



ORGANIZATION COMMITMENT AND FIVE FACTOR MODEL OF PERSONALITY: THEORY RECAPITULATION

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Abstract

Organizational commitment is one of the most popular psychological construct which plays a vital role in predicting work behavior. There are many approaches to study organizational commitment, and one of them is an individual difference approach. Since organizational commitment is one kind of job attitudes, and personality traits might predispose individual to experience raised or lowered levels of his or her organizational commitment. In connection to the previous studies, this research is aimed to examine the association among big five personality traits (FFM with dimensions of the organizational commitment. A questionnaire was adopted from the previous studies and a total number of 150 responses were gathered from the lecturer/supervisors working in public universities located in Lahore, Pakistan. The results of the research demonstrated that there is a significant relationship between FFM and organizational commitment dimensions. Furthermore, the results of stepwise regression analyses showed that conscientiousness and openness to experience are positively associated with affective commitment. Openness to experience is negatively linked to continuance commitment, extroversion, and neuroticism is negatively associated with normative commitment.

1. INTRODUCTION

From the last few decades there has been a plethora of research to explore and comprehend the predecessor and consequences of the organizational commitment. A great number of researches concluded that organizational commitment is one of the most popular psychological constructs which play a vital role in predating work behavior (Erdheim *et al.*, 2006).

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Although researchers have different concept and measurement to measure it, there is one common thought that it is related to employees' turnover (Allen & Meyer, 1990). In addition, the stronger organizational commitment the employee has the less likely that he or she will leave the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Erdheim *et al.*, 2006). Therefore, organizational psychologists are interested in studying organizational commitment because it can help companies to retain their competitive advantage by keeping their potential staff (Petrides & Furnham, 2006).

There are many approaches to study organizational commitment, and one of them is an individual difference approach. Since organizational commitment is one kind of job attitudes, Eagly and Chaiken (1993) defined attitude as a psychological behaviour which is showed by evaluation of a certain situation. Staw and Ross (1985) also mentioned that personality might predispose individual to experience raised or lowered levels of his or her job satisfaction. Erdheim *et al.* (2006) pointed out that although many researchers have been studied relationships between personality and organizational commitment, most of them were exercised the positive affectivity (PA) - negative affectivity (NA) taxonomy of affective temperament. Therefore, they argued that the five-factor model of personality may provide a more understanding of commitment because it may include more traits than PA-NA typology (Erdheim *et al.*, 2006).

1.1. The five factor model of personality

Before the five-factor model of personality emerged, trait psychology had suffered from a thirty years' war of competing trait models by some major psychologists like Guildford, Cattell, and Eysenck (McCrae & Costa, 2008), and there is only be twenty-five years that it has become a major approach of studying trait psychology or individual difference (McCrae & Costa, 2008). Besides, it has been widely used by researchers in various field of psychology such as cross cultural psychology, clinical psychology, and industrial and organizational psychology (McCrae & Costa, 2008). The model is consists of five fairly independent dimensions (Erdheim *et al.*, 2006), which are Extraversion, Neuroticism, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness to experience.

The first factor is Extraversion which has been recognized by psychologist for many years. It is also the most easily detected facet and the most popular one (McCrae & Costa, 2008). Barrick and Mount (1991) said that it can be measured by looking at these behaviours, for example, talkative, active, assertive, and being sociable. In addition, Soldz and Vaillant (1999) cited in McCrae & Costa (2008) stated that it is related to social success and popularity, and also linked to self-promotion and higher lifetime income. Moreover, extraverts tend to live happier than introvert people (McCrae & Costa, 2008). Neuroticism is the second factor, which is more familiar to clinical psychologist and psychiatrists than other factors because it is one of the core causes of individuals' mental disorder (McCrae & Costa, 2008). According to Barrick and Mount (1991), the behavioral tendencies in this factor are feeling uncertain, worried, emotional, irritated, unhappy, and gloomy. Furthermore, Neurotic people tend to feel unhappy despite their life circumstance, so that they are more likely to have problems with their mental health such as personality disorders than others (McCrae & Costa, 2008).

The third factor in the five-factor model is Agreeableness. Barrick and Mount (1991) said that it includes typical behaviours like well mannered, adaptable, caring, collaborative, kind, understanding, and patient. Moreover, there are some advantages of being high of Agreeableness, which found by Buss and Barnes (1986) and Donnellan *et al.* (2004) cited in Erdheim *et al.* (2006). They found that agreeable people tend to have better marriage life and also are more desired as partners (Erdheim *et al.*, 2006). Conscientiousness is the fourth factor. It represents behavioral tendencies to achieve in individuals' life. Being hard-working, punctual, systematic and responsible are typical characteristics of this factor, therefore it does not surprise that it is the most reliable predictor of job performance as Barrick and Mount found in 1991 (Erdheim *et al.*, 2006; McCrae & Costa, 2008). In addition, Weiss and Costa (2005) cited by McCrae and Costa (2008) mentioned that Conscientiousness is also related to many good health habits such as exercise, safe-driving and healthy diet as a result people who high conscientiousness are feasible to live longer and have good health. Openness to experience, which is also called 'intellect' or 'openness vs. closeness', is the last factor in the five factor model (McCrae &

Costa, 2008). Being imaginative, curious, open-minded, and explorative can be categorized to this factor (Erdheim *et al.*, 2006). Moreover, McCrae (1996) found that it is a good "predictor of creative achievement, whereas closeness predicts political conservatism and religious fundamentalism" (McCrae & Costa, 2008). According to McCrae & John (1992), openness people tend to have more "need of variety, aesthetic sensitivity, and unconventional values than others.

1.2. Organizational commitment

In general, organizational commitment is a psychological contract that employees have with their organizations. Has been defined and assessed in various ways by industrial and organizational psychologists, it can be said that there are three different reasons of employee's commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990). First, it is because employees have emotional attachment to their organizations (Allen & Meyer, 1990). The second reason is because employees feel that they will lose their profit from the effort that they invest into the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Lastly, it is because employees feel responsible to their organizations (Allen & Meyer, 1990). From three reasons that mentioned above, Allen and Meyer (1990) proposed that there are three components of organizational commitment, which call Affective commitment, Continuance commitment and Normative commitment respectively (Allen & Meyer, 1990). According to these three concepts, Allen and Meyer (1990) stated that employees who have strong affective commitment stay with their organizations because they want to, "[and] those with strong continuance commitment because they need to". Finally, employees who have strong normative commitment remain loyalty to their organization "because they feel they ought to do so" (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Erdheim *et al.* (2006) proposed that five-factor model of personality is one approach to study "the dispositional sources of organizational commitment". In fact, they mentioned that Extraversion is the most constant predictor of all three components of organizational commitment. Having positive emotionally is one core behavioral of Extraversion personality dimension and positive emotion and affective commitment are positively related. Therefore extraversion was favorably related to affective commitment (Erdheim *et al.*, 2006). Moreover, it has been found that extraversion was negatively related to continuance commitment (Erdheim *et al.*, 2006). Finally, according to a research done by Watson (2000), extraverts might have high normative commitment because they feel that they have a psychological contract with their organizations.

1.3. Link between big five and organizational commitment

In last decade a few studies have been carried out to investigate the association between organizational commitment and five factor model of personality. (Erdheim *et al.*, 2006; Kumar & Bakhshi, 2010; Chandel *et al.*, 2011). All these studies depicted similar results.

Prior researches showed a positive relationship between affective commitment, normative commitment and extroversion, (Erdheim *et al.*, 2006).

Furthermore the same study showed that continuance commitment and affective commitment was positively linked to neuroticism and conscientiousness respectively. However, the prior studies including Erdheim *et al.* (2006) showed a no relationship between agreeableness and openness to experience and three construct of organizational commitment.

According to the McCrae (1996) and Erdheim *et al.* (2006) employees who score on high openness to experience usually undervalue the things which are valued by the others like informal and formal rewards. From this argument we can conclude employees with this trait of personality are average in continuance and affective commitment but low in normative commitment. While on the other hand the employees having conscientiousness trait of personality are more associated with normative and continuance commitment, however, they are negatively associated with affective commitment. (Organ & Lingl, 1995; Erdheim *et al.*, 2006). This idea leads to the argument that employees who are self disciplined they do not involved themselves in emotional things, while they are working and they are more persistence in performance and they seek rewards for motivation. Furthermore, extrovert employees are positively linked with continuance commitment and affective commitment and

negatively associated with normative commitment. Extrovert employees are more emotionally involved because of their energetic and social behavior and they are more influenced by extrinsic rewards, this notion leads to the proposition that this type of employees would score high on continuance commitment. (McCrae, 1992; Watson & Clark, 1997; Lucas *et al.*, 2000). Studies showed that employees with agreeableness trait of personality keep a good relationship with other employees and they show high normative commitment (Judge *et al.*, 2002; Tobin *et al.*, 2000). It is found that neuroticism employees usually show nervousness, lack of confidence and many other negative emotions from this scholars concluded that they will have positive relationship with continuance commitment; however, they will have insignificant relationship with normative and affective commitment (Watson & Clark, 1984). From the above discussion we came up with six hypothesis for this study

H1: There is a significant association between the big five personality trait and organization commitment dimension.

H1a: There is a significant association between the big five personality trait and affective commitment.

H1b: There is a significant association between the big five personality trait and continuance commitment

H1c: There is a significant association between the big five personality trait and normative commitment

2. METHOD

Sample size: A total number of 150 responses were collected from the lecturers/supervisors working in public higher education institutes of Lahore, Pakistan.

2.1. Measures

Organization commitment: The measure of was adopted from Allen and Meyer's (1991). It measures three dimensions of organization commitment which includes affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. It comprised of 24 items, in which there are 8 questions for each of the three dimensions of organizational commitment. In this study, Cronbach's alpha was extracted 0.82, 0.74, and 0.76 respectively for each of the three dimensions— affective, continuance, and normative commitment, so was 0.84 for the sum total of the scale.

Five factor model of personality: This measure was adopted from Costa and McCrae. This scale is capable of measuring the big five personality traits and six dimensions of each trait. In the present study, the Cronbach's alpha was extracted 0.70, 0.68, 0.50, 0.51, 0.76 respectively for each dimensions—neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness, so was 0.74 for the sum total of the scale.

3. RESULTS

H1: In table 1, the correlation coefficient between the five factor personality traits and the dimensions of organizational commitment is presented. According to the findings of the table, the correlation coefficient between neuroticism and affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment respectively stood at -0.171, 0.184, and -0.243; and extraversion and normative commitment 0.194; openness to experience and affective and continuance commitment 0.190 and -0.166 respectively; agreeableness and normative commitment 0.181, and finally conscientiousness and affective and normative commitment 0.231, and 0.373 respectively. That is to say, the relationship of neuroticism to normative commitment, the conscientiousness to the affective, and normative commitment are significant at $p < 0.01$ level, while other relationships are significant at $p < 0.05$ level.

Table 1: The Pearson correlation coefficients between the five-factor personality and the dimensions of organizational commitment

Personality factors	Statistical indexes	Affective commitment	Continuance commitment	Normative commitment
Neuroticism	Pearson correlation coefficients	-0/171*	0/184*	-0/243**
	Significance level	0/037	0/026	0/003
Extraversion	Pearson correlation coefficients	0/055	0/023	0/194*
	Significance level	0/506	0/779	0/021
Openness to experience	Pearson correlation coefficients	0/190*	-0/166*	0/075
	Significance level	0/020	0/043	0/362
Agreeableness	Pearson correlation coefficients	0	0/109	0/181*
	Significance level	0/176	0/183	0/027
Conscientiousness	Pearson correlation coefficients	0/231**	0/048	0/373**
	Significance level	0/004	0/562	0/001

*p< 0.05 **p< 0.01

Multiple correlation coefficient with affective commitment as it explains 5% of its variance. In the second stage, by inserting openness to experience into the model, the explained variance rises by 8%.

Table 2: The multiple correlation coefficient and the results of the stepwise regression analysis with respect to predicting the AC (affective commitment)

Model	Statistical index	Multiple correlation coefficient MR	Determination coefficient RS	Ratio F Probability p	Regression coefficient (B)	
	Personality Factors				1	2
1	Conscientiousness	0/231	0/053	8/365 0/004	B=0/218 t=2/892 P<0/004	
2	Conscientiousness and openness to experience	0/284	0/081	6/445 0/002	B=0/201 t=2/673 P<0/008	B=0/175 t=2/082 P<0/039

Hypothesis1b: In table 3, the multiple correlation coefficient and the results of the stepwise regression analysis were introduced for predicting continuance commitment. As seen in table 3, among the five factors of personality as predictor variable, only openness to experience play a predictor role for continuance commitment, while other personality traits have no role as such.

Table 3: The multiple correlation coefficient and the results of the stepwise regression analysis with respect to predicting the continuance commitment

Model	Statistical index Personality factors	Multiple Correlation MR	Determination coefficient RS	Ratio F Probability P ¹	Regression coefficients (B)
1	Openness to experience	0/166	0/027	4/178 0/043	B=-0/123 t=-2/044 P<0/043

Hypothesis1c: in table 4, the multiple correlation coefficient and the results of the stepwise regression analysis were introduced for predicting normative commitment. According to the results of table 4, conscientiousness has the multiple correlation coefficients (0.37) with normative commitment, as it

explains 14% of its variance. In the second stage, when extraversion is added to equation, the explained variance rises by 16%. In the final stage, with the insertion of neuroticism, the multiple correlation coefficient amounts to 44%. Overall, the three variables were capable of explaining 19% of the normative commitment variance.

Table 4: The multiple correlation coefficient and the results of the stepwise regression analysis with respect to predicting the normative commitment

model	Statistical indexes Personality Factors	Multiple Determination correlation coefficient MR	coefficient RS	Ratio F Probability P	Regression coefficient (B)		
					1	2	3
1	Conscientiousness	0/373	0/139	23/963 0/001	B=0/236 t=4/895 P<0/001		
2	Conscientiousness and extraversion	0/405	0/164	14/439 0/001	B=0/277 t=5/374 P<0/001	B=0/197 t=2/090 P<0/038	
3	Conscientiousness, extraversion, and neuroticism	0/442	0/195	11/792 0/001	B=0/238 t=4/471 P<0/001	B=0/183 t=2/961 P<0/004	B=-0/219 t=-2/365 P<0/019

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the association between five factor model of personality and organization commitment dimensions among the staff of public sector higher institutes of Lahore, Pakistan. The results exposed that there is in general a significant relationship between the big five personality traits and the dimensions of organizational commitment. According to the findings of the study, there is a negative significant relationship between neuroticism and affective commitment, Neuroticism is considered to be the main source of negative emotions, for which the association between negative emotions and organizational commitment in the previous studies (Cropanzano *et al.*, 1993; Thoresen *et al.*, 2003) was observed, (Kumar & Bakhshi, 2010). Likewise, there is a positive significant relationship between neuroticism and continuance commitment, which is in line with the findings of Pasha *et al.* (2008), Erdheim *et al.* (2006), and Kumar & Bakhshi (2010). The finding can be explained as neuroses are prone to experience negative situations (Magnus *et al.*, 1993) and negative emotions (Emmons *et al.*, 1985), this leads them to be cautious about emotional investment in an organization, as well as aware of the costs of leaving job. Evidence has shown that neuroses display more continuance commitment, since they experience more negative events in their lives; this stems from their fear of losing the current position (Meyer & Allen, 1997). There is also a negative significant relationship between neuroticism and normative commitment, which is in line with the findings of Jazayeri *et al.* (2006), and Pasha *et al.* (2008). In other words, people with negative feelings namely anger, anxiety, and stress are devoid of essential stability, and they are remarkably concerned with internal and subjective issues, neglecting their extrinsic stimuli and events in the workplace. The ignorance or negligence would make them incapable of meeting the expectations they held in their work, including environmental or organizational expectations, loyalty and commitment to their organization and career (Jazayeri *et al.*, 2006).

Another finding of the present study was that there is a positive significant relationship between extraversion and normative commitment, extrovert people tend to build a bilateral connection with their organization, because they believe that the bilateral connection is a psychological contract between them and organization, by which a social ideal environment is provided for them (Watson, 2000).

There is a positive significant relationship between openness to experience and affective commitment. The individuals who earn high scores in openness to experience can achieve the power to accept various issues including career will grow in them (Jazayeri *et al.*, 2006). There is a negative

significant relationship between openness to experience and continuance commitment, Since openness to experience can be regarded as a personal need for change, intricacy, freshness, and interior desire to experience (McCrae, 1996), the people who earn high scores in openness to experience reach high levels with respect to exploration, more willing to pursue the alternatives to their jobs (Erdheim *et al.*, 2006).

The results of the research indicate that there is a significant relationship between agreeableness and normative commitment. This is because agreeableness is pleasantly linked to communication with other people (Organ & Lingl, 1995), which in turn is directly related to affective intimacy, Such affection can increase worker's social identity in the workplace, so it can heighten his need for forging a bilateral relationship with organization in an attempt to provide a supportive social environment.

Another finding of the study was that there is a positive significant relationship between conscientiousness and affective commitment. In the end, there is a significant relationship between conscientiousness and normative commitment; As for the explanations of both findings, we have to say that conscientious people can increase their attachment to work by the level of organization (Erdheim *et al.*, 2006), since they are inclined to be involved in their jobs (Organ & Lingl, 1995).

The results of the stepwise regression analysis revealed that, among the fivefold personality traits, openness to experience and conscientiousness has the maximum role of predicting affective commitment. Similarly, among the same traits, it was just openness to experience that could predict continuance commitment, while other traits had no parts. Moreover, conscientiousness, extraversion, and neuroticism had the maximum role of predicting the normative commitment.

The study can help the human resource managers to make a pre hiring strategy in accordance to the finding of the study.

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