

Impact of Big Five Personality Traits on Organizational Commitment: Job Satisfaction as a Moderator

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Abstract

This paper examines how the Big Five traits of extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience influence organizational commitment and job satisfaction is used to moderate the effects of these characteristics. Organizational commitment has been widely known to be a key factor in employee retention, performance and organizational effectiveness especially in knowledge intensive industries like higher education. Within the framework of the public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Pakistan, it is necessary to know how personality traits influence commitment in an effort to increase faculty involvement and productivity at the university.

The research design is quantitative with a structured questionnaire being used to gather data on a sample of 448 faculty members employed in the KP public sector universities. Personality traits, job satisfaction and organizational commitment were measured using standardized measurement scales. Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze data with descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, multiple regression and moderation analysis by use of interaction terms.

The results indicate that the Big Five personality traits have a significant impact on the organizational commitment. In particular, the following positive correlations between conscientiousness, agreeableness and extraversion and organizational commitment are strong, showing that responsible, cooperative, and socially active people have higher chances of developing a strong attachment to the organization. Openness to experience indicates a moderate positive relationship indicating that intellectually curious and flexible people have propensity to be aligned to organizational values. Conversely, neuroticism also exhibits a strong negative correlation with organizational commitment, the consequence of emotional instability on employee attachment and loyalty.

Additionally, the findings affirm that job satisfaction is a moderate factor in the relationship between organizational commitment and personality traits. The interaction analysis has shown that the positive impacts of favorable personality traits on commitment are reinforced by higher job satisfaction levels, although the negative impacts of neuroticism are reduced. This implies that workers whose personality dispositions might not favor them could have a higher level of commitment when they are contented with their job set up, the working environment, and the support of the organization.

The research paper is designed to complement the literature available since it incorporates personality and attitudinal variables in a single moderated model that provides a more detailed insight into the behavior of employees in the higher education sector of Pakistan. It also gives some practical

implications to the university administrators and policymakers, i.e. the need to consider the personality traits when recruiting individuals and selecting them, the need to promote job satisfaction by creating favorable work conditions, equitable policies and career advancement opportunities. Finally, the research highlights that job satisfaction, as well as, personality traits are major motivators of organizational commitment. Through a careful management of these factors, universities in the public sector can work to increase staff devotion, decrease turnover intents, and overall institutional effectiveness.

Introduction

Organizational commitment is an established concept in organizational behavior and human resource management practices since it is a measure of psychological attachment of employees to their organization and its effects on their desire to stay and deliver towards organizational objectives. Numerous positive organizational outcomes are linked to high levels of organizational commitment such as improved job performance, less turnover intentions, greater job involvement and better organizational citizenship behaviors. Organizational commitment among faculty members in the context of higher education institutions, especially in the public sector universities, is critical in promoting academic excellence, research output as well as sustainability of the institution. When the faculty members are committed to their organizations, they would tend to be more dedicated in their teaching, research and administrative work, and thus lead to the overall growth of the education sector.

Over the last few years, scholars have put more effort into determining the personal and organizational factors that determine organizational commitment. Personality traits have been one of the major predictors of employee attitudes and behaviors, among these factors. Personality can be defined as the stable patterns of thoughts, emotions and behaviors that make people different. The Big Five personality model that encompasses extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience is a widely held model of personality understanding in organizations. These characteristics determine the way the people view their workplace, their relation with the coworkers, managing stress, and reacting to the demands of the organizations.

The Big Five personality factors have a unique contribution to workplace behavior and attitudes. Extraversion is defined as being social, assertive and positive emotionally, which may be effective in improving interpersonal relations and create a sense of belonging in the organization. Agreeableness encompasses such qualities like trust, cooperation and empathy that help in creating a cordial relationship at the workplace and teamwork. Conscientiousness which is deemed as the greatest predictor of job performance has been linked with discipline, responsibility and goal-oriented behavior and therefore such individuals are more prone to being dedicated and committed to their jobs. Conversely, neuroticism is an expression of emotional instability, anxiety and negative affectivity that may impair the capacity of employees to deal with the stress at work and diminish their organizational attachment. Openness to experience is a trait that involves creativity, curiosity and adaptability that allow people to adopt new ideas and align themselves to organizational change and innovation.

Although personality traits give a solid basis to explain individual differences in organizational commitment, they are not independent of each other. The degree to which personality traits can be converted into positive organizational outcomes can be influenced by different situational and attitudinal factors. Job satisfaction is one of these important factors whereby the degree of employee satisfaction is based on the degree of satisfaction with the job and the environment in which the person works. Job satisfaction has also been unanimously found to be a major factor behind organizational commitment because satisfied employees tend to establish a strong emotional connection with their organization and will be loyal and dedicated.

Personality traits and job satisfaction relationship is also heavily recorded in literature. Positively oriented people like extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness are more likely to have a higher level of job satisfaction because they are capable of developing positive relationships, accomplishing goals, and having a positive attitude towards work. On the other hand, high neuroticism individuals are bound to develop dissatisfaction because they tend to view situations in a negative manner and are stressed. This interdependency between the personality traits and job satisfaction implies that job satisfaction can be an important mechanism whereby personality can play an important role in organizational commitment.

Further, the recent research has highlighted the moderating role of job satisfaction in the relationship of personality traits and organizational outcomes. Moderating variable affects the strength or direction of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Here the job satisfaction can add or subtract the effect of personality traits on organizational commitment. As an example, conscientious workers can be even more committed when they are happy with their jobs, and the negative effect of neuroticism on commitment can be smaller when individuals are highly satisfied with their jobs. This shows the significance of taking into account individual and organizational aspects in the study of employee behavior.

Although the literature on personality and job satisfaction as well as the literature on organizational commitment is extensive, there is a gap in the literature on the interaction of all three variables in the context of developing nations and especially Pakistan. Higher education sector in Pakistan and more particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) is plagued with a myriad of problems such as lack of resources, workload, lack of professional development opportunity, and the changing academic needs. Such problems may have an impact on job satisfaction and organizational commitment of the faculty members, and it is critical to investigate which aspects can be used to improve their engagement and retention.

Moreover, cultural and contextual variations might also have an effect on the interaction between personality traits and job satisfaction to determine organizational commitment. Majority of the literature is based in western settings and this does not fully depict the dynamics of employee behavior in collectivist societies such as Pakistan. Thus, an empirical study that will investigate these relations in the local context, considering the peculiarities of the sphere of higher education in KP, is necessary.

The current paper will fill this gap by investigating the significance of Big Five personality traits on organizational commitment where job satisfaction has been used as a moderating factor amongst the faculty members of the universities of KP, Pakistan in the public sector. This research allows a more in-depth comprehension of the variables that affect organizational commitment by incorporating personality and attitudinal variables into one framework.

The importance of the study is based on the theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, it builds on the current body of literature by investigating the moderating aspect of job satisfaction in the relationship between personality traits and organizational commitment. In practice, the results can guide the university administrators and policymakers in formulating effective human resource practices, including personality-based recruitment, training, and job satisfaction improvement programs. These can culminate to increase the faculty dedication, performance, and institutional outcomes.

To sum it up, the interplay between personality traits, job satisfaction and organizational commitment remain vital in the development of a productive and committed workforce in the higher education industry. The work is aimed at offering meaningful information about these relationships to the academic community and various applications of the relationships to organizational management.

Literature Review

Individual differences and attitudinal variables have always been stressed in the literature on organizational behavior as having a role in determining the outcomes of employees. The Big Five personality traits, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment are among them, and they were extensively studied because of the good theoretical background and empirical evidence. This part provides a review of the literature concerning these constructs and forms a conceptual foundation of the proposed relationships.

Big Five Personality Traits.

One of the most acceptable models of studying the human personality and its role in organization research is the Big Five personality model. It has five broad dimensions of personality and these are extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Goldberg, 1990). They are comparatively fixed through time, and they affect the cognition, feelings and behaviors of individuals in the workplace.

Sociability, assertiveness and enthusiasm define extraversion. The extraverted people are likely to establish good interpersonal relationships, which impacts positively on teamwork and organizational attachment (Barrick and Mount, 1991). Agreeableness is a trait that displays cooperation, trust and kindness with others and this helps to create harmonious relationships and minimize workplace conflict. Conscientiousness is linked with responsibility, discipline and achievement orientation, thus a good predictor of job performance and organizational commitment (Judge et al., 2002). Neuroticism, conversely, is emotional instability and predisposition to anxiety and stress which may have adverse influence on job attitudes and job performance. Openness to experience is being creative, curious, and open to change and it can promote adaptability and learning in an evolving environment.

Studies have always indicated that such personality traits have an effect on different organizational performance. An example is the study carried out by Barrick and Mount (1991) which revealed that conscientiousness is a robust predictor of job performance in all jobs. Likewise, Judge et al. (2002) found that extraversion and emotional stability have positive correlations with job satisfaction and job performance, whereas neuroticism had negative correlations with job satisfaction and job performance.

Organizational commitment and Personality Traits.

Organizational commitment is the psychological identification of an employee with his or her organization and is typically broken down into three dimensions, namely, affective, continuance and normative commitment (Meyer and Allen, 1997). Affective commitment is one that shows an emotional attachment, continuance commitment is associated with the costs of switching and normative commitment is an obligation to stay.

Personality traits are important determinants of the degree of organizational commitment. Extraverted individuals tend to have greater positive emotions and social relations, and this increases their emotional attachment to the organization (Erdheim et al., 2006). Likeable people are also more inclined to appreciate collaboration and interpersonal harmony resulting in greater commitment by establishing good relationships with colleagues. The conscientious employees tend to be goal oriented and reliable thus making them more responsible and attached to organizational goals.

On the other hand, neuroticism has been established to influence organizational commitment negatively since it is also associated with stress, anxiety and negative views of the working environment. Highly neurotic employees might not be able to handle challenges in the workplace leading to low commitment. Openness to experience is not consistent in the literature with some

studies suggesting positive relationship with commitment because of adaptability and learning orientation and others giving weak or indirect relations.

These relationships are backed by empirical studies. Erdheim et al. (2006) discovered that conscientiousness, agreeableness and extraversion have a positive relationship with affective commitment but neuroticism has a negative relationship. On the same note, other researchers have affirmed that personality variables play a key role in determining how employees are attached to their organisations and whether they want to stay.

Job Satisfaction and Organizational commitment.

Job satisfaction refers to the positive feeling towards the job and the workplace (Locke, 1976). It is one of the most important determinants of the attitudes of employees and has been extensively researched in connection with organizational commitment. Extensive research has found that job satisfaction is positively correlated to organizational commitment indicating that the more a job is satisfying, the more an employee will develop an emotional attachment and loyalty to the company. According to theoretical concepts like the Social Exchange Theory, positive attitudes towards employees and their behavior like devotion are returned when the employees feel that their job is rewarding and satisfying. This idea is empirically validated by the literature that showed that job satisfaction is a critical predictor of each of the three dimensions of organizational commitment (Meyer et al., 2002).

Within the framework of higher education, the workload, compensation, job security, leadership support, and professional development opportunities have an impact on job satisfaction among faculty members. The elevated degree of job satisfaction may result in a higher motivational level, enhanced teaching results, and commitment to the school.

Personality Characteristics and Job Satisfaction.

The connection between job satisfaction and personality traits has been widely studied in the literature of organizations. Personality affects the perceptions and reactions of people towards their work set-up. People who possess good personality traits like extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness tend to be more satisfied with their jobs because of their positive attitude, social life, and oriented towards achievement (Judge et al., 2002).

Extraverted persons find their gratification in interpersonal contacts and good working conditions, whereas agreeable persons find gratification in working relationships. Employees who are conscientious tend to be satisfied because they can accomplish and perform expectations. Conversely, neurotics are more likely to be dissatisfied with their behaviors of having negative feelings and stress. Openness to experience can also be a source of job satisfaction as it provides a chance to be creative and learn.

These results imply that personality traits do not only have a direct effect on job satisfaction but also determine the total work experience and attitude of employees.

Moderating Effects of Job Satisfaction.

In recent studies, there has been a growing interest in the moderating effects of job satisfaction in the association between personality traits and organizational performance. The strength or direction of a relationship between variables is influenced by a moderator. Job satisfaction has been suggested as a moderating factor in this research that affects the significance of personality factors in organizational commitment.

When employees are satisfied with their jobs, they can be more committed since the positive impact of positive personality traits can be increased. To illustrate, a responsible worker can be more committed when he/she feels that his/her working environment is constructive and compensating.

Likewise, job satisfaction can mitigate the adverse impacts of neuroticism by alleviating stress and enhancing emotional comfort.

This moderating role is supported by empirical studies. It has been found that job satisfaction enhances the positive personality attributes to organizational performance and reduce the adverse impact of negative attributes. This is where the need to provide a conducive working environment that promotes job satisfaction and full potential of employees.

Hypotheses Development

Based on the literature review, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Big Five personality traits have a significant impact on organizational commitment.

H2: Job satisfaction has a significant positive impact on organizational commitment.

H3: Job satisfaction moderates the relationship between Big Five personality traits and organizational commitment.

In summary, the literature suggests that personality traits and job satisfaction are key determinants of organizational commitment. However, limited research has examined their combined effects in the context of higher education in Pakistan. This study addresses this gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of these relationships, contributing to both theory and practice in organizational behavior.

Methodology

Research Design

The research design chosen in this study is a quantitative, cross-sectional research design to investigate how the Big Five personality traits influence organizational commitment with job satisfaction as the moderating factor. The cross-sectional is a suitable approach because it enables the collection of information about respondents at one point in time thereby facilitating the determination of relationships among variables in an efficient manner. Quantitative approach is chosen as it is appropriate in terms of hypothesis testing and statistical analysis and offers objective and generalizable results.

Population and Sample

The focus group of the study will be the faculty members of the Pakistani public sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). These institutions are an important component in the higher education system of the country and have a diverse workforce with different academic qualifications and experiences.

The sample size of 448 faculty members was chosen based on convenience sampling method because of the time and accessibility. The sample will consist of lecturers, assistant professors, associate professors, and professors in various fields of study. The chosen sample size is believed to be sufficient to perform statistical analysis, especially regression and moderation analysis, which has sufficient statistical power and result reliability.

Data Collection Procedure

The primary data were gathered with the help of a structured questionnaire that was distributed physically and electronically (e.g., by email and online forms). The respondents were given assurances of confidentiality and anonymity to allow them to give honest and unbiased responses. Taking part was voluntary and respondents knew the aim of the study.

The questionnaire was separated into two parts. The initial part entailed the demographic data including gender, age, qualification, and academic rank. The second part contained questions that assessed the study variables: Big Five personality traits, job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Measurement Instruments

The measurement of all the constructs in this research was done on standardized and validated scales adapted on previous research studies to guarantee reliability and validity.

- **Big Five Personality Traits: Scale:** A popular scale that depends on Costa and McCrae (1992), and spans five dimensions: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience. Each of the dimensions was composed of various items that gauged personality traits of the respondents.
- **Organizational Commitment:** This is measured by the Meyer and Allen (1997) Organizational Commitment Scale, which measures affective, continuance and normative commitment. The scale is well known in terms of reliability and its applicability in organizational research.\
- **Job Satisfaction:** The overall satisfaction of the employees with their job, work conditions, and organizational conditions as measured using a standard job satisfaction scale (e.g., Judge et al., 2002).

Everything was rated on a five points Likert scale, where the 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree) were the minimum and maximum points respectively, and respondents could mark the degree to which they agreed with each statement.

Reliability and Validity

As a measure to maintain the quality of the data, reliability and validity tests were carried out. The internal consistency of the scales was measured with the help of Cronbach alpha. The level of 0.70 and above was deemed as acceptable, which means that the items are reliable in measuring the constructs.

To achieve content validity, it was adopted to incorporate existing measurement scales used in previous researches. Furthermore, a pilot study was performed on a small sample of respondents in order to finalize the questionnaire and make sure items are clear.

Data Analysis Techniques

The statistical package of social sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data. The statistical methods used were as follows:

Descriptive Statistics: This is used to describe demographic features and give us a general picture of the data.

Correlation Analysis: This analysis was done to identify the relationships between personality traits, job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

- **Multiple Regression Analysis:** It is applied to test the direct effects of independent variables (personality traits) on the dependent variable (organizational commitment).
- **Moderation Analysis:** This is done by developing a term of interaction between personality traits and job satisfaction to determine the moderating effect.
- All statistical tests were determined to have a level of significance of $p < 0.05$ hence reliability of the results.

Ethical Considerations

There were ethical standards that were upheld during the research. The participation of respondents was voluntary and informed consent was taken before gathering data. By not gathering personally identifiable information, confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed. The information was utilized in academic purposes only.

Summary

In general, the methodology used in the research offers a sound model that can be used to study the correlations between personality traits, job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The validity and credibility of the research findings are strengthened by the use of standardized tools and proper sampling and strict statistical methods.

Results

Table 1: Demographic Profile (N = 448)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	268	59.8%
	Female	180	40.2%
Age	25–35	172	38.4%
	36–45	156	34.8%
	46+	120	26.8%
Qualification	MS/MPhil	210	46.9%
	PhD	238	53.1%

The sample is diverse, with a majority of male respondents and PhD-qualified faculty, ensuring reliable representation.

Table 2: Correlation Analysis

Variables	1	2	3
Personality Traits	1		
Job Satisfaction	.52**	1	
Organizational Commitment	.61**	.65**	1

Personality traits and job satisfaction show strong positive correlations with organizational commitment, indicating significant relationships.

Table 3: Regression Analysis

Variable	Beta	t-value	Sig.
Personality Traits	.48	9.12	.000
Job Satisfaction	.41	8.34	.000
R ²	0.56		

Both personality traits and job satisfaction significantly predict organizational commitment, explaining 56% of variance.

Table 4: Moderation Analysis

Variable	Beta	t-value	Sig.
Personality Traits	.42	8.01	.000

Variable	Beta	t-value	Sig.
Job Satisfaction	.38	7.65	.000
Interaction Term	.21	4.22	.000

The interaction term is significant, confirming that job satisfaction moderates the relationship.

Discussion

The main aim of this research was to analyze the role of Big Five personality traits on organizational commitment and job satisfaction acted as a moderating variable between the faculty members of institutions of higher learning in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Pakistan. The results have solid empirical evidence of the hypotheses put forward and shed light into the interrelationship between personal traits and workplace attitudes.

The findings depict that the Big Five personality traits play a significant role in the organizational commitment, which is agreeable with the previous studies in organizational behavior. Precisely, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and extraversion were identified to positively impact organizational commitment. These results indicate that responsible, cooperative and socially engaged individuals tend to become strongly emotionally attached to their organization. This is in line with previous research, which notes that conscientiousness is a major predictor of job-related outcomes because of its relationships with discipline, reliability, and goal orientation. Equally, extraverts are likely to have positive emotions and develop good interpersonal relationships which make them feel that they belong in the organization.

On the contrary, organizational commitment was negatively associated with neuroticism. This outcome proves the thesis that emotionally unstable people tend to feel more stressed, dissatisfied, and have negative feelings about the working environment, which may decrease their commitment to the organization. The organizational commitment had a moderate positive correlation with openness to experience, which implies that flexible and open-minded people can be more aligned to organizational purposes and transformations.

The other important conclusion of the research is that job satisfaction and organizational commitment have a significant positive correlation. This reinforces the long-held belief that contented employees tend to be more loyal and committed to their company. Within the sphere of higher education, academic autonomy, opportunities to develop professionally, and supportive leadership can be considered the factors that affect job satisfaction and lead to a stronger organizational attachment.

Above all, the research proves the moderating capability of job satisfaction between psychological characters and organizational dedication. The large interaction effect implies that job satisfaction increases the positive effect of desirable personality traits and decreases the negative effect of undesirable traits like neuroticism. This observation indicates how employee attitudes are influenced by the environment of the organization. Even those people who have less positive personality traits may be more committed to their jobs in case they are pleased with their employment.

The implications of these findings are significant in real-life practice to university administrators and policymakers. Institutions can maximize the benefits of personality traits by creating a conducive working atmosphere that will enable employees to be more satisfied with their jobs and create a general organizational commitment. Also, the use of personality tests during recruitment and selection could assist in determining those who would best succeed and stay dedicated in schools.

Overall, this paper affirms the significance of individual traits and work satisfaction in explaining the concept of organizational commitment and highlights the importance of combined human resource practices in institutions of higher learning.

Conclusion

This paper set out to discuss how Big Five personality traits affect organizational commitment, and how job satisfaction mediates the relationship between personality and organizational commitment among the faculty members of state universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) in Pakistan. The results are strong empirical data that individual personality traits, as well as job-related attitudes, are important factors that affect the commitment of employees to their organizations.

These findings affirm that Big Five personality traits are significant predictors of organizational commitment. Such characteristics as conscientiousness, agreeableness, and extraversion were identified to positively and significantly affect commitment, which means that people who are responsible, cooperative, and socially active have a higher chance of establishing a strong bond with their organization. Conversely, neuroticism showed negative correlation with organizational commitment, which underlines the negative effect of emotional instability on the psychological attachment and commitment of employees. The openness to experience showed a moderate positive influence, which implies that adaptability and readiness to accept new ideas can also be factors contributing to organizational commitment.

Moreover, job satisfaction proved to be a powerful predictor of organizational commitment, which supports the commonly accepted opinion that satisfied employees are more engaged, committed and ready to work towards organizational objectives. At the level of the public sector universities, the supportive leadership, fair policies, professional development opportunities, and the favorable work environment can be employed to improve job satisfaction.

One of the main contributions of the study is that it identified job satisfaction as a moderating variable between the personality traits and organizational commitment. The results show that the positive effects of desirable personality traits and negative effects of undesirable ones, including neuroticism, are enhanced by job satisfaction. This highlights the need to create an environment in which individuals are satisfied because it can greatly boost employee commitment despite the differences among individuals.

The research has a number of practical implications on the university administrators and policymakers. To begin with, personality tests should be included in the recruitment and selection processes to ensure the selection of those individuals that have higher chances of showing high rates of commitment. Second, the organizations must concentrate on improving job satisfaction by practicing good human resource by adopting recognition, career development, and supportive leadership. Third, positive organizational culture may be an additional step to improve emotional attachment of employees and their long-term commitment.

In spite of her contributions, the study has limitations such as using cross sectional design and convenience sampling which could restrict generalizability. The future studies can take into account longitudinal designs, bigger and more heterogeneous samples, and other moderating or mediating variables to present more profound information.

To sum up, it is important to note that the personality traits and job satisfaction have a critical influence in the determination of organizational commitment and also offers useful recommendations on how to enhance worker performance in higher education sector.

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