adjudged reliable for this study.

### **3.8 Method of Data Collection**

Data was collected by personal administration of instrument to respondents with the aid of three research assistants and collected back immediately after completion from respondents. The researcher instructed the research assistants prior to the exercise with a sample questionnaire. The use of research assistants was to aid in the administration of the instrument and to facilitate the process of retrieval of the instruments. A total of 373 copies of Questionnaire were distributed and retrieved from the respondents by the researcher and research assistants.

### **3.9 Data Analysis Technique**

The descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions while Chi-square statistics was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The choice of mean to answer research questions is because data collected was on interval scale. The use of chi-square on the other hand was because the study also sought to determine whether variables such as extroversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, openness and neuroticism have perceived effect on the information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in Universities in Benue State.

Bench mark of 2.50 was established to accept any item with a mean rating of 2.50 or above as agreed while any item with a mean rating less than 2.50 was regarded as disagreed for research question 1. In deciding on the items for answering research questions two to five, the real limits of numbers were utilized for decision making as follows. Any item with a mean value

of 3.50 to 4.00 was regarded as Very Great Extent, 2.50 to 3.49 was regarded as Great Extent, 1.50 to 2.49 was regarded as Low Extent while any item with a mean value below 1.50 was regarded as Very Low Extent.

The decision rule for rejection or otherwise of hypotheses was based on the chi-square calculated value ( $\chi^2_{cal}$ ) and the table value ( $\chi^2_t$ ). A hypothesis of no significant effect was rejected for any cluster of items whose chi-square calculated value was greater than the table value at 0.05 and with the specified degree of freedom while it was not rejected for any cluster of items whose chi-square calculated value was less than the table value at 0.05 and with the specified degree of freedom

## **4.0**

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter deals with the presentation and analysis of data obtained from the responses of postgraduate students. A total of 373 copies of questionnaire were distributed while 373 (100%) copies of questionnaire were accurately completed and returned. Therefore, the data analysis was carried out using descriptive analysis and inferential statistics based on the total number of questionnaire returned which are 373.

### **4.1 Results**

In line with the objectives, research questions and hypotheses of this study, data obtained were presented, analysed and interpreted as follows:

**4.1.1 Research Question 1:** What are the information seeking behaviours of postgraduate students in Universities in Benue State?

To answer the above question, data on information seeking behaviours of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state was collected and subjected to analysis using mean and standard deviation as presented in Table 1.

**Table1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Information Seeking Behaviours of Postgraduate Students in Universities in Benue State (N=373)**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Information Seeking Behaviours</b>	<b><math>\bar{X}</math></b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Remark</b>
1	Ask executives and other members of my association for information	2.82	.78	Agreed
2	Visits library for information	2.81	.85	Agreed
3	Visits library information centres for information	3.08	.88	Agreed
4	Visits internet centres for information	2.94	1.02	Agreed
5	Listens to radio to get information	2.95	.88	Agreed
6	Watch television to get information	2.95	.58	Agreed
7	Go to local government to get information	3.09	.96	Agreed
8	Go to palace for information	2.14	1.16	Disagreed
9	Ask NGOs for information	3.55	.83	Agreed
10	Ask my friends for information	3.01	.75	Agreed
11	Ask my relatives for information	3.31	.94	Agreed
12	Visit Churches for information	3.13	.92	Agreed
13	Visit Mosque for information	3.02	.65	Agreed
14	Go to newspaper and magazine vendors so as to get information	2.84	.62	Agreed
15	Send somebody to search and get information I need	2.28	.99	Disagreed
16	Go to conferences to get information	2.82	.65	Agreed
17	Read always to become informed	2.84	.65	Agreed
	<b>Grand Mean and Standard Deviation</b>	<b>2.92</b>	<b>.83</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

$\bar{X}$ = mean of respondents, SD = Standard deviation of respondents.

Source: Field work 2017

Data presented in Table 1 revealed that 15 out of 17 item statements had their mean values ranged from 2.81 to 3.55, indicating that their mean values were above the cut-off point of 2.50. This showed that the 15 items were agreed by respondents as the information seeking behaviours of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state. The Table also revealed that 2 items had their mean values as 2.14 and 2.28 indicating that their mean values were below the cut-off point of 2.50. This showed that the 2 items were disagreed by respondents as information seeking behaviours of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state. The Table further showed that the standard deviation of the items ranged from .58 to .116, indicating that the respondents were not too far from the mean and from the opinion of one another in their responses on information seeking behaviours of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state.

**4.1.2 Research Question 2:** To what extent does extroversion affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in Universities in Benue State?

To answer the above question, data on extent to which extroversion affects information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state was collected and subjected to analysis using mean and standard deviation as presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Extent to which Extroversion Affects Information Seeking Behaviour of Postgraduate Students in Universities in Benue State (N=373)**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Information Seeking Behaviours</b>	<b><math>\bar{X}</math></b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Remark</b>
<b>18</b>	Am outgoing in information seeking	2.84	.69	Great Extent
<b>19</b>	Am sociable in information seeking	2.84	.62	Great Extent
<b>20</b>	Am strongly confident in information seeking	2.79	.65	Great Extent
<b>21</b>	Am full of energy in information seeking	2.76	.61	Great Extent
<b>22</b>	Am talkative in information seeking	2.80	.63	Great Extent
<b>23</b>	I show a lot of enthusiasm in information seeking	2.76	.61	Great Extent
<b>Grand Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>2.80</b>	<b>.63</b>	<b>Great Extent</b>

$\bar{X}$  = mean of respondents, SD = Standard deviation of respondents.

**Source: Field work 2017**

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation of responses on extent of extroversion on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students. Results revealed that am outgoing in information seeking ( $\bar{X} = 2.84$  and  $SD=0.69$ ), am sociable in information seeking ( $\bar{X} = 2.84$ , and  $SD= 0.62$ ), am strongly confident in information seeking ( $\bar{X} = 2.79$  and  $SD=0.65$ ), am full of energy in information seeking ( $\bar{X} =2.76$  and  $SD=0.61$ ) Am talkative in information seeking ( $\bar{X} = 2.80$  and  $SD=0.63$ ) and I show a lot of enthusiasm in information seeking ( $\bar{X} =2.76$  and  $SD=0.61$ ). The grand mean and standard deviation is ( $\bar{X} = 2.80$  and  $SD= 0.63$ ) and this shows that extroversion affects information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state to a great extent.

**4.1.3 Research Question 3:** To what extent does conscientiousness affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in Universities in Benue State?

To answer the above question, data on extent to which conscientiousness affects information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state was collected and subjected to analysis using mean and standard deviation as presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Extent to which Conscientiousness Affects Information Seeking Behaviour of Postgraduate Students in Universities in Benue State (N=373)**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Information Seeking Behaviours</b>	<b><math>\bar{X}</math></b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Remark</b>
<b>24</b>	I like keeping things in order in information seeking	3.57	.67	Very Great Extent
<b>25</b>	Am neat and tidy in my doings in information seeking	3.37	.72	Great Extent
<b>26</b>	I make sure things are done in information seeking	3.19	.77	Great Extent
<b>27</b>	Am perseverance in getting things done in information seeking	3.17	.76	Great Extent
<b>28</b>	Other people count on me in information seeking	3.25	.67	Great Extent
<b>29</b>	I endure to get things done in information seeking	3.29	.73	Great Extent
<b>Grand Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>3.31</b>	<b>.72</b>	<b>Great Extent</b>

$\bar{X}$ = mean of respondents, SD = Standard deviation of respondents.

Source: Field work 2017

Table 3 shows the mean and standard deviation of responses on the extent to which conscientiousness affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students. Results revealed that I like keeping things in order in information seeking ( $\bar{X} = 3.57$  and  $SD=0.67$ ), Am neat and tidy in my doings in information seeking ( $\bar{X} = 3.37$  and  $SD=0.72$ ), I make sure things are done in information seeking ( $\bar{X} = 3.17$  and  $SD=0.76$ ), Other people count on me in information seeking ( $\bar{X} = 3.25$  and  $SD=0.67$ ); I endure to get things done in information seeking ( $\bar{X} = 3.37$  and  $SD=0.72$ ). The grand mean and standard deviation is ( $\bar{X} = 3.31$  and  $SD= 0.72$ ) and this shows that conscientiousness affects information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state to a great extent.

**4.1.4 Research Question 4:** To what extent does agreeableness affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in Universities in Benue State?

To answer the above question, data on extent to which agreeableness affects information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state was collected and subjected to analysis using mean and standard deviation as presented in Table 4.

**Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation of Extent to which Agreeableness Affects Information Seeking Behaviour of Postgraduate Students in Universities in Benue State (N=373)**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Information Seeking Behaviours</b>	<b><math>\bar{X}</math></b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Remark</b>
<b>30</b>	Am compassionate in doing things in information seeking	2.81	.75	Great Extent
<b>31</b>	I treat others with respect in information seeking	2.81	.76	Great Extent
<b>32</b>	Am focused in information seeking	2.92	.80	Great Extent
<b>33</b>	Help others in getting things done in information seeking	2.85	.86	Great Extent
<b>34</b>	I respects others in information seeking	2.87	.78	Great Extent
<b>35</b>	prefer to have others take charge in information seeking	2.84	.61	Great Extent
<b>Grand Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>2.85</b>	<b>.76</b>	<b>Great Extent</b>

$\bar{X}$ = mean of respondents, SD = Standard deviation of respondents.

Source: Field work 2017

Table 4 shows the mean and standard deviation of responses on extent to which agreeableness affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students. Results revealed that am compassionate in doing things in information seeking ( $\bar{X} = 2.81$  and  $SD=0.75$ ), I treat others with respect in information seeking ( $\bar{X} =2.81$  and  $SD=0.76$ ); am focused in information seeking ( $\bar{X} =2.92$ and  $SD=0.80$ ), Help others in getting things done in information seeking ( $\bar{X} = 2.85$  and  $SD=0.86$ ); I respects others in information seeking( $\bar{X} =2.87$  and  $SD=0.78$ ), prefer to have others take charge in information seeking ( $\bar{X} =2.84$  and  $SD=0.61$ ). The grand mean and standard deviation is ( $\bar{x} = 2.85$  and  $SD=0.76$ ) and this shows that agreeableness affects information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state to a great extent.

**4.1.5 Research Question 5:** To what extent does openness to experience affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in Universities in Benue State?

To answer the above question, data on extent to which openness to experience affects information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state was collected and subjected to analysis using mean and standard deviation as presented in Table 5 below.

**Table 5: Mean and Standard Deviation of Extent to which Openness to Experience Affects Information Seeking Behaviour of Postgraduate Students in Universities in Benue State (N=373)**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Information Seeking Behaviour</b>	<b><math>\bar{X}</math></b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Remark</b>
<b>36</b>	Am curious about different things in information seeking	3.34	.86	Great Extent
<b>37</b>	I find clever ways of doing things in information seeking	2.97	1.05	Great Extent
<b>38</b>	I am often fascinated by art, music and literature in information seeking	3.40	.84	Great Extent
<b>39</b>	Am not easily upset in information seeking	3.09	.77	Great Extent
<b>40</b>	I value art and beauty in information seeking	3.31	.80	Great Extent
<b>41</b>	I like to keep my emotion under control in information seeking	2.80	.91	Great Extent
<b>Grand Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>3.15</b>	<b>.87</b>	<b>Great Extent</b>

$\bar{X}$ = mean of respondents, SD = Standard deviation of respondents.

**Source: Field work 2017**

Table 5 shows the mean and standard deviation of responses on extent to which openness to experience affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students. Results revealed that am curious about different things in information seeking ( $\bar{x}=3.34$  and  $SD=0.86$ ), I find clever ways of doing things in information seeking ( $\bar{x}=2.97$  and  $SD=1.05$ ), I am often fascinated by art, music and literature in information seeking ( $\bar{x}=3.40$  and  $SD=0.84$ ); am not easily upset in information seeking ( $\bar{x}=3.09$  and  $SD=0.77$ ), I value art and beauty in information seeking ( $\bar{x}=3.31$  and  $SD=0.80$ ) I value art and beauty in information seeking ( $\bar{x}=2.80$  and  $SD=0.91$ ). The grand mean and standard deviation is ( $\bar{x}=3.15$  and  $SD=0.87$ ) and this indicates that openness to experience affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students to a great extent.

**4.1.6 Research Question 6:** To what extent does neuroticism affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in Universities in Benue State?

To answer the above question, data on extent to which neuroticism affects information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state was collected and subjected to analysis using mean and standard deviation as presented in Table 6.

**Table 6: Mean and Standard Deviation of Extent to which Neuroticism Affects Information Seeking Behaviour of Postgraduate Students in Universities in Benue State (N=373)**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Information Seeking Behaviours</b>	<b><math>\bar{X}</math></b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Remark</b>
42	Am sometimes moody in information seeking	3.25	.66	Great Extent
43	I can be tense in information seeking	2.81	.93	Great Extent
44	I sometimes argument in information seeking	3.66	.65	Very Great Extent
45	Am sometimes sad in information seeking	3.62	.68	Very Great Extent
46	I worries a lot in information seeking	2.75	.91	Great Extent
47	Am sometimes rude to other in information seeking	2.79	.91	Great Extent
<b>Grand Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>3.15</b>	<b>.79</b>	<b>Great Extent</b>

$\bar{X}$ = mean of respondents, SD = Standard deviation of respondents.

**Source: Field work 2017**

Table 6 shows the mean and standard deviation of responses on the extent to which neuroticism affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students. Results revealed that am sometimes moody in information seeking ( $\bar{X}=3.25$  and  $SD=0.66$ ), I can be tense in information seeking ( $\bar{X}=2.81$  and  $SD=0.93$ ); I sometimes argument in information seeking ( $\bar{X}=3.66$  and  $SD=0.65$ ), am sometimes sad in information seeking ( $\bar{X}=3.62$  and  $SD=0.68$ ); I worried a lot in information seeking ( $\bar{X}=2.75$  and  $SD=0.91$ ), am sometimes rude to other in information seeking ( $\bar{X}=2.79$  and  $SD=0.91$ ). The grand mean and standard deviation is ( $\bar{X}=3.15$  and  $SD=0.79$ ) and this indicates that neuroticism affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students to a great extent.

## **Test of Hypotheses**

**4.1.7 Hypothesis 1:** Extroversion does not significantly affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state.

To test the above hypothesis, the mean ratings of postgraduate students were analysed using chi-square statistical tool and presented in Table 7.

**Table 7: Chi-Square Test of Perceived Effect of Extroversion on Information Seeking Behaviour of Postgraduate Students in Universities in Benue State**

	<b>Df</b>	$\chi^2_t$	$\chi^2_{cal}$	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Alpha Level</b>	<b>Remark</b>
Pearson Chi-square	15	25.00	841.158			Significant
Number of Valid Cases		373		.000	.05	

**Df = degree of freedom,  $\chi^2_t$  = chi-square table value,  $\chi^2_{cal}$  = chi-square calculated, Sig. = P-value; P < .05**

Table 7 shows chi-square calculated value of 841.158 which is greater than the table value of 25.00 at .05 level of significance (i.e.  $\chi^2_{cal} = 841.158 > 25.00$ ) Therefore, extroversion significantly affects information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

**4.1.8 Hypothesis 2:** Conscientiousness does not significantly affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state.

To test the above hypothesis, the mean ratings of postgraduate students were analyzed using chi-square statistical tool and presented in Table 8.

**Table 8: Chi-Square Test of Perceived Effect of Conscientiousness on Information Seeking Behaviour of Postgraduate Students in Universities in Benue State**

	<b>Df</b>	$\chi^2_t$	$\chi^2_{cal}$	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Alpha Level</b>	<b>Remark</b>
Pearson Chi-square	15	25.00	200.493			Significant
Number of Valid Cases		373		.000	.05	

**Df = degree of freedom,  $\chi^2_t$  = chi-square table value,  $\chi^2_{cal}$  = chi-square calculated, Sig. = P-value; P < .05**

Table 8 shows chi-square calculated value of 200.493 which is greater than the table value of 25.00 at .05 level of significance (i.e.  $\chi^2_{cal} = 200.493 > 25.00$ ) Therefore, conscientiousness significantly affects information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

**4.1.9 Hypothesis 3:** Agreeableness does not significantly affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state.

To test the above hypothesis, the mean ratings of postgraduate students were analysed using chi-square statistical tool and presented in Table 9.

**Table 9: Chi-Square Test of Perceived Effect of Agreeableness on Information Seeking Behaviour of Postgraduate Students in Universities in Benue State**

	<b>Df</b>	$\chi^2_t$	$\chi^2_{cal}$	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Alpha Level</b>	<b>Remark</b>
Pearson Chi-square	15	25.00	341.920			Significant
Number of Valid Cases		373		.000	.05	

**Df = degree of freedom,  $\chi^2_t$  = chi-square table value,  $\chi^2_{cal}$  = chi-square calculated, Sig. = P-value; P < .05**

Table 9 shows chi-square calculated value of 341.920 which is greater than the table value of 25.00 at .05 level of significance (i.e.  $\chi^2_{cal} = 341.920 > 25.00$ ) Therefore, agreeableness significantly affects information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

**4.1.10 Hypothesis 4:** Openness to experience does not significantly affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state.

To test the above hypothesis, the mean ratings of postgraduate students were analysed using chi-square statistical tool and presented in Table 10.

**Table 10: Chi-Square Test of Perceived Effect of Openness to Experience on Information Seeking Behaviour of Postgraduate Students in Universities in Benue State**

	<b>Df</b>	$\chi^2_t$	$\chi^2_{cal}$	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Alpha Level</b>	<b>Remark</b>
Pearson Chi-square	15	25.00	263.212			Significant
Number of Valid Cases		373		.000	.05	

**Df = degree of freedom,  $\chi^2_t$  = chi-square table value,  $\chi^2_{cal}$  = chi-square calculated, Sig. = P-value; P < .05**

Table 10 shows a chi-square calculated value of 263.212 which is greater than the table value of 25.00 at .05 level of significance (i.e.  $\chi_{cal}^2 = 263.212 > 25.00$ ). Therefore, openness to experience significantly affects information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

**4.1.11 Hypothesis 5:** Neuroticism does not significantly affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state.

To test the above hypothesis, the mean ratings of postgraduate students were analyzed using chi-square statistical tool and presented in Table 11.

**Table 11: Chi-Square Test of Perceived Effect of Neuroticism on Information Seeking Behaviour of Postgraduate Students in Universities in Benue State**

	<b>Df</b>	$\chi^2_t$	$\chi^2_{cal}$	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Alpha Level</b>	<b>Remark</b>
Pearson Chi-square	15	25.00	415.767			Significant
Number of Valid Cases		373		.000	.05	

**Df = degree of freedom,  $\chi^2_t$  = chi-square table value,  $\chi^2_{cal}$  = chi-square calculated, Sig. = P-value; P < .05**

Table 11 shows a chi-square calculated value of 415.767 which is greater than the table value of 25.00 at .05 level of significance (i.e.  $\chi_{cal}^2 = 415.767 > 25.00$ ). Therefore, neuroticism significantly affects information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

## **4.2 Major Findings of the Study**

The following major findings emerged from the study based on the research questions answered and hypotheses tested.

1. Students agreed to fifteen (15) out of seventeen (17) information seeking behaviour and the exception ones are: they don't go to palaces for information and they don't send someone to search and get the information they need.
2. There was significant perceived effect of extroversion on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state.
3. There was significant perceived effect of conscientiousness on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state.
4. There was significant perceived effect of agreeableness on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state.
5. There was significant perceived effect of openness to experience on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state.
6. There was significant perceived effect of neuroticism on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state.

### 4.3 Discussion of Findings

Based on the findings of the study, the following were discussed.

Finding of the study on research question one table 1 revealed that students possess nearly all the information seeking behaviour except for going to palace for information and sending somebody to search and get information they need with mean response rate of =2.14, SD= 1.16 and  $\bar{X}$ =2.28, SD=.99. This implied that there are various information seeking behaviours among postgraduate students in universities in Benue state. The result of this study agrees with the findings of Eweniyi and Ogunsanya (2006) that students vary in their ability to find and retrieve information in structured information environment. The result of this study also agrees with the findings of Halder, Roy, and Chakraborty, (2010) that personality traits could influence attitude and behaviour in an information seeking context.

Similarly, the findings of this study correspond with the result of the findings of Heinstrom, (2003) and Gul et al. (2014) that there is a positive relationship between personality traits and information seeking behaviour. Information seeking and personality traits are important psychological factor that guides and affect students' behaviour even among postgraduate students in universities in Benue state. Personality traits can affect the quality of information that can be retrieved by the students. It can also determine how successful the process of information seeking could be. Again, with the desire to retrieve information, students contact different sources and exhibits different behaviour. The result of this study may be because there is complexity in user's preference and use of different kinds of information resources to acquire needed information.

Findings of the study on table 2, research question 2 revealed that the extent of extroversion on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state was high. This implies that extroversion positively influence information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students. The result of this study agrees with the findings of Wang, Noe and Wang (2014) that extroverts seek information even when not necessary. This is also supported by Barrick, Parks, and Mount, (2005) that students who are high on extroversion will gain more knowledge than those that are low on extroversion. Similarly, the findings of this study correspond with the result of the findings of Halder, Roy and Chakraborty (2010) that extrovert students are more purposeful in their information need and their search zeal are found to be high.

In the same vein the findings is also in line with Onwuegbuzie (2014) who revealed that extrovert students are more diverse and wider in their information search and use most of the resources available for seeking information. Students with high extroversion can be more critical in selecting the relevant documents from the bulk of information retrieved and would tend to go through it critically to select the authentic ones before actually using it. The result of this study may be because extrovert's psychic energy usually flows outward and they are often referred to as attention seekers and domineering.

Result on table 3, research question 3 revealed that the extent of conscientiousness on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state was high. This implies that conscientiousness positively affect information seeking behaviour of university students. The finding of the study agrees with Halder, Roy and Chakraborty (2010) who found conscientiousness to correlate with information seeking behaviour. In their findings also, conscientious students were found to be reliable, dutiful, dependable, responsible, industrious, hardworking, organised achievement striking, orderly, punctual, goal oriented and are found to

put more effort when seeking information. The result of this study agrees with the findings of O'Connor and Paunonen, (2007) that conscientious students are self-disciplined and dutiful. It also agrees with Bidjerano and Dai, (2007) who found that conscientious students are efficient in organising their studies and managing their time. The result is in line with Ishida, (2005) who found significant influence between conscientiousness and information seeking behaviour. The argument is that, conscientious students may collect information which will turn out to be superfluous for their goal, such as passing a test, and to make sure they do not miss out on anything essential. However, the finding of the study did not agree with Cabrera, Collins and Salgado (2006) and Teh, Yong, Chong, and Yew (2011) who in their study found conscientiousness not to significantly correlate with information seeking behaviour. The result of this study may be because conscientious students are often submissive when seeking information and this dimension of trait facilitate positive information seeking in a student.

Result on table 4, research question 4 revealed that the extent of agreeableness on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state was high. This implies that agreeableness positively affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state. This result agrees with Matzler et al. (2008) who found agreeableness to have significant influence on information seeking behaviour of students. They argue that agreeable students are more critical in choosing relevant information and go through the information to get the best and authentic ones. It also agrees with Halder, Roy and Chakraborty (2010) who found that people high on agreeableness have high zeal for information search. In their study, agreeable students were found to be compassionate, straightforward, modest, tender minded, selfless, helpful, and compliant. The result lends support from Ayodele (2013) who affirm that individuals high on agreeableness traits are trusting, good-natured,

helpful and interpersonally supportive. However, the findings of this study disagree with the findings of Diseth (2013) who in his study argued that agreeableness have no significance influence on information seeking behaviour of individuals. The result of this study may be because agreeable students are less egoistic and are found to be high on their zeal for information seeking and this helps them to meet up with time when seeking information.

Result on table 5, research question 5 revealed that the extent of openness to experience on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state was high. This implies that openness to experience positively affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state. This result is in line with Halder, Roy and Chakraborty (2010), Gul et al. (2014) and Lotfi et al. (2016) who found out that opened students are intellectually curious, aesthetically sensitive, emotional, pays attention to inner feelings, imaginative, have flexibility of thought and open to new ideas. This result agrees with Cabrera, Collins and Salgado (2006) who found openness to experience to influence information seeking behaviour of students because it reflects an individual originality and curiosity disposition which in most cases influence them to seek insight from other people. It also concurs with the findings of Heinström, (2003) who affirm that high openness to experience can lead to a broad and invitational information attitude. It also agrees with Urguhort, (2011) who found opened students to feel excited when seeking information. The result of this study may be because opened students are intellectually curious and this facilitates them to seek insight from other people.

Findings of the study on table 6, research question 6 revealed that the extent of neuroticism on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state was high. This implies that neuroticism negatively affect information seeking behaviour of university students. This is because neuroticism comprises of negative dispositions which could

have negative influence on student's information seeking behaviour. These negative emotions act as barrier to students successful information search as students high on neuroticism would achieve little or no success when seeking information. The result agrees with Lotfi et al. (2016) and Hienstrom (2003) who found out that neuroticism encompasses negative emotions like anger, anxiety, depression and could have negative influence on information seeking behaviour of students. They also argued that negative emotions consumes energy and distracts concentration due to the fact that high levelled neurotic students do not critically evaluate information before actually using it. Findings of the study also imply that individuals with high neuroticism would probably be less involved in information seeking. This result is in line with Gul et al. (2014) who noted neuroticism to negatively influence information seeking behaviour of students. In their findings, it was noted that neuroticism students are often influenced by negative emotions such as anger, fear, embarrassment, guilt, depression and sadness and these hinders successful information search and retrieval. Students with negative emotion are often hostile, self-conscious, anxious, insecure and moody. The findings also agree with Halder, Roy and Chakraborty (2010) who found negative correlation between neuroticism and information seeking behaviour as neurotic tendencies may act as an obstacle to successful information seeking. The result also concur with Hienstrom (2014) who found individuals high on neuroticism to be worriers and anxious in information seeking. In his studies, (Gupta, 2008) had noted that the reason why information seeking would be interfered by neuroticism is due to the negative attributes associated with it. Individuals who have high neuroticism are characterized as insecure, moody and self-conscious. They possess the common inclination to express undesirable attributes such as embarrassment, fear, sadness, anger, and guiltiness. The findings of this study disagree with Wang and Yang (2007) who in their findings showed no significant correlation

between neuroticism and information seeking behaviour. The result of this research may be because neurotic students are prone to negative emotions like anger, stress, moody, fear, depression and so on. These negative emotions often act as barrier to successful information search and retrieval.

The result of this study conforms with the result of the study by Gul et al. (2014) who noted that if one wants to know the variability and pattern of information seeking, one has to understand users' psychological characteristics as search behaviour evolves from the interaction of the two.

## **5.0**

## **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter presents summary of the study, conclusion, educational implications of the study, recommendations, limitations of the study, and suggestions for further studies.

### **5.1 Summary**

The study investigated the perceived effect of personality traits on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state. The specific objective of the study were to: identify the information seeking behaviours of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state, Determine the extent to which extroversion affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state, Determine the extent to which conscientiousness affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state, Ascertain the extent to which agreeableness affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state, Determine the extent to which openness to experience affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state, Determine the extent to which neuroticism affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state. Six research questions were raised in line with the objectives of the study and five hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance using Chi-square.

The study adopted survey research design. The study was carried out in Benue state, Nigeria. The population of this study was 373 registered postgraduate library users which was made up of 156 registered postgraduate library users in Francis Sulieman Idachaba Library, University of Agriculture Makurdi, 181 registered postgraduate library users in Benue state university Makurdi, and 36 registered postgraduate library users in Chief Ason Bur Learning

Centre, University of Mkar, all of which were drawn from 2015/2016 and 2016/2017 academic sessions of the universities under study. However, the entire population was used for the study because the researcher was able to manage the population. The instrument for data collection was John & Srivastava, (1999) "Questionnaire on The Big-Five Trait Taxonomy" (QTBFT) adapted by the researcher and titled "Questionnaire on the Perceived Effect of Personality Traits on Information Seeking Behaviour of Postgraduate Students in Universities in Benue State" (QPEPTISBPSUBS). The QPEPTISBPSUBS was subjected to face and content validity by four validates; one from Psychology department Benue state University Makurdi, one from test and measurement university of Agriculture Makurdi, one from Guidance and counselling university of Agriculture Makurdi and one from library department university of Agriculture Makurdi. The instrument was trail tested on 30 respondents of University of Ibadan, Oyo state which has the same characteristics as of the population under study. Cronbach Alpha method of reliability was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.82. The QPEPTISBPSUBS instrument was used for data collection, and data collected for the study was analysed using mean scores and standard deviations to answer research questions and Chi-square was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Findings of the study revealed that students agreed to fifteen (15) out of seventeen (17) information seeking behaviour and the exception ones are: they don't go to palaces for information and they don't send someone to search and get the information they need. The result of the study also revealed that the five dimensions of personality traits (extroversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, openness to experience and neuroticism) significantly affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

The study has successfully investigated the perceived effect of personality traits on information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state. The study revealed that there are various types of information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state, and that all the five dimensions of personality traits significantly affect information seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in universities in Benue state. It was concluded that librarians and information scientist need to know these information seeking behaviour and how they are affected by the different dimensions of personality traits as it will enable them in successful information service delivery to postgraduate students in universities in Benue state.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Academic libraries in Benue state should develop data-based information on individual differences to facilitate a favourable information seeking climate.
2. Librarians should design an information search system based on individual differences to avoid time wastage.
3. Librarians should be given effective training on identifying individual trait differences when they interact with users and how to provide needed information to library users based on user's traits.

#### **5.4 Limitations of the Study**

Some of the respondents were sceptical about giving information to the researcher and research assistants even when given assurance that information that they would give was purely for academic purpose. However, they were later convinced with the explanation and the purpose of the study. Again, the study was limited to postgraduate students in Benue state and as a result, could not generalise the findings to all postgraduate students in Nigeria. Despite these limitations, the researcher was able to manage the situation.

#### **5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies**

This study has created a gap that future researchers may wish to fill. This gap is as follows:

1. Further study can be carried out on the same topic to cover undergraduate students and more states other than Benue state.

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