

Effect of Personality on Organizational Commitment and Employees' Performance: Empirical Evidence from Banking Sector of Pakistan

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Abstract: Considering the importance of employees' performance and their commitment with organization, this study is initiated to investigate the impact of individuals' personality on the employees' commitment level and employees' performance in organization. Mediating role of organizational commitment is investigated in relation of personality and performance. The model is empirically tested on the employees banking sector of Pakistan. In data analysis, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness are found as significant and positive predictors of employee's commitment with organization, while organizational commitment is a significant predictor of task and contextual performance of employees.

Key words: Organizational Commitment • Big Five Personality Model • Task Performance • Contextual Performance

INTRODUCTION

After globalization and specifically after privatization phase of banking sector of Pakistan, numbers of new private and foreign banks have been entered into this sector. Now the prevailing situation of banking sector shows that there are total 55 banks and development financial institutions, out of which only 5 banks are public sector [1]. So due to new entrants, intense competition among the banks has been noticed. Due to increased competition among the banks, the culture of the banks has been transformed into performance based culture [2]. So the biggest challenge of Human Resource Department is to hire the employees that can perform with their full potentials. Therefore this study is attempted to find out how the personality of an employee affects his performance. Whether personality of an individual can significantly predict his job performance?

Moreover, after the extensive review of literature it is found, one of the main predictors of the employees' performance is organizational commitment. Few studies in the banking sector of Pakistan have indicated that due to excessive reforms and transforms by the State Bank of

Pakistan, commitment level of employees is affecting [3, 4]. So it is equally important to study the organizational commitment along with the employees' performance.

Therefore, the conceptual framework of this study is designed to check the effect of personality characteristics on employees' attitude and then effect of employees' attitude is investigated on the employees' workplace behavior. In nutshell, this study is investigating effect of personality directly on the performance; moreover, effect of personality is also investigated on personality through the mediating role of organizational commitment. Two classes of performance are studied in this research, that are task and contextual performance. The reason to study the contextual performance is that past researches show that major emphasis of the researchers and academicians is on the task specific performance, while contextual performance is bit ignored component [5]. So this study is considering both classes of performance simultaneously.

To measure the organizational commitment; from the three different components of organizational commitment that are affective, normative and continuance explained by Meyer, Allen and their associates; only

affective commitment is considered in this study because it refers to the emotional attachment of employees with organization and true commitment of employees with organization is depicted through this component.

To measure personality, big five personality model is studied in this research due to its wide level acceptability among the personality psychologists [6-12].

Literature Review: This chapter is discussing literature regarding concepts, theories, classification and ambiguities in studied variables and their inter relationship. Data about previous studies is compiled from the books, review articles, journal articles, conference proceedings, reports and websites.

Big Five Personality Model: Personality in this study is measured through the big five personality model. Big five personality model consists of five broad traits of personality that are extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience[13]. The first trait of personality is extraversion which refers to the degree to which an individual is social, active, talkative, outgoing and assertive with others [14, 15]. Agreeableness trait refers to the degree to which an individual is cooperative, helpful, courteous and supportive to others. The third personality trait is conscientiousness which refers to the degree to which an individual is responsible, disciplined, organized and goal achiever[16]. Neuroticism trait of personality consists of few negative attributes of personality that are nervous, stressed, unstable, unconfident, doubtful and uncertain individual[17, 18]. Last personality trait is openness to experience which refers to personality attributes as creative, sensitive, curious, cultivated and independent minded [14, 19, 15]. These traits might be low, high or moderate among different individuals but these traits do exist in everyone's personality that is the underlying assumption of all the trait theories presented by psychologists [20].

Organizational Commitment: There are number of different authors, defined the organizational commitment. One of the most comprehensive definitions of organization commitment states: "Organizational commitment refers to psychological contact which governs the attitude and behavior of an employee and characterize as the degree of loyalty, obligation and attachment towards an organization and its goals"[21]. Organizational Commitment can be divided into

three distinct classes named as Affective Commitment, Continuance Commitment and Normative Commitment [22]. Affective Commitment can be defined as: "Employee's emotional attachment to, identification with and involvement in the organization"[23]. Continuance commitment is defined as "Commitment with organization that is due to the awareness of the cost associated with leaving the organization" [23]. Meyer & Allen explained in their study that "employees with normative commitment feel that they are associated with organization because they ought to stay in organization" [22]. So as it can be inferred from the above given definitions that continuance commitment and normative commitment are not based on true emotional attachment with organization, therefore this study is only considering the affective commitment, as the mediator in relation of personality and performance.

Job Performance: Rothman & Coetzer (2003) explains: "Job performance of employees refers to performance of employees to achieve the goals and targets set by the organization". This study is considering the classification of performance made by Borman & Motowidlo i.e. Task Performance and Contextual Performance[5]. Task performance refers to the class of performance which includes the primary activities on the basis of which selection of employees is made and these activities are also included in job description of employees[24]. The second dimension of contextual performance can be defined as: "Behavior that contributes to organizational effectiveness through its effects on the psychological, social and organizational context of work" [24].

Effect of Personality on Performance: The relationship of personality and performance is full of controversies. In depth analysis of literature on these relationship shows that studies before 1990s indicate that personality is not a valid predictor of job performance [25-31]. While the studies after 90s era have clearly indicated that personality can significantly predict the job performance of employees [32-34]. The one major reason behind these inconsistent results is that before 90s no well-defined taxonomy to measure personality was present. So due to non-proper measurement of personality, no relationship between personality and performance was found. But after 90s Big Five Personality Model is emerged as a well-defined measure of personality that created a significant relationship between personality and performance.

In previous studies positive and significant effect of personality traits of extraversion, conscientiousness,

agreeableness and openness to experience is found on the employees' performance [35, 14, 36, 17, 37]. While a difference of opinion is found in the relationship of neuroticism and employees's performance among the researchers. In number of researches, positive relationship is found in relationship of neuroticism and personality with the argument that employees with high level of stress and depression cannot perform as good as emotionally stable individual [17, 37-43]. But surprisingly in few studies it is found that neuroticism positively affect the job performance because these individuals strive to avoid stressful and unpleasant outcomes in future and this relationship is supported with control and cybernatic theories [44-47].

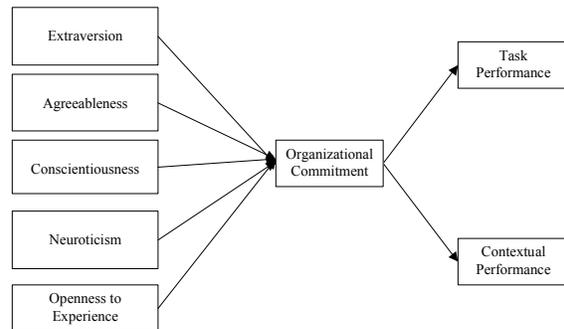
Effect of Personality on Organizational Commitment:

From the 1990s and afterward, attention of the researchers and academicians shifted towards the personality as a predictor of organizational commitment. Work of Erdheim, Wang, & Zickaris important in this context[48]. A positive association of extraversion is found with the affective commitment while negative relationship of neuroticism and affective commitment is found in previous studies [49, 48]. Moreover in literature it is found that agreeableness and conscientiousness, positively and significantly predict the affective commitment of employees [50]. In number of studies, it is concluded that openness to experience cannot significantly predict affective commitment [48, 49]. While Kappagoda concluded a negative relationship in openness to experience and affective commitment [51]. So from the above discussion, it can be clearly hypothesized that personality is a significant predictor of organizational commitment.

Effect of Organizational Commitment on Performance:

Affective commitment is found a significant and positive predictor of job performance of employees in the literature [52-56]. There are clear evidences in the researches that employees who have some sort of emotionally bonding with organization perform better as compare to others. While affective commitment is not only the predictor of task performance of employees but affectively committed employees actively participates in extra role duties [52, 51, 57]. Therefore in famous studies, it is found that affective commitment is a significant predictor of not only task performance but also the contextual performance class of employees' performance. So it can be expected that same results will be found in the case of banking sector of Pakistan.

Theoretical Framework: From the extensive literature review on the hypothesized relationship, below given hypothesized model is extracted.



Research Methodology: To collect the data from the banking sector employees of Pakistan, cross sectional study design is opted and survey methodology is used. Self Administered Questionnaires are designed through five point Likert scale with the well validated and reliable items defined by the subject matter experts. Big five personality traits are measured through the famous BFI-44 items scale presented by John, Donahue, & Kentle; John, Naumann, & Soto[58, 59]. Organizational Commitment is measured with six item scale of Affective Commitment defined by Meyer & Allen (1991); Meyer, Allen, & Smith (1993); Meyer & Allen (1997); Meyer & Allen (2004) [22, 23, 60, 61]. The first class of job performance i.e. task performance is measured with the seven item scale of Motowidlo & Van Scotter; Kahya [62, 63]. The second class of job performance that is contextual performance is measured through 10 items extracted from 16 item scale of Borman & Motowidlo[5]. Through the proper analysis of population of banking sector employees of Pakistan, it is discovered that 84% branches of banks are in the Sindh and Punjab region. So data is collected from 10 different cities of Sindh and Punjab region to undertake cultural and regional differences. In first step, banking sector of Pakistan is divided into four strata that are Public Banks, Private Banks, Islamic Banks and Foreign Banks. 700 questionnaires were randomly distributed among employees from each strata and 384 complete and accurate questionnaires were received back that makes 55% response rate. Reliability and Validity of the instrument is ensured before inferential analysis. Multiple Regression Analysis and Correlation Analysis are run on the collected data to draw inferences.

Table 1: Correlation Analysis

Variables		Task Performance	Contextual Performance	Organizational Commitment
Extraversion	Pearson Correlation	.345**	.396**	.372**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
Agreeableness	Pearson Correlation	.534**	.471**	.412**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
Conscientiousness	Pearson Correlation	.601**	.591**	.492**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
Neuroticism	Pearson Correlation	-.304**	-.299**	-.326**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
Openness	Pearson Correlation	.483**	.524**	.417**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
Organizational Commitment	Pearson Correlation	.459**	.489**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	

Table 2: Regression Results on the Effect of Personality Traits on Task Performance

Dependent Variables	Independent Variables	Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Task Performance	Extraversion	.095	.051	.093	1.864	.063
	Agreeableness	.272	.049	.270	5.580	.000
	Conscientiousness	.404	.062	.361	6.523	.000
	Neuroticism	.060	.043	.063	1.391	.165
	Openness	.142	.057	.139	2.480	.014
Contextual Performance	Extraversion	.129	.051	.126	2.521	.012
	Agreeableness	.179	.049	.178	3.650	.000
	Conscientiousness	.408	.063	.363	6.512	.000
	Neuroticism	.067	.043	.071	1.551	.122
	Openness	.204	.058	.198	3.520	.000

Table 3: Regression Analysis for Mediation Testing of Organizational Commitment in Relationship of Personality Traits and Task Performance

Dependent Variables	Independent Variables	Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
Task Performance	Extraversion	.068	.051	.066	1.328	.185
	Agreeableness	.245	.049	.244	5.019	.000
	Conscientiousness	.363	.063	.324	5.800	.000
	Neuroticism	.066	.043	.069	1.538	.125
	Openness	.133	.057	.129	2.332	.020
	Organizational Commitment	.137	.044	.143	3.107	.002
Contextual Performance	Extraversion	.129	.051	.126	2.521	.012
	Agreeableness	.179	.049	.178	3.650	.000
	Conscientiousness	.408	.063	.363	6.512	.000
	Neuroticism	.067	.043	.071	1.551	.122
	Openness	.204	.058	.198	3.520	.000
	Organizational Commitment	.129	.051	.126	2.521	.012

Table 4: Regression Results on the Effect of Personality Traits on Organizational Commitment

Dependent Variables	Independent Variables	Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Organizational Commitment	Extraversion	.197	.058	.186	3.364	.001
	Agreeableness	.192	.056	.184	3.424	.001
	Conscientiousness	.297	.071	.255	4.165	.000
	Neuroticism	-.041	.050	-.042	-.829	.407
	Openness	.072	.066	.067	1.080	.281

Table 5: Effect of Organizational Commitment on Job Performance

Dependent Variables	Independent Variables	Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
Task Performance	Organizational Commitment	.441	.044	.459	10.085	.000
Contextual Performance	Organizational Commitment	.472	.043	.489	10.962	.000

Results of Study: To further check the collective effect of independent variables on the outcome variables, multiple regression analysis is run. Table 2 explains the regression results on the relationship of Personality traits on both classes of job performance. Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and Openness to Experience have positive significant effect on task performance at 10% significance level. While results on the relationship of neuroticism and task performance show that neuroticism although has positive but insignificant effect on the task performance. Similarly Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and Openness to experience positively and significantly predict contextual performance while, neuroticism has positive but insignificant impact on contextual performance.

Table 3 shows that with the addition of organizational commitment, predictive power of personality traits is reduced. Regression Coefficients of personality traits is reduced in comparison with the Table 2 in case of both classes of job performance. The beta value of extraversion to predict task performance has become insignificant, so full mediation of organizational commitment exists in extraversion and task performance. Moreover, SOBEL Test is applied to check the significance of mediation. Mediation of organizational commitment is found significant in relation of Extraversion and Task Performance; Extraversion and Contextual Performance; Agreeableness and Task Performance; Agreeableness and Contextual Performance; Conscientiousness and Task Performance and Conscientiousness and Contextual Performance.

Table 4 shows that Extraversion, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness can significantly and positive affect the organizational commitment. On the other hand, neuroticism has negative and insignificant relationship with organizational commitment. Openness to experience positively predicts organizational commitment but this relationship is found statistically insignificant.

Table 5 shows that organizational Commitment positively and significantly predicts the task and contextual performance.

CONCLUSION

This study was initiated with the aim to investigate how the personality influences job performance of employees with the mediating role of organizational commitment. Moreover direct effect of personality was also investigated on the employees' performance because in the literature, difference of opinion exists among the researchers and psychologists on this relationship [25, 26, 32, 33]. Results on the personality-performance relationship show that Personality directly affects the task and contextual performance and these findings are consistent with the latest researches on the relationship of personality and performance [35, 17]. Extraversion, Conscientiousness, Agreeableness and Openness to Experience positively and significantly predict the task and contextual performance.

As far as the second objective of the study is concerned i.e. mediating role of organizational commitment in the relationship of personality and performance; results show that three factors of

personality, extraversion, conscientiousness and openness to experience can significantly and positively predict the organizational commitment of employees. While, organizational commitment is found a significant predictor of task and contextual performance which means organizational commitment is found a significant positive mediator in relationship of personality and performance and these results are consistent with numerous previous studies on this relationship [52-56].

Implications of Study: This study has few important implications for academicians and practitioners both.

Management of the banking sector should seriously consider including a formal personality analysis of the candidates short listed for the recruitment. Because through the multiple empirical evidences like this research, it is proven that personality of an individual cannot only determine their performance level but also their prospective commitment with organization that ultimately lead them toward better job performance.

Moreover, in Pakistan's perspective, few studies can be found on the relationship of personality with workplace outcomes. So prospective researchers and academicians must explore this model in different professional sectors of Pakistan.

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