

**Effect of personality characteristics on organizational commitment and job performance**Sayed Aliakbar Ahmadi<sup>1</sup>, Somayyeh Zarei Baba Arabi<sup>2</sup>, Reza Zare<sup>3</sup>, Ali Reza Fathizadeh<sup>4</sup><sup>1</sup> Department of Public Administration, Payame Noor University, PO BOX 19395-3697, Tehran, IRAN<sup>2</sup> Department of Educational Science, Payame Noor University, PO BOX 19395-3697, Tehran, IRAN<sup>3</sup> Department of Public Administration, Payame Noor University, PO BOX 19395-3697, Tehran, IRAN,E-mail: [rezazare77@gmail.com](mailto:rezazare77@gmail.com)<sup>4</sup> Department of Public Administration, Payame Noor University, PO BOX 19395-3697, Tehran, IRAN

**Abstract:** This survey is mainly aimed to explore the relationship between personality characteristics and the employees' organizational commitment and job performance. In order to do so, the employees of Fars Agricultural Organization were selected as the population. The questionnaires used in this survey included some multiple-choice questions related to the personality characteristics, organizational commitment and job performance. The questionnaires were randomly distributed among the employees. Results show that there is a direct relationship between personality characteristics, such as being conscientious, and the organizational commitment and job performance. Moreover, there is a direct relationship between being agreeableness and organizational commitment of the employees, but there is no direct relationship between being agreeableness and job performance. As expected, there is a negative relationship between characteristics such as being neurosis and organizational commitment. According to the results, there is a positive relationship between extroversion and organizational commitment. On the other hand, there is no direct relationship between extroversion and job performance. Moreover, there is a direct relationship between organizational commitment and job performance.

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**Key words:** Personality Characteristics; Conscientiousness; Agreeableness; Neuroticism; Organizational Commitment; Job Performance.

**Introduction**

"Personality" can be defined as a dynamic and organized set of characteristics possessed by a person that uniquely influences his or her cognitions, motivations, and behaviors in various situations. During the recent years, the staff managers and the advisers have presented various methods in order to evaluate the personality characteristics of the candidates. Hunt & Brow concluded that the personality characteristics play a main role in the employees' progress and failure. (Spector, 2000)

The word "personality" originates from the Latin *persona*, which means mask. Significantly, in the theatre of the ancient Latin-speaking world, the mask was not used as a plot device to *disguise* the identity of a character, but rather was a convention employed to represent or *typify* that character. Personality may also refer to the patterns of thoughts, feelings and behaviors consistently exhibited by an individual over time that strongly influence our expectations, self-perceptions, values and attitudes, and predicts our reactions to people, problems and stress. In a phrase, personality is not just who we are, it is also how we are. (Carver and Scheier, 2004).

The pioneering American psychologist Gordon Allport (1937) described two major ways to study personality: the nomothetic and the idiographic.

*Nomothetic psychology* seeks general laws that can be applied to many different people, such as the principle of self-actualization, or the trait of extraversion. *Idiographic psychology* is an attempt to understand the unique aspects of a particular individual. (Franklin, 2011)

Today, organizations obtain their goods and materials from the other countries. But human resource is not interchangeable. Therefore, this is to say that the skilled human resource is the main comparative capital of a country (Casio & Agonies, 2005).

**Personality characteristics**

With regard to the personality of individuals, the employment process can be promoted. Since the personality characteristics affect on the behavior of the employees, they can be used in order to present a framework for predicting the personal behavior. Being informed from the employees' personality helps the manager to employ those having the necessary qualifications. It also decreases the employees' replacement and increases their job satisfaction (Zuckerman, 1991).

"Personality" is referred to the unobservable power which includes behavior, thoughts, motivation and emotion. By personality, we mean how the people

differ from each other and how they are alike (McCrae, R.R and Costa, P.t, 1990).

In past, researchers had various opinions about the number of personality characteristics. From the viewpoint of Alphon, there are 4000 characteristics relative to the personality, but Raymond Katal believes that there are 16 personality characteristics.

Today, researchers have concluded that human personality has the following characteristics:

- Extroversion
- Pleasure
- Dutifulness
- Excitement
- Freedom of thought

Personality affects on the personal characteristics. It is worth noting that your unique personality is under the influence of your personal priorities. It affects on the selection of your friend or a classical music (Bagboy et al, 2005).

From the viewpoint of Gordon Alport, personality characteristics are rare. Sometimes a person is distinguished from other persons based on his/her unique characteristic.

From the viewpoint of most of the people, personality includes both primary and secondary characteristics.

The first one is referred to those on which the personality is based. The second one refers to the priorities, attitudes and behaviors of an individual (Srivastava et al, 2003).

There are some unique characteristics affecting on the jobs. These characteristics include:

- Mental/ physical activities
- Crowded / isolated environments
- Group / personal work
- The way of supervising

Personality refers to a set of mental characteristics of a person which affect on his/ her way of thinking. In other words, personality includes a set of mental characteristics used for distinguishing the position of persons (Plomin et al, 1998).

Lewis Goldberg proposed a five-dimension personality model, nicknamed the "Big Five":

- 1) **Openness to Experience:** the tendency to be imaginative, independent, and interested in variety vs. practical, conforming, and interested in routine.
- 2) **Conscientiousness:** the tendency to be organized, careful, and disciplined vs. disorganized, careless, and impulsive.
- 3) **Extraversion:** the tendency to be sociable, fun-loving, and affectionate vs. retiring, somber, and reserved.
- 4) **Agreeableness:** the tendency to be softhearted, trusting, and helpful vs. ruthless, suspicious, and uncooperative.

5) **Neuroticism:** the tendency to be calm, secure, and self-satisfied vs. anxious, insecure, and self-pitying (Santrock, 2008).

This survey has used the Lewis Goldberg viewpoint to investigate the personal characteristics concept.

### Organizational commitment

Organizational commitment is one of the main issues based on which the personality of a person is shaped and he/she enjoys from the organizational partnership. Organizational commitment means the degree of psychological equalization of the organization used in order to:

- accept the organizational values and objectives
- have a tendency toward the organizational effort
- have a tendency toward being stable in the organization ( Mowdy et al, 1982)

An organization should develop the level of its employees' commitment because organizational commitment is a new idea and there is a difference between job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Stitzer and Portz, 1992). For example, most of the nurses may enjoy their jobs, but they are not satisfied to work in some hospitals. Therefore, they seek another place to work in (Greenberg and Baron, 1997). Moreover, there are some evidences showing that there is a positive relationship between organizational commitment and some consequences including job satisfaction, organizational behavior and job performance. Also, there is a negative relationship between organizational commitment and job learning (Shian Cheng et al, 2002). The high performance of the organizations, companies and institutions is based on the various factors. There are several methods for solving some problems which lead to decrease the job performance. From the viewpoint of some authors, being focused on the personality characteristics of the employees is the way through which the job performance problems are solved.

### Job performance

Personal and organizational objectives combined with the performance improvement are regarded as the factors having influence on the productivity of human force. In other words, it is not expected the human forces to have a high performance when their social needs are not removed. It is needed to present a system by which these problems can be improved. The main tools for doing so are the suitable administrative systems and human resource regarded as the supportive systems (Kaplan, R.S and Norton, D.P, 1992).

Evaluation of performance means the process through which the operational efficiencies and effectiveness are quantified (Neely, A.D, Georgy,M, Platts, K.W, 1995).

From a long time ago, the organizational performance has been evaluated by the authors. In past, the commercial organizations used the financial criterion as an instrument for evaluating performance. At the early 1980, Jonson & Kaplen explored some inefficiencies related to the evaluation of organizational performance. These inefficiencies were resulted from the increase of the organizational performance and market competitions.

An efficient evaluation system can affect on the recognition of unique abilities of the persons. On the other hand, the efficient evaluation system can increase the employees' commitment and motivation (Tangen, 2004).

Evidences show that the employees interested in the organization, have high qualified job performance. They don't absent their selves from the organization and have more motivation to work. Therefore, the organizations can fulfill their objectives by determining the degree of organizational commitment of the employees.

Regarding the mentioned issues, it is important to investigate the relationship between personality characteristics, organizational commitment and job performance. Authors believe that five – dimension model can be used in order to describe the main aspects of personality. This model has been used in psychological and organizational areas related to the job performance (Barrick and Mount, 1991).

### Research background

Barrick and Mount (1991) concluded that being conscientious is the main personality characteristics for predicting job performance. Moreover, characteristics such as extroversion and neurosis are the best for predicting job satisfaction (Barrick and Mount, 1991)

From the viewpoint of Kark, Shamir and Chen (2003), being conscientious is the main factor affecting on the job performance (Kark, Shamir and Chen, 2003)

Birneh concluded that being conscientious is suitable for predicting job performance (Birneh et al, 2005).

Regarding the relationship between job performance and organizational commitment of the managers, Johns et al (2000) concluded that there is a direct relationship between the organizational commitment and job performance of the employees.

Smith (2004) examined the effects of personality characteristics of the managers on the attitudes of the employees' attitudes of the employees and concluded

that there is a direct relationship between the managers' personality and the employees' attitude. Also, there is a direct relationship between emotional constancy and extroversion of the managers. Meanwhile, there is a direct relationship between the employees' satisfaction, emotional commitment and job – leaving.

### Method and Material

#### Research hypothesis

H1: there is a relationship between being conscientious and organizational commitment.

H2: there is a relationship between being agreeableness and organizational commitment.

H3: there is a relationship between being conscientious and job performance.

H4: there is a relationship between being agreeableness and job performance.

H5: there is a negative relationship between being neuroticism and organizational commitment.

H6: there is a relationship between being neuroticism and job performance.

H7: there is a relationship between organizational commitment and job performance.

H8: there is a meaningful difference between the job performances of the male and the female employees.

H9: there is a meaningful difference between the organizational commitments of the male and the female employees.

Since the relationship between the variables is examined, this is a descriptive - correlative survey. The population includes 2820 employees of Fars Agricultural Organization from whom 183 ones were selected as the sample using Cochran (1977) formula. 183 out of 200 questionnaires distributed randomly among population were gathered.

Equal 1) Cochran formula

$$n = \frac{N \times Z_{\alpha/2}^2 \times P(1-P)}{\varepsilon^2 (N-1) + Z_{\alpha/2}^2 \times P(1-P)} = 183$$

P: Estimated as adjective ratio of variable (P=0.5)

Z: The quantity of normal variable of unit, proportionate to safety level of 95 percent

$(Z_{\alpha/2} = 1.96)$

ε: The wrong permissible quantity ( $\varepsilon = 0.07$ )

N: The volume of statistical social (2820)

P equals to 0.5; because where p=0.5, n quantity is maximum and it causes sample to be great enough

The following questionnaires were used in order to gather data:

*NEO questionnaire* : the NEO questionnaire designed by Kasta and McCare (1989), included 60

questions for evaluating five main factors of personality including neurosis, extroversion, clear experiences, being agreeableness and being conscientious. This survey is mainly aimed to examine three aspects including neurosis, being agreeableness and being conscientious (McCare, R and Costa, P.T, 1990).

*Organizational commitment questionnaire:* this questionnaire makes clear that to what extent a person is responsible toward his/her organization (Mowdy et al, 1982).

*Job performance questionnaire:* this questionnaire was designed by the managers of a Japanese company in 1993 in order to evaluate the job performance of the employees in Khuzestan Steel Company. It has been regulated for three groups including the staffs, the employees and the managers (Naami, 2005).

Cronbach's  $\alpha$  test was used in order to determine the permanency of the questionnaires. The questionnaires' permanency was 0.87. Therefore, the questionnaires were suitable because  $0.87 > 0.7$ . As mentioned above, the reliable questionnaires were also used in this survey. This survey has used the Pearson correlation for instigating relation between independent and dependent variable. Independent variables are personal characteristics and organizational commitment, and dependent variable is job performance. This survey has used the ANOVA test for investigating difference between groups of male and female.

## Results

In order to determine hypothesis 1, the scores related to examination of the two variables were estimated using regression test. As seen in the table below, there is a positive relationship between being conscientious and organizational commitment.

Table 1: Relationship between being conscientious and organizational commitment

Pearson correlation	0.327
N	183
$\beta$	0.31
Sig.(2.tail)	0.001*
t	5.3

\*P<0.05

In order to examine hypothesis 2, the correlation between the scores related to the variables was evaluated using regression test, as shown in table 2, there is a positive relationship between being agreeableness and organizational commitment.

Table 2: Relationship between being agreeableness and organizational commitment

Pearson correlation	0.257
N	183
$\beta$	0.25
Sig.(2.tail)	0.001*
t	4.14

\*P<0.05

In order to examine hypothesis 3, the correlation between the scores of tests related to the variables was estimated. As illustrated in table 3, there is a positive relationship between being conscientious and organizational performance.

Table 3: Relationship between being conscientious and organizational performance

Pearson correlation	0.196
N	183
$\beta$	0.16
Sig.(2.tail)	0.042*
t	2.23

\*P<0.05

In order to test hypothesis 4, the correlation between the scores of tests related to the variables was estimated.

As seen in table 4, there is a positive relationship between characteristic of being agreeableness and job performance. Although the relationship between the two variables is positive, this relationship is not meaningful.

Table 4: Relationship between characteristic of being agreeableness and job performance

Pearson correlation	0.253
N	183
$\beta$	0.17
Sig.(2.tail)	0.174*
t	2.66

\*P<0.05

In order to test hypothesis 5, the correlation of the two variables was estimated using regression test. As shown in table 5, there is a negative relationship between the characteristic of being neurosis and organizational commitment.

Table 5: Relationship between the characteristic of being neurosis and organizational commitment

Pearson correlation	-0.145
N	183
$\beta$	0.34
Sig.(2.tail)	0.005*
t	2.21

\*P&lt;0.05

In order to test hypothesis 6, the correlation between the two variables (being neurosis and job performance) was estimated using regression test. As illustrated in a table 6, there is no relationship between the characteristic of being neurosis and job performance.

Table 6: Relationship between the characteristic of being neurosis and job performance

Pearson correlation	-0.263
N	183
$\beta$	0.05
Sig.(2.tail)	0.23*
t	0.75

\*P&lt;0.05

In order to test hypothesis 7, the correlation between the two variables (organizational commitment and organizational performance) was estimated using regression test. As seen in table 7, there is a positive relationship between organizational commitment and organizational performance.

Table 7: Relationship between organizational commitment and organizational performance

Pearson correlation	0.412
N	183
$\beta$	0.339
Sig.(2.tail)	0.000*
t	4.95

\*P&lt;0.05

In order to test hypothesis 8, the scores related to the organizational performance of male and female employees were calculated using T-test. As shown in table 8, there is no difference between the males and females' organizational performance.

Table 8. T-test related to the difference between the males' and females' organizational performance

Groups	N	Mean	St.d	d.f	T	P-value
Males	141	15.12	3.82	182	1.66	3.65*
Females	42	15.85	2.95			

\* P&lt;0.05

In order to test hypothesis 9, the scores related to the organizational commitment of male and female employees were calculated using T-test. As seen in table 9, there is a meaningful difference between the organizational commitment of the male and female employees.

Table 9. T-test related to the difference between the organizational commitment of the male and female employees

Groups	N	Mean	St.d	d.f	T	P-value
Males	141	37.10	7.48	182	2.32	0.038*
Females	42	35.81	4.69			

\*P&lt;0.05

### Conclusion

Today, it is believed that a person lacking necessary talents for learning new profession will be unsuccessful, however attractive he/she may be. This issue overshadows the public joint emotions. Evidences show that the personality factors have influence on the failure and success of the employees.

Organizational commitment and job performance of the employees are the main issues investigated by the managers of the organizations. From the middle 2000, the organizational commitment has been taken into consideration and many researchers have evaluated it. Results of these researches show that there is a direct relationship between the organizational commitment and the job performance of the employees. Moreover, the organizational commitment affects on the performance of the organization.

In order to achieve the organizational objectives, the employees should work suitably. It is necessary for the public organizations having weak performance to achieve their goals. From social perspective, the organizations should have the employees who can improve the organizational productivity and national economy.

Evidences show that there are various factors affecting on the job performance of the employees. These factors not only affect on the employees' performance, but also improve the quality and the productivity of the organizations. Personality characteristic is regarded as one of the main variables leading to better organizational commitment and job performance. It is believed that there is a relationship between the organizations' joint problems and the personality factors. Regarding the importance of personality characteristics of the employees, it is hypothesized that the employees' problems can affect on their job performance. Therefore, with regard to the results of this survey, the organizations should

take the employees' personality characteristics into consideration in order to improve their job performance.

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