

THE IMPACT OF FIVE - FACTOR MODEL OF
PERSONALITY ON ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT
OF ENGLISH TEACHERS IN SRI LANKAN
GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

Commitment of the teachers is one of the most important issues in the education sector. A number of investigations have identified personality of the teachers as a major influencing factor of their organizational commitment. However, relatively few researchers have examined the impact of five factor model of personality on organizational commitment. The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of five factor model of personality on organizational commitment of English teachers in Sri Lankan government schools. The data were randomly collected from a sample of 450 English teachers who work in North Central, Western and North Western provinces in Sri Lanka. A questionnaire was administered among the English teachers to measure their big five personality and organizational commitment. The collected data were analyzed using correlation coefficient and regression analysis. The results of the study indicated that extraversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness had a significant positive relationship with organizational commitment. Results further indicated that Neuroticism and openness to experience had insignificant negative association with organizational commitment. It is concluded that extraversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness had a strong influence on English teachers' organizational commitment.

Keywords: English teachers, Five Factor Model of Personality, Impact, Organizational Commitment

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Introduction

Organizational Commitment (OC) is an important topic in organizational research due to its many effects on the overall performance of the organization. Although most of the researches on organizational commitment have been done within industrial -organizational and occupational settings (Mueller, Wallace & Price, 1992) but few researches on organizational commitment have been conducted within educational settings. Over the past several decades, an impressive amount of research efforts have been devoted to understand the nature, antecedents, and consequences of organizational commitment. It has received much attention in the work place because of its correlation with many employee behaviors and attitudes. Meta-analyses indicate that commitment is negatively related to turnover (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005), absenteeism (Farrell & Stamm, 1988), counterproductive behavior (Dalal, 2005) and positively related to job satisfaction (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005), motivation (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990), and organizational citizenship behaviors (Ricketta, 2002). Low commitment has also been associated with low levels of morale (DeCottis & Summers, 1987) and decreased measures of altruism and compliance (Schappe, 1998). Finally, non-committed employees may describe the organization in negative terms to outsiders thereby inhibiting the organization's ability to recruit high-quality employees (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982).

In reviewing the theoretical and empirical evidence, researchers have identified different factors that can be affected for organizational commitment. Personal characteristics (Meyer and Allen, 1993), supervisory relationship (Randall, Feder, Longenecker, 1990), job characteristic, work experience, role related characteristics (Mowday et al, 1982) are considered as more commonly investigated antecedences of organizational commitment. In addition to these factors dispositional factors influenced to organizational commitment. Personality characteristics, needs, attitudes, preferences and motives that result in a tendency to react to situations in a predetermined manner are the dispositional factors (House, Shane & Herrold, 1996).

Understanding someone's personality is very important to managers because this knowledge is also useful for placing people into jobs and it gives managers clues about how that person is likely to act and feel in a variety of situations. In turn, Persons' personality is a good predictor of work attitudes and work outcomes. According to Kumar and Bakhshi (2010) the dispositional

factors are always referring to the five-factor model of personality namely openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism (Kumar and Bakhshi, 2010). Big five is one of the most prominent models in contemporary psychology to describe the most salient aspects of personality (Goldberg, 1990; John & Srivastava, 1999).

Although the researches on identification of antecedents of job satisfaction have increased enormously over the past few years, dispositional sources are given less consideration. The relationship of the five factor model of personality on job satisfaction is much less studied (Gelade, Dobson & Gilbert, 2006; Silva, 2006). In Sri Lankan research literature, there were few researches on personality and organizational commitment but nothing can be found on the impact of five factor model of personality on organizational commitment in the English teachers in Sri Lankan government schools.

Problem statement

In order to improve the organizational commitment of the employees, the managers have to identify the factors influencing on organizational commitment. In reviewing the literature, lots of researchers have identified different factors influencing to organizational commitment. Among them, big five personality characteristics of the employees are identified as important factors which shape the employees' organizational commitment. Anyway, there were no any researches on the impact of big five personalities on organizational commitment among the English teachers in Sri Lankan government schools. Therefore, the problem addressed in this study is to investigate "How does five factor model of personality influence on organizational commitment of English teachers in the government schools in Sri Lanka?"

Objective of the study

To investigate the impact of five factor model of personality on organizational commitment of English teachers in Sri Lankan government schools.

Literature review

Five Factor Model of Personality

The five-factor model of personality or the Big Five dimensions of personality involves five relatively independent traits that provide meaningful information about individual differences in an organization and their responses (Kumar and Bakhshi, 2010). Openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism are the traits of this model. These dimensions altogether provide a meaningful taxonomy for the study of individual differences. Openness to experience is the degree to which a person is curious, original, intellectual, creative, and open to new ideas. People high in openness seem to thrive in situations that require flexibility and learning new things. They are highly motivated to learn new skills, and they do well in training settings (Barrick& Mount, 1991; Lievens, Harris, Van Keer&Bisqueret, 2003). The most prominent part of this personality is originality and creativity whereby this type of person is mostly innovators and initiators (Teng, 2008). Conscientiousness refers to the degree to which a person is organized, systematic, punctual, achievement-oriented, and dependable. Conscientiousness is the one personality trait that uniformly predicts how high a person's performance will be across a variety of occupations and jobs (Barrick& Mount, 1991). This type of personality can be referred as self-discipline and ability to act obediently (Erdheim, Wang and Zickar, 2006). Extraversion is the degree to which a person is outgoing, talkative, sociable, and enjoys socializing (Teng, 2008). Employees with this type of personality have the propensity to have more friends and spend more time in social circumstances. Extraverts have an easier time than introverts do when adjusting to a new job. They actively seek information and feedback and build effective relationships, which helps them adjust (Wanberg&Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000). Agreeableness is the degree to which a person is affable, tolerant, sensitive, trusting, kind, and warm (Kumar and Bakhshi, 2010). People who are high in agreeableness are likeable people who get along with others. Not surprisingly, agreeable people help others at work consistently; this helping behavior does not depend on their good mood (Ilies, Scott, & Judge, 2006). Neuroticism or emotional stability refers to the degree to which a person is anxious, irritable, temperamental, and moody (Teng, 2008). It is perhaps the only Big Five dimension where scoring high is undesirable. People very high in Neuroticism experience a number of

problems at work. They have trouble forming and maintaining relationships and are less likely to go for advice and friendship (Klein, Beng-Chong, Saltz & Mayer, 2004).

Organizational Commitment

Organizational researchers can be divided into two major camps, those who view organizational commitment as an attitude and those who view it as behaviors (Meyer and Allen, 1991). According to Poter et al., (1984) an attitudinal perspective refers to the psychological attachment or affective commitment (AC) formed by an employee in relation to his identification and involvement with the respective organization. They further explain this as “an attachment to the organization, characterized by intention to remain in it, identification with the values and goals of the organization, and a willingness to exert extra effort on its behalf.” Behavioral perspectives of organizational commitment is explained under the side bet theory (Becker, 1960) Side bets theory refers to the accumulation of investments valued by the individual which would be lost if she or he was to leave the organization (Becker, 1960). According to this theory individuals are committed to the organization as far as they hold their positions, irrespective of the stressful condition they experience. However, if they have been given alternative benefits, they will not to leave the organization

Meyer and Allen (1990) viewed organizational commitment as multidimensional concept. Meyer and Allen (1991) proposed a Three-Component Model, including: AC, Continuance Commitment (CC), and Normative Commitment (NC). AC refers to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization (positive feelings, or emotions, toward the organization). The antecedents for AC include perceived job characteristics (task autonomy, task significance, task identity, skill variety and supervisory feedback), organizational dependability (extent to which employees feel the organization can be counted on to look after their interests), and perceived participatory management (extent to which employees feel they can influence decisions on the work environment and other issues of concern to them). CC refers to commitment based on the costs that the employee associates with leaving the organization due to the high cost of leaving. Potential antecedents of CC include age, tenure, career satisfaction and intent to leave. NC refers to an employee's feeling of obligation to remain with the organization based on the employee having internalized the values and goals of the organization. The potential antecedents for NC include co-worker commitment (including

affective and normative dimensions, as well as commitment behaviors), organizational dependability and participatory management. Co-workers' commitment is expected to provide normative signals that influence the development of NC.

Anyway, the researcher conceptualized organizational commitment as a work related attitude and defined it as psychological attachment or affective commitment formed by the English teachers in relation to their identification and involvement with the respective organization. Lots of researches have only considered the affective component of the commitment because affective commitment is a best predictor of individual performance (Angle and Lawson, 1994). According to Meyer et al., (1989), employees who are affectively committed to the organization tend to perform better than those who are not.

Five factor model of personality and organizational commitment

Several researchers have pointed out the correlation between each dimensions of five factor personality model and organizational commitment (Eidheim, Wang and Zickar, 2006; Kumar and Bakhshi, 2010; Chandel, Sharma and Bansal, 2011).

Eidheim, Wang and Zickar (2006) have found significant positive relationship between extraversion and affective commitment. Similarly, Watson and Clark (1997) stated that those high in extraversion experience higher affective commitment than those who are less extraverted because extroverts exhibit positive emotionality. As a result of that they strongly identify the goals of the organization and desire to remain in the organization. In addition, several researchers have found significant positive correlation between positive emotionality and affective commitment (Williams, Gavin, & Williams, 1996). Therefore, the following hypothesis is suggested;

H₁ : English teachers' extraversion will be positively related to their affective commitment.

Based on the theoretical and empirical foundation, it can be argued that there is a positive relationship between agreeableness and affective commitment. Since the agreeableness is an interpersonal factor that focuses on the quality of relationships through cooperation and trust, highly agreeable individuals have a tendency to be forgiving, courteous, and flexible in dealing with others (DeNeve & Cooper, 1998; Judge, et al., 1999). Agreeableness helps to build pleasant

and satisfying relationship with other employees (Organ and Lingl, 1995). As a results of that agreeableness link to emotional warmth and it may encourage an employee's social identity with their work environment. Then, it encourages their sense of belonging and identification with values and goals. Morrison (1997) reported agreeableness to be significantly correlated with overall organizational commitment. Similar to this Naquin and Holton (2002) found a modest relationship between agreeableness and affective commitment. Based on these facts, the following hypothesis is developed;

H₂: English teachers' agreeableness will be positively related to their affective commitment.

The relationship between conscientiousness and affective commitment is positive (Erdheim, Wang and Zickar, 2006; Matzler & Renzl, 2007; Naquin & Holton, 2002). According to Ciavarella, Buchholtz, Riordan, Gatewood, & Stokes (2004) the dimensions of conscientiousness (dependability, industriousness and efficiency) are the predictors of persevering, hardworking and achievement oriented people. On the other hand, conscientiousness is positively correlated with job involvement (Organ & Lingl, 1995). Theory suggests that individuals affectively committed to the organization are characterized by high involvement in the organization and commitment to its goals (Meyer et al., 1989). Therefore it seems logical to predict conscientiousness may enhance affective commitment because the employees who highly engaged with their jobs are involved in their organizations. Based on the evidence presented the following hypothesis is formulated;

H₃: English teachers' conscientiousness will be positively related to their affective commitment

Some studies pointed out that there was a negative relationship between neuroticism and affective commitment (Gelade, Dobson & Gilbert, 2006; Naquin & Holton, 2002). Bozionelos (2004) stressed that neurotic individuals should be more likely to develop negative attitudes and behaviors towards their work. Naquin and Holton (2002) found that neuroticism was significantly and negatively associated with affective commitment. Similarly, Gelade and colleagues (2006) found that affective commitment was higher in nations where neuroticism was lower. Thus, following hypothesis is suggested;

H₄: English teachers' neuroticism will be negatively related to their affective commitment

Lounsbury, Sundstrom, Loveland and Gibson (2003) found that openness to experience individuals are more likely to expend time and effort to finish projects, meet deadlines and are more productive. Therefore it is reasonable to predict that openness is likely to influence the employees' affective commitment. McCrae (1996) and Erdheim, Wang and Zickar (2006) found that openness employees are normally average in affective commitment. Although the research support is limited, it was predicted that individuals higher in openness are more likely to affectively commit to their organization. The following hypothesis is suggested by considering the above facts.

H5: English teachers' openness to experience will be positively related to their affective commitment

Research methodology

The research design

The current study employed a correlational research design in order to explore the relationship between English teachers' big five personality (independent variable) and their organizational commitment (dependent variable). This field study is conducted in natural environment in government schools under non-contrived settings. The unit of study is individual.

Population and sample

The population of this study is all the English teachers who work in government schools in Sri Lanka. The sample of this study was drawn from a population comprised of 21132 English teachers in Sri Lanka. The study was conducted using 470 English teachers. 58 teachers of English from North Central province, 250 teachers of English from Western province and 162 English teachers from North Western province were randomly selected for this study. The gender composition of the sample was 60% female (N = 270) and 40 % male (N = 180). The mean age of the English teachers of 35.51 years (SD= 6.51). Respondents have been in their present organization an average of 13.2 years (SD= 8.40).

Measures

English teachers' organizational commitment was the dependent variable and big five personality of the English teachers was the independent variable of this research. These variables

were measured using standard instruments. The questionnaire was separated into three sections for demographic data, big five personality types and organizational commitment. Six questions were included to get the demographic information. The big five inventory (John, Donahue, and Kentle,1991) was used to measure big five personality. It was measured using 44 questions including 8, 9, 9, 8, 10 questions were used to measure extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience respectively. 08 questions were used to measure the affective commitment.

Validity and reliability

The questionnaire which was prepared for English teachers consists of 02 instruments (big five personality and organizational commitment). Big five inventory is a standard questionnaire which has been developed by John, Donahue, and Kentle, (1991) and assured the content validity. The instrument which is used to measure affective commitment was developed by Allen and Meyer (1991) and assured the content validity.

Table 01 - Alpha value for test retests reliability

Variables	Alpha value
Extraversion	0.91
Agreeableness	0.84
Conscientiousness	0.81
Neuroticism	0.89
Openness to experience	0.79
Affective commitment	0.88

Table 02 - Cronbach coefficient alpha value for internal consistency

Variables	Alpha value
Extraversion	0.89
Agreeableness	0.81
Conscientiousness	0.81
Neuroticism	0.90
Openness to experience	0.89

Affective commitment	0.84
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It can be concluded that the instruments possess high test retest reliability and the internal consistency reliability is satisfactory owing to the data represented in table 01 and 02.

Methods of data analysis

The data were analyzed using correlation coefficient and regression analysis. SPSS data analysis package of 17th version was used to analyze the data.

Results

The results of the univariate data are given in table 03 and 04. According to the data, the level of affective commitment is high among the English teachers. According to the table 04, the majority of English teachers have the personality type of conscientiousness and Neuroticism is the lowest personality trait among the English teachers.

Table 03- The results of univariate

Variables	Mean	Std.Deviation
Extraversion	3.51	0.63
Agreeableness	4.07	0.48
Conscientiousness	4.18	0.54
Neuroticism	2.72	0.70
Openness to experience	3.48	0.62
Affective commitment	3.57	0.54

Table 04- Correlation coefficient between independent variables and dependent variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Extraversion	-					
2. Agreeableness	.31**	-				
3. Conscientiousness	.19*	.21**	-			
4. Neuroticism	-.30**	-.24*	-.21**	-		
5. Openness to experience	.23**	.17*	.12*	.21**	-	
6. Affective commitment	.24**	.18**	.11**	-.07	-.11	-

*p<.05, **p<.01

Table 05- Results of regression analysis

	β	R^2	P value	F value
Extraversion	0.21	0.19	0.00	55.32
Agreeableness	0.34	0.31	0.00	86.32
Conscientiousness	0.11	0.09	0.03	11.10
Neuroticism	-0.14	0.15	0.07	2.21
Openness to experience	-0.19	0.07	0.12	-4.36

The results of the correlation coefficient between big five personality and organizational commitment of English teachers in Sri Lankan national schools are presented in Table 04. According to the results, the correlation between extraversion and affective commitment ($r = .24, p < 0.01$), agreeableness and affective commitment ($r = 0.18, p < 0.01$), conscientiousness and affective commitment ($r = 0.11, p < 0.01$) were significant and positive. It was reported a negative relationship between neuroticism and affective commitment ($r = -0.07$) and openness to experience and affective commitment ($r = -0.11$) but the relationships are not significant.

The result of the regression analysis is reported in table 06. The relationship between extraversion and affective commitment ($\beta = .21, p < .01$), agreeableness and affective commitment ($\beta = .34, p < .01$), conscientiousness and affective commitment ($\beta = .11, p < .05$) were significant and positive. Neuroticism and openness to experience were found to be negatively related with affective commitment but the relationships were statistically insignificant.

Discussion

The main objective of this study was to examine the impact of five factors model of personality on organizational commitment of English teachers in Sri Lankan government schools.

The results of correlation coefficient and regression analysis indicated that personality types of extraversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness of the English teachers have significantly and positively correlated to their organizational commitment. These findings generally supported the research hypotheses one, two and three. The fourth hypothesis was that English teachers' neuroticism would negatively relate to their affective commitment. There is statistical evidence to

accept this hypothesis but the relationship was insignificant. The fifth hypothesis was that there was a positive relationship between openness to experience and affective commitment. According to the results of correlation and regression analysis, the relationship was negative.

The personality type of extraversion has significantly explained 19% of variance in affective commitment. The agreeableness and conscientiousness have an ability to explain 31% and 9% variance of affective commitment respectively. Agreeableness was the strongest predictor of affective commitment within this sample. The neuroticism and openness to experience have not significant predictors of affective commitment. F values represent that there are significant linear relationships between extraversion and affective commitment (55.32), agreeableness and affective commitment (86.32), conscientiousness and affective commitment (11.10).

Conclusion

In the present research, the personality type of extraversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness of English teachers were significantly correlated with their affective commitment. However, the links of the neuroticism and openness to experience with affective commitment were not statistically significant.

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