

Relationship Between Triarchic Psychopathy Personality Traits and Academic Motivation: A Study of Accounting Students in China

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ABSTRACT

With the growth of China's economy, the accountancy profession in China played a vital role in serving the industry and in regulating the capital market. To be successful in becoming a professional accountant, accounting majors must have both the required skills and professional knowledge and the appropriate personality for that profession. Therefore, it is crucial to find out whether the personality of students studying accounting degrees in China will affect their academic motivations in studying accounting. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the relationship between triarchic psychopathy personality traits and the academic motivation of students studying accounting in China. A self-administered questionnaire survey was conducted to collect data from students who were studying accounting in universities across China. A total of 125 responses were collected for descriptive statistics, and correlation and regression analysis using SPSS 25. The findings of the study suggested that undergraduate students studying accounting degrees were mainly motivated by their concerns about their future career prospects, contribution to the community, and self-exploration. Concerning their personality trait, the highest mean value among the three traits was boldness, which means, to a certain extent, they could remain emotionally stable even if they are working under pressure. Nevertheless, the results of the correlation and regression analysis suggest the relationship between triarchic psychopathy personality traits and academic motivation of students studying accounting in China is not significant. The results, however, could not be generalized to all accounting students in China since the valid samples collected were only 125 and non-probability sampling technique was adopted in this study. The accounting professional bodies may benefit from the findings of this study in their member recruitment strategies, as well as the accounting education providers in assessing the candidates who are suitable for study accounting and in curriculum development of accounting courses.

Keywords: triarchic psychopathy personality, big-five personality, academic motivation, intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, accounting students

INTRODUCTION

With the open-up and growth of China's economy, the accountancy profession in China played a vital role in serving the industry and in regulating the capital market by promoting transparency, accountability, and investor confidence; as well as contributing to the overall stability of the financial system. To enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the

accountancy profession, professional integrity and ethical are the core values of this profession (Chinese Institute of Certified Public Accountants [CICPA], 2018). Many professional accountants possess the personality of extrovert, sensing, thinking, and judging (Newman, 2011). It is because they need to communicate with others, to have critical thinking and judgements on the fair presentation of the financial statements. To be trustworthy to the users of financial statements, besides integrity and ethical, the required competence and professional knowledge in response to the ever-changing economic and business environment are also particularly important in the accounting profession. Carnegie and Napier (2010)'s research findings align with this idea and, suggested that, on top of integrity, traditional accountant should have characteristics of honesty, trustworthy and meticulousness while modern stereotype accountant concerns more on competence and opportunism. To ensure its members possess and maintain the required standard of competences and ethical conduct, CICPA set up the system of supervision and monitoring qualification and continuous development of members, practicing quality of audit firms and audit report of listed companies, together with disciplinary and appeal mechanisms. (CICPA, 2018).

Students who want to pursue an accounting career tend to be sensing, thinking, and judging individual who prefers to be efficient in making decisions based on logical reasoning and information collected (Briggs et al., 2007; Andon et al., 2010). The personality type of STJ is essential to the professional accountant since individuals who work in the accounting field must be accountable, dependable, and diligent in their work and the competencies of professional skepticism and professional judgement are based on logic, data, and facts.

In choosing accounting as their major, students might consider the career prospects and status of the accounting profession (Byrne et al., 2012; Teixeira et al., 2015). To facilitate future success in the career in accounting profession, students of accounting major must have the capacity, passion, and motivation to study accounting and other knowledge that is relevant to their future career development in the accounting field. Moreover, they need to consider whether they possess the personality characteristics such as integrity, conscientiousness, honesty, and trustworthy that are appropriate for taking up the position as a professional accountant. To be successful in becoming a professional accountant, accounting majors must have both the required skills and professional knowledge and the personality that is appropriate for that profession. Therefore, it is crucial to find out whether the personality of students studying accounting degrees in China will affect their academic motivations in studying accounting.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Personality

Personality is the continuing pattern of built-in tendencies and behaviour of an individual's adjustment to life experiences, comprising major traits, interests, drives, values, identification, self-concept, abilities, and emotional patterns (American Psychological Association, n.d.). Personality, which involves how an individual reacts to and interacts with the environment and others, comprises moods, attitudes, and opinions and is a characteristic way of thinking, feeling, and behaving (Holzman, 2023). Thus, personality refers to the individual differences of thoughts, feelings, and behaviour, both inherent and acquired from the relation to the environment and others.

There are various personality theories pursued to explain how an individual behaves under different circumstances. Jung's Theory suggests individual differences in behaviour comes from the differences in their preferences to use their perception for gathering information from the world (comprises Sensing and Intuition) and Judgment for making decisions (comprising Thinking and Feeling) to deal with the outside world (Daniels, 2014). Each of these four functions of consciousness exists in two forms; that is, extraverted and introverted. Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), which is developed from Jung's theory, is used to measure an individual's preference on each of the four aspects of personality: Extraversion (E) versus Introversion (I), Sensing (S) versus Intuition (N), Thinking (T) versus Feeling (F), and Judging (J) versus Perceiving (P). These four aspects of personality are combined to make up sixteen distinct personality types (McCrae & Costa, 1989).

Five-Factor Model (FFM) of personality Traits (also known as Big Five Personality traits) is a testing framework that measures personality differences through five traits of Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness. (Chmielewski & Morgan, 2013; McCrae & John, 1992; Digman, 1990) and the NEO Personality Inventory-Revised (NEO PI-R) was developed to measure each of the Big Five personality traits. Prior research results found there are correlations between the MBTI and four of the Big Five personality traits. The Extraversion-Introversion dimension (E-I) was correlated with Extraversion, the Sensing-Intuition dimension (S-N) with Openness, the Thinking-Feeling dimension (T-F) with Agreeableness, and the Judging-Perceiving dimension (J-P) with Conscientiousness (Furnham, 1996; McCrae & Costa, 1989). Furnham (2022) examined the relationship between two personality tests of MBTI and NEO-PI-R at the domain level, results suggested there were correlation for Extraversion with E-I, and for Agreeableness with T-F were the same as prior research done by Furnham (1996) and McCrae and Costa (1989). Nevertheless, results of the research suggested there were differences with prior research done including the correlation for Openness was J-P and for Conscientiousness was T-F.

Triarchic Psychopathy Model (TriP Model) of three interrelated personality traits of disinhibition, boldness, and meanness, developed by Patrick and Drislane (2015) based on the triarchic conceptualization of psychopathy domains (Patrick et al., 2009). Boldness denotes fearlessness, venturesomeness, emotional resiliency, social dominance, and the ability to remain calm under pressure. Meanness involves a lack of empathy and affiliation, excitement seeking, and aggressive exploitation. Disinhibition signifies a propensity toward impulse control problems such as irresponsibility, impulsiveness, hostility and mistrust, and emotion regulation (Patrick et al., 2009; Sellbom & Phillips, 2013). The Triarchic Psychopathy Measure (TriPM), which is a 58-item self-report scale designed to index the three psychopathy traits, was developed from the triarchic conceptualization of psychopathy domains (Patrick, 2018a; Patrick, 2018b).

Miller et al. (2016) found the five-factor model (FFM) can account for the TriP Model's psychopathy domains. Poy et al. (2014) considered TriP Model is largely consistent with the conceptualization of psychopathy in terms of FFM constructs and found that Meanness linked to personalities of low Agreeableness and low Conscientiousness; while Disinhibition possessed the personalities of low Conscientiousness and low Agreeableness, together with high Neuroticism and Extraversion. In addition, Boldness represented some features of psychological adjustment and interpersonal psychopathy, and therefore, connected to low

Neuroticism, high Extraversion, and high Openness, together with low Agreeableness. Hyatt et al. (2018) considered that the TriP Model can be viewed as being nested within the FFM and found that the TriP Model and FFM personality traits are closely related; in particular, there are correlation between Boldness and Extraversion, Meanness and Agreeableness, and Disinhibition and Conscientiousness. Hyatt et al. (2020) suggested that the three personality traits of the TriP Model overlapped substantially with the FFM of personality. Particularly, Boldness relates to low Neuroticism and high Extraversion; Meanness is perceptible by low Agreeableness; and Disinhibition is characterized by low Conscientiousness. From this, one can see that the psychopathy domain of Boldness is connected to FFM personality traits of Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness and Agreeableness; Meanness is related to Agreeableness and Conscientiousness; while Disinhibition is related to Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Extraversion.

Academic Motivation

Motivation is the process accountable for the initiation, intensity, and persistence of behavior (Usher & Morris, 2012) and academic motivation is related to academic performance and achievement. The sources of academic motivation of accounting major students cover both intrinsic motivations derived from internal processes, and extrinsic motivations resulting from external forces. The findings from various authors suggest the motivation of students who had chosen to study accounting involved both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. The intrinsic motivations of students who choose accounting as their major involve seeking personal development through broadening knowledge, skills, and horizons (Byrne et al., 2012), self-determined personal interests and pleasure in studying accounting and intellectual growth (Hartutik et al., 2016; Samsuddin et al., 2015; Teixeira et al., 2015). As for extrinsic motivations, students are mainly motivated by career-oriented reasons such as professional status and contribution, professional aspirations, financial rewards and other achievements, and career prospects (Arquero et al., 2009; Byrne et al., 2012; Hartutik et al., 2016; Samsuddin et al., 2015; Teixeira et al., 2015). Law & Yuen (2012) suggested that the extrinsic motivation of parental influence, which is the cultural norms rooted in Chinese societies, will influence students' choice of studying accounting degree.

The theories of academic motivation relating to both the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations of accounting students include expectancy-value theory, self-determination theory, and achievement goal theory. The perspective of self-determination theory, which focuses on motivation as predictors of performance, relational, and well-being outcomes (Deci & Ryan, 2008), indicates that accounting students are intrinsically motivated by personal interest and growth, and extrinsically motivated by professional aspirations, social and rewards. Based on achievement goal theory, comprising learning goals to increase competence and performance goals to gain favorable judgement (Elliott & Dweck, 1988); the accounting students' academic motivation should be derived from the intrinsic motivation of developing competences and mastery of the subject matter; and the extrinsic motivation of outperform in the accounting profession and acquiring role identity. According to the expectancy-value theory, which concerns the expectancies for success and subjective task values (Ball et al., 2016), for accounting majors, their intrinsic motivation could be the value of acquiring professional accounting knowledge; and the extrinsic motivation could be their expectancy of future career success and performance.

Referring to the above discussion regarding academic motivation accounting major students, intrinsic motivation relates to personal interest and development, and value of exploring competences in accounting profession; while extrinsic motivation relates to achieving professional aspirations and contributions, personal goals, social identity and others' expectations, self-efficacy, and rewards.

Personality and Academic Motivation

Personality influences attitude and attitudes affect motivation, which then leads to behavioral outcomes. Results of the prior research suggest the Big Five Personality Traits associated with academic motivation in the education context and found that conscientiousness positively affected academic performance indirectly through academic motivation (Feyter et al., 2012; Komarraju et al., 2009). In addition, conscientiousness and extraversion could predict extrinsic motivation (Clark & Schroth, 2010; Hazrati-Viari et al., 2012; Komarraju et al., 2009); and agreeableness is positively related to extrinsic motivation (Clark & Schroth, 2010). Furthermore, openness to experience and conscientiousness could predict or be positively related to intrinsic motivation (Hazrati-Viari et al., 2012; Komarraju et al., 2009). In a logical sense, amotivation could be negatively associated with conscientiousness and agreeableness, and positively associated with neuroticism (Clark & Schroth, 2010; Komarraju et al., 2009).

Komarraju & Karau (2005) found that personality was significantly related to a wide variety of academic motivations, including engagement motivation about the desire for self-improvement, achievement motivation concerning the mastery and completion of task, and avoidance motivation involves moving away from negative experiences. Specifically, engagement motivation was best explained by openness to experience and extraversion; and achievement motivation was best explained by conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience. While avoidance motivation was best explained by neuroticism, extraversion, and inversely related to conscientiousness and openness to experience.

Referring to the discussion above, it is suggested that personality will have impact on the motivation to learn or to achieve goals. Those who have conscientiousness and openness personality are intrinsically motivated. Those extrinsically motivated students have personality of extroversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. Komarraju et al. (2009) suggested that extravert individuals should have strong social needs and tend to be sociable, and agreeable individuals are trusting and cooperative; therefore, they would be more extrinsically motivated. Conscientious individuals tend to be more disciplined and achievement-oriented, and those with high openness should have a strong intellectual curiosity and enjoy learning; therefore, they would be positively related to intrinsic motivation. Given that individuals high in neuroticism and low in conscientiousness and agreeableness display emotional instability and poor impulse control and cooperation with others, these individuals are expected to be high on amotivation.

Hypotheses Development

To be successful in the accounting profession today, an individual should be excellent in time management, good communication with clients and others, adaptability in response to the changing professional requirements, and capable of properly organizing detailed information. Conscientiousness was usually higher for accountants since they were required to comply with professional standards and to have trustworthiness and consistency in carrying out their work.

Based on the big five personality traits, the most distinguishing personality dimension of accountants is conscientiousness (Burton et al., 2016; Leão & Gomes, 2022; Levy et al., 2011; O'Shea, 2018). People who own the personality trait of conscientiousness are emotionally stable, methodical, detail focused, comply with rules, well planned and organized, and dependable in conducting their jobs. Briggs et al. (2007) proposed the current and future accountants need to be more extroverted and possess effective communication and leadership skills. Wetmiller and Barkhi (2021) found the personality traits of those who enter the accounting profession are becoming more balanced within the extraversion and introversion, and the thinking and feeling characteristics. Since accountant's work is concerned about the presentation of true financial picture of an entity, they need not have high openness (Levy et al., 2011), and they prefer predictability rather than creativity and intuitive thinking (Briggs et al., 2007). From the above research findings, the personality required to be a professional accountant could be Conscientiousness, Extraversion, assertiveness, emotional stability, sensing, independence, and critical judgement.

Referring to the discussions above, it is suggested that personal development and aspiration, intellectual growth and personal interest in accounting are intrinsic motivations for studying accounting. On the other hand, career orientation and rewards, academic performance, social norms, and parental influence are extrinsic motivations for students studying accounting. Both the accounting profession and the students studying accounting are concerned about those accounting graduates are becoming successful professional accountant in future. It will be beneficial to find out how different personalities predict the motivation of students who are studying accounting in China.

The findings of various authors indicated that there was relationship between different personality traits and academic motivation (Clark & Schroth, 2010; Hazrati-Viaria, et.al., 2012; Komarraju, et.al., 2009). Poy, et.al. (2014) considered that the psychopathy domains of meanness and disinhibition linked to personalities of agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and extraversion. In addition, boldness is connected to neuroticism, extraversion, assertiveness, openness, emotional stability, and agreeableness. In this connection, different TriP personality traits are expected to be able to predict academic motivations of university students.

Putting together the discussions above gives rise to the research question of whether the components of TriPM of Personality are associated with the academic motivation of students studying accounting in China?

It is against this background that the purpose of the current study is to find out the relationship between the triarchic psychopathy personality traits and academic motivation of students entering higher education for studying accounting in China. From this research, it is expected to find out how different TriP personality traits predict various aspects of academic motivation of students studying accounting in China.

Considering the literature and discussion above, it is possible that TriP personality traits could affect academic motivation. Therefore, the following hypothesis is developed:

- H1: There is significant relationship between triarchic psychopathy personality traits and academic motivation of students studying accounting in China.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

An online survey, using questionnaire on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”), was conducted to collect data on the personality and academic motivation of students studying accounting at universities across China.

Data on the personality of the participants were collected using the 58-items Triarchic Psychopathy Measure (TriPM), which includes the items on TriP personality traits of boldness (19 items), meanness (19 items), and disinhibition (20 items) for measuring the fearlessness, deficient empathy, and impulse control behavior, respectively. Prior research demonstrates TriPM is valid, consistent, and reliable (Poy, et.al., 2014; Sica, et al., 2015) and the triarchic model relates to normal-range personality traits and FFM-based conceptions of psychopathy Drislane et al. (2018); therefore, TriPM offers an efficient self-report instrument for measuring the three TriP personality traits. A 30-item University Student Motivation and Satisfaction Questionnaire Version 2 (TUSMSQ2) was developed for measuring intrinsic motivations of self-exploration and altruism, and extrinsic motivations of rejection of alternative options, career and qualifications, social enjoyment, and social pressure (Neill, 2004). TUSMSQ2 was used for collecting data of university students’ academic motivations in studying accounting.

Data collected was screened for any missing data and data from the valid samples were summarized using descriptive statistics (including Cronbach’s Alpha to assess scale reliability) for the variables related to personality and academic motivation of studying accounting. Regression and correlation analyses were conducted to identify the relationship between the TriP personality traits and the academic motivation of students studying accounting. The independent variables were TriP personality traits and the dependent variables for testing were academic motivation.

EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

Data collected was screened for any missing data and finally data from 125 valid samples were for data analysis. The age composition of the 125 samples was divided into the following age groups: aged 18 (5.6%), aged 19 (32.0%), aged 20 (25.6%), aged 21 (8.0%), and aged 22 years old (28.8%). Most of the participants (74.4%) indicated that the accounting programme was their first choice.

This section describes first the descriptive statistics for the variables of TriP personality traits and motivation to study accounting were used to summarize the results of data collected, then data screening procedures, and finally correlation and regression analysis were conducted to identify the relationship between the TriP Personality Traits and the academic motivation of students studying accounting in China.

Table 1 indicates the academic motivation of career and qualification has the highest mean (4.482). This suggests that the majority of the respondents consider that acquiring better job opportunities and professional qualifications is important to them. The second highest mean value is the academic motivation of altruism (3.805) and then self-exploration (3.469). Boldness has the highest mean value of 3.112 among the TriP personality and this indicates most accounting students possess boldness personality. Having boldness personality trait is important for becoming a professional accountant since it is necessary to work under

significant pressure; however, they must remain calm and maintain emotional stable to complete their jobs appropriately.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

	Triarchic Psychopathy Personality			Academic motivations					
	Boldness	Meanness	Disinhibition	Altruism	Career & Qualifications	Rejection of Alternative Options	Self-Exploration	Social Enjoyment	Social Pressure
Mean	3.112	2.668	2.353	3.805	4.482	2.921	3.469	3.456	3.054
Standard Deviation	0.268	0.326	0.428	0.490	0.580	0.801	0.555	0.485	0.656
Variance	0.072	0.106	0.183	0.240	0.336	0.641	0.307	0.236	0.431
Kurtosis	1.431	1.931	0.998	5.195	4.252	-0.559	0.803	-0.190	-0.576
Skewness	0.684	0.642	0.051	-1.212	-1.623	0.250	-0.469	-0.435	-0.291
Cronbach's Alpha	0.512	0.696	0.784	0.890	0.827	0.876	0.799	0.804	0.858

Joshi (1997) suggested that data is normally distributed if the value of skewness is between -2 to +2 and kurtosis is between -7 to +7. Table 1 indicates skewness values are ranging from -1.623 and 0.684 and kurtosis values are ranging from -0.576 and 5.195, therefore, constructs and data are normally distributed. Cronbach's alpha values that reach a coefficient alpha value of 0.70 show good internal consistency. Cronbach's Alpha for the three personality subscales of Boldness, Disinhibition and Meanness, and in the current sample were 0.512, 0.696, and 0.784, respectively. As for the six motivation subscales, their Cronbach's Alpha are above 0.7, ranging from 0.799 to 0.890. The result demonstrates that the internal consistencies are adequate for both the personality and motivation variables except for the Boldness variable.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Analysis Results on TriP Personality and Academic Motivation

	Boldness	Meanness	Disinhibition	Altruism	Career and Qualifications	Rejection of Alternative Options	Self-Exploration	Social Enjoyment	Social Pressure
Boldness	1								
Meanness	0.224*	1							
Disinhibition	0.062	0.464*	1						
Altruism	0.065	0.172	-0.058	1					
Career and Qualifications	-0.095	0.153	-0.083	0.365*	1				
Rejection of Alternative Options	-0.030	0.233*	-0.034	0.178	-0.083	1			
Self-Exploration	-0.121	-0.059	0.063	0.257*	0.125	0.060	1		

Social Enjoyment	-0.223*	-0.064	-0.166	0.086	0.130	0.060	0.158	1	
Social Pressure	-0.155	0.119	-0.109	0.143	-0.128	0.492**	0.029	0.247*	1
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).									
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).									

Table 2 presents the Pearson correlation between independent variables of TriP personality traits and dependent variables of academic motivations. It was found that certain variables have significantly correlated with each other; including Meanness was positively correlated with Boldness ($r = 0.224$) and Disinhibition ($r = 0.464$), Altruism was positively correlated with Career and Qualification ($r = 0.365$) and Self-Exploration ($r = 0.257$), and Social Pressure was positively correlated with Rejection of Alternative Options ($r = 0.492$) and Social Enjoyment ($r = 0.247$). Overall, it appears that there was a low correlation between TriP personality and academic motivation of accounting students studying in China, except that there was significant positive relationship between Meanness and Rejection of Alternative Options ($r = 0.233$). Since the value of correlation between each variable is below 0.9, there is no multicollinearity problem in the regression model.

Table 3: Regression Analysis Results on TriP Personality and Academic Motivation

Dependent Variable: Altruism							
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval	
	β	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	3.253	0.572		5.683	0.000	2.120	4.386
Boldness	0.037	0.166	0.025	0.226	0.822	-0.292	0.366
Meanness	0.374	0.154	0.233	2.427	0.017	0.069	0.678
Disinhibition	-0.200	0.114	-0.179	-1.750	0.083	-0.426	0.026
R Square	0.054						
Adjusted R Square	0.031						
Standard Error	0.482						
Dependent Variable: Career and Qualifications							
(Constant)	4.781	0.671		7.126	0.000	3.453	6.109
Boldness	-0.315	0.195	-0.170	-1.618	0.108	-0.701	0.070
Meanness	0.499	0.180	0.253	2.765	0.007	0.142	0.856
Disinhibition	-0.276	0.134	-0.204	-2.058	0.042	-0.541	-0.011
R Square	0.073						
Adjusted R Square	0.051						
Standard Error	0.565						
Dependent Variable: Rejection of Alternative Options							
(Constant)	2.386	0.919		2.597	0.011	0.567	4.206
Boldness	-0.284	0.267	-0.114	-1.065	0.289	-0.812	0.244
Meanness	0.839	0.247	0.309	3.395	0.001	0.350	1.329
Disinhibition	-0.348	0.183	-0.185	-1.899	0.060	-0.712	0.015
R Square	0.089						
Adjusted R Square	0.066						
Standard Error	0.774						
Dependent Variable: Self-Exploration							
(Constant)	4.215	0.658		6.405	0.000	2.912	5.518

Boldness	-0.226	0.191	-0.140	-1.182	0.240	-0.604	0.152
Meanness	-0.146	0.177	-0.081	-0.826	0.410	-0.497	0.204
Disinhibition	0.142	0.131	0.116	1.081	0.282	-0.118	0.402
R Square	0.025						
Adjusted R Square	0.001						
Standard Error	0.554						
Dependent Variable: Social Enjoyment							
(Constant)	4.961	0.560		8.853	0.000	3.852	6.071
Boldness	-0.414	0.163	-0.264	-2.546	0.012	-0.736	-0.092
Meanness	0.109	0.151	0.066	0.725	0.470	-0.189	0.408
Disinhibition	-0.210	0.112	-0.183	-1.880	0.062	-0.432	0.011
R Square	0.077						
Adjusted R Square	0.054						
Standard Error	0.472						
Dependent Variable: Social Pressure							
(Constant)	3.954	0.754		5.247	0.000	2.462	5.446
Boldness	-0.494	0.219	-0.227	-2.260	0.026	-0.927	-0.061
Meanness	0.538	0.203	0.241	2.654	0.009	0.137	0.939
Disinhibition	-0.338	0.150	-0.219	-2.248	0.026	-0.636	-0.040
R Square	0.087						
Adjusted R Square	0.065						
Standard Error	0.635						

Regression analyses were conducted, with each of the six academic motivation variables separately, to examine whether the Trip Personality traits will have impact on the academic motivations of those accounting students studying in China. The results of the regression analysis from Table 3 indicated all three independent variables had p -values of more than 0.05 and t -values of less than +2. Therefore, the null hypothesis should not be rejected.

As shown in Table 3, the regression equation did not produce a good fit with the data, indicating that TriP personality was not a good predictor of the academic motivation factors of: altruism ($R^2 = .054$, adjusted $R^2 = .031$, $F = .482$), career and qualification ($R^2 = .073$, adjusted $R^2 = .051$, $F = .565$), rejection of alternative options ($R^2 = .089$, adjusted $R^2 = .066$, $F = .774$), self-exploration ($R^2 = .025$, adjusted $R^2 = .001$, $F = .554$), social enjoyment ($R^2 = .077$, adjusted $R^2 = .054$, $F = .472$), and social pressure ($R^2 = .087$, adjusted $R^2 = .065$, $F = .635$).

There was a negative relationship between disinhibition personality trait and altruism motivation ($\beta = -.02$, $t = -1.75$, $p = .083$) with the model predicting one unit increase in disinhibition would cause a decrease of 0.02 altruism motivation. Both boldness and meanness personality trait had a positive relationship with altruism motivation (boldness: $\beta = .037$, $t = .226$, $p = .822$; meanness: $\beta = .374$, $t = 2.427$, $p = .017$) with the model predicting that one unit increase in boldness and meanness would cause an increase of altruism motivation by 0.037 and 0.374, respectively.

The career and qualification motivation had a negative relationship with both boldness ($\beta = -.315$, $t = -1.618$, $p = .108$) and disinhibition personality traits ($\beta = -.276$, $t = -2.058$, $p = .042$) with the model predicting one unit increase in boldness and disinhibition would cause a decrease in career and qualification motivation by 0.315 and 0.276, respectively. There was a positive relationship between meanness personality and career and qualification motivation ($\beta = .499$,

$t = 2.765, p = .007$) with the model predicting one unit increase in meanness would cause an increase 0.499 career and qualification motivation.

There was a positive relationship between meanness and rejection of alternative options motivation ($\beta = .839, t = 3.395, p = .001$) with the model predicting one unit increase in meanness would cause an additional of 0.839 rejection of alternative options motivation. Both boldness and disinhibition were negatively related to rejection to alternative options motivation (boldness: $\beta = -.284, t = -1.065, p = .289$; disinhibition: $\beta = -.348, t = -1.899, p = .06$) with the model predicting that one unit increase in boldness and disinhibition would cause a decrease of rejection of alternative options motivation by 0.284 and 0.348, respectively.

Both the boldness and meanness personality were negatively related to self-exploration motivation (boldness: $\beta = -.226, t = -1.182, p = .24$; meanness: $\beta = -.146, t = -.826, p = .41$), and the model predicting one unit increase in boldness and meanness would cause a decrease of self-exploration motivation by 0.226 and 0.146, respectively. There was a positive relationship between disinhibition and self-exploration motivation ($\beta = .142, t = 1.081, p = .282$) with the model predicting one unit increase in meanness would cause an additional 0.142 self-exploration motivation.

The social enjoyment motivation had a negative relationship with both boldness ($\beta = -.414, t = -2.546, p = .012$) and disinhibition personality trait ($\beta = -.21, t = -1.88, p = .062$), the model predicting one unit increase in boldness and disinhibition would cause a decrease in social enjoyment motivation by 0.414 and 0.21, respectively. There was a positive relationship between the meanness personality trait and social enjoyment motivation ($\beta = .109, t = 0.725, p = .470$), the model predicting one unit increase in meanness would cause an increase 0.109 social enjoyment motivation.

Meanness personality was positively related to social pressure motivation ($\beta = .538, t = 2.654, p = .009$) with the model predicting one unit increase in meanness would cause an additional 0.538 to social pressure motivation. Both boldness and disinhibition were negatively related to social pressure motivation (boldness: $\beta = -.494, t = -2.26, p = .026$; disinhibition: $\beta = -.338, t = -2.248, p = .026$) with the model predicting that one unit increase in boldness and disinhibition would cause a decrease of social pressure motivation by 0.494 and 0.338, respectively.

Results indicated that the higher boldness personality trait is, the more altruism motivation but the lower the other five motivations are likely to have. The higher the meanness personality trait, the lower the motivation of self-exploration while the higher the other five motivations are likely to have. The higher the disinhibition personality trait, the lower motivation is likely to have except for self-exploration motivation.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Key findings

Although there has been a great deal of research on topics of personality and motivation, there are questions that remain, particularly in considering whether the TriP personality is effective for predicting the academic motivation of university students studying accounting in China. Since there was no clear relationship between personality and academic motivation that emerged from the correlation analyses, regression analyses were conducted to further clarify

their relationships. The results of the regression analysis suggested meanness (β , ranging from -.146 to .839) was a relatively better predictors of academic motivation of students studying accounting in China in comparison with disinhibition (β , ranging from -.348 to .142) and boldness (β , ranging from -.494 to .037). The result from the regression analysis is contrary to the hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between triarchic psychopathy personality traits and academic motivation of students studying accounting in China. There is only one exception is that there is a positive correlation between motivation of rejection of alternatives options and personality of meanness. Individuals with meanness personality involve aggressive exploitation and they will reject those alternatives that is not most advantageous to them.

One of the findings from the descriptive statistics of the current study indicated career and qualification, altruism, and self-exploration were important motivations for students studying accounting in China. This aligns with the views of various authors on the academic motivation of students studying accounting; specifically, the intrinsic motivation for this is personal development and growth, and the extrinsic motivation is career prospectus and contribution (Arquero et al., 2009; Byrne et al, 2012; Hartutik et al., 2016). Altruism is also important for motivating students to choose accounting as their major and this indicates that they are concerned about their contribution to the community and the profession. Furthermore, this finding is also consistent with the self-determined theory about self-identity (Anctil, et.al., 2008; Deci & Ryan, 2000) as a professional in their future career. Moreover, this finding supports the expectancy-value theory concerning the belief in the value and outcome of the task (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000) about career aspiration. This finding also concurs with the achievement goal theory on achieving goals (Elliot, 1999) of acquiring professional qualifications and personal growth.

Boldness has the highest mean value of 3.112 among the TriP personality traits and this indicates most accounting students possess boldness personality. Those who own boldness personality are fearlessness, emotional resiliency and the ability to remain calm under pressure (Patrick et al., 2009). A professional accountant must be adaptable to the changing professional requirements, and to maintain independence and consistency in reviewing and reporting information according to the required standard (Levy, et.al, 2011). To a certain extent, those who would like to be successful in their future career of a professional accountant need to have the ability to maintain emotional resiliency and calm under pressure, and as well as to adopt unfamiliarity. These features agreed with the boldness personality characteristics, as suggested by Patrick, et al. (2012), and Sellbom and Phillips (2013).

Limitations of the Study and Future Research

The findings of the current study have valuable implications for the attempts to use measures of TriP personality, which is relatively new in relation to the FFM of personality, to predict academic motivation. The present study demonstrates that the TriP personality may be used to predict certain motivation factors of university students who are studying accounting in China. The present study expands upon these results by identifying potential significant predictors of motivation; in particular, the TriP personality.

However, there are limitations in the methodology adopted in this study is online questionnaire survey because it could be possibility that the respondents may not fully understand the

information on the questionnaire, then affects the reliability of the data collected. It would be better if interviews with the respondents could be conducted to clear the queries of the respondents and to further investigate students' motivations for studying accounting in higher education.

Results of the prior research indicate there are relationship between personality and academic motivations (Clark & Schroth, 2010; Hazrati-Viari et al., 2012; Komarraju et al., 2009); however, the tools and scales for measuring personality traits and academic motivation are not the same as this research. This could be one of the reasons why the result from the current study is not the same as prior research.

In relation to the choice of studying an accounting degree and the preference for professional accountant as their future career, there could be differences among different countries due to the differences in cultural factors such as parental influence on them (Law & Yuen, 2012) and social norms of the country or the community (Byrne, 2012). The results of the current study may not generalize to different groups, including students of different majors and from different countries. Since the findings from previous research demonstrated that there were differences in the personality and academic motivations of students of different majors and from other countries, the present study could be replicated to include students of majors other than accounting and from countries other than China.

The primary concern in the current study is a relatively small sample size, and this could limit the power of the statistical analyses. In this connection, this could be significant constraints in relation to the generalizability of the results. Therefore, it is better to enlarge the sample size of the current study.

The results from the current study could not demonstrate that TriP Model of personality is associated with motivation, future research could expand upon this relationship in students studying different subjects, studying in different countries, and at different levels to confirm whether TriP personality is a predictor of motivation. Another possible direction for future research is to investigate the relationship between personality and motivation using different personality constructs and motivation variables under different theories of motivation.

Conclusions

The findings of this study have concluded that there was no significant relationship between the TriP personality and the academic motivation of students studying accounting in China.

Therefore, the findings of this study suggested that TriP personality was not the most important predictor of academic motivations for students studying accounting. This is not in line with the findings of the previous studies study was that accounting students were motivated by their future career and professional qualifications. Moreover, the Big-Five Model of personality appears to be better at predicting academic motivation in comparison with the TriP Model of personality.

This study is beneficial for students to decide whether they should select accounting as their major and whether they are suitable for the accounting profession. This study is beneficial to the accounting professional bodies in designing strategies for members' recruitment.

Moreover, the findings from this study are useful for the education provider in curriculum development for accounting students by taking into account their personality and academic motivation.

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