

## The Role of Personality Factors on Job Satisfaction among Academic Staff at Public Research University

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### Abstract

The current study was intended to examine the association between personality factors and job satisfaction among academic staff. The job satisfaction assumed as an essential factor in educational organizations spatially university that influenced by various factors. Moreover, distinguishing these effective factors is very important and lack of consideration to this inner feeling leads to several abnormal organizational behaviors at university. Therefore, this study focused on the association between these two factors at university. A cross-sectional examination design was applied with purposive selected sample that taken from academic staff (N=440) of public research universities in Klang Valley, Malaysia. In present study, the participants completed the job descriptive index inventory and the big five personality test which explained their personality factors and their relation with job satisfaction. It is concluded that neuroticism as one of the main personality factors predicts job satisfaction and there is negative relationship between neuroticism and job satisfaction and also there are positive relationships between agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness with job satisfaction that analyzed by correlation coefficient and regression analysis test.

**Keywords:** personality factors, job satisfaction, academic staff, university

### Introduction

One of the principle organizational factors in any university is job satisfaction that has main effect on performance and behavior of academic staff at workplace. The job satisfaction has great role in growing and developing physical and mental health among staff and assumed as basic human need (Mansoor, Fida, Nasir, & Ahmad, 2011). In reality, the healthy academic staff create effective and positive performance at

educational organization and illustrate affirmative organizational behaviors at workplace. Absolutely, the job satisfaction identify as a positive emotion that drive from effect of different factors at university (Mohammad, Quoquab Habib, & Alias, 2011). This inner feeling is result of internal and external factors that exist at staff's workplace and conduct their attitudes and behaviors in various directions. The presence of these factors is so important

and guide staff performance at university. The internal factors have direct referred to within individual and exactly they have psychological value. On the other word, appearing positive and negative attitudes that formed by these factors lead to various level of staff job satisfaction at university. On the other hand, lack of attention to this human need lead to various abnormal organizational behaviors and reactions and also decrease the amount of organization outcomes (Saari & Judge, 2004).

Based on major role of internal factors on job satisfaction, recognizing and conducting them in an accurate way is so vital at university and has considerable results at university's outcomes. In fact, the internal factors are intrinsic motivators that emerge different levels of satisfaction among staff (Yeop Yunus & Ishak, 2012). Also these internal factors have direct association with self and refer to the inner-word of staff (Wadhwa, Verghese, & Wadhwa, 2011). One of these basic internal factors is personality factors that have great contribution in changing the level of job satisfaction. Indeed, personality arrangements various individual's characteristics that separate an individual from other and has general role on staff's behaviors and reactions that appeared at university (Barkhuizen, Swanepoel, & Ermakova, 2012). In fact fully, the personality defined as stability among individuals that influenced on their feeling, activity, behavior and reactions (Bauger, 2011). According to the Judge, Klinger, Simon and Yang (2008) the personality factors predict some positive and negative reactions such as the amount of performance, motivations, feeling, power, stress,

burnout, conflict etc. (Mousavi et al., 2012). This internal motivator included five main factors such as neuroticism, openness, agreeableness, extraversion and conscientiousness. Each of these factors has separately definition and effect on the amount of job satisfaction and lead to accurate organizational behaviors or insufficient reactions among staff at workplace (McCrae, 2010).

Neuroticism assumed as negative mood that repeat for long time and leads to uncommon behaviors such as stress, anxiety and angry mood among staff and also decrease the level of job satisfaction at university (Fayombo, 2010). The openness is type of intellectual interest that named as wisdom. This internal factor has great role on the activity of staff at workplace (Barkhuizen et al., 2012). The agreeableness as another personality factors explains cooperation and friendly behavior that lead to trustworthy at work (Gurven, Rueden, Massenkoff, Kaplan, & Lero Vie, 2013). In addition, the extraversion is kind of energetic and talkative characteristic that staff show at university and it refers to optimistic opinions toward everything (Saklofske, Austin, Rohr, & Andrews, 2007). Finally, the consciousness mentions self-discipline in private and social life and also explains positive effect on hard working of staff. Regarding to the role and effect of each personality factors, attending to job satisfaction as essential factor at university is very vital because each of them can noticeably change the level of satisfaction. According to the role and effect of these factors realizing and manage them by staff is so essential because these should be control and appear in

accurate way and increase level of ability and performance of staff at university ,otherwise, perform some negative organizational behavior such as conflict, absence, insufficient behavior with others etc. (Naz, Rehman, & Sagib, 2013).

### *Objective*

According to the role of personality factors on the level of job satisfaction among academic staff, in present study focused on determining the predictor of job satisfaction by personality factors of academic staff in public research universities in Klang Valley, Malaysia.

### *Literature*

Regarding to the importance existence of job satisfaction at university; considering to the effective factors that change the level of satisfaction as basic human needs is very noticeable (Noordin, 2009). Indeed, focusing on these factors and manage them in the accurate way lead to appearing convenient atmosphere for staff and increase the level of their job satisfaction; with increasing this inner feeling emerged several positive organizational behavior at university. On the other hand, inattention to this inner feeling create some behavioral problems at educational area. Personality factors are one of the great internal motivators that have principle contribution in motivating staff job satisfaction (Ayan & Kocacik, 2010).

Based on researchers' vision, each of personality factors associated with job satisfaction and predict the level of it among staff (Bockhaus, Hillyer, & Peterson, 2012). The staff based

on their personality cope with difficulties and manage their relation with others at university (Tesdimir, Zaheer Asghar, & Saeed, 2010). In line with, Propat (2009) reported personality of staff determined the amount of their performance at workplace and this fact drives from their job satisfaction toward work.

Barkhuizen et al (2012) explained that neuroticism has negative relationship with job satisfaction and decrease it at workplace. In effect, the neuroticism refers to disagreeable emotions that appear with impulse control. Regarding to Naz, Rehman and Sagib (2013) the openness staff have positive opinions toward their work and this fact raises the level of their satisfaction. The presence of agreeableness characteristic among staff lead to increasing the level of satisfaction and provide optimistic views toward job and also the extrovert staff have good feeling toward their job and their colleagues (Cooper et al, 2014). Lastly, Fayombo (2010) explained that the conscientious staff regulate all plans and projects at work without any uncertainties and also they do not become complicate with the problems that occurred in during of work.

### *Theoretical Framework*

According to effect of personality factors on job satisfaction and changing the level of this inner feeling by each of these factors in Herzberg Theory refers to this internal motivator that assumed as good predictor of job satisfaction at workplace (Barkhuizen et al , 2012). In addition, this theory explained that job satisfaction is a basic human need that drives from enhancements

of self that exactly determined in the first level of needs (Tan & Waheed, 2011). In this theory focused on two facets of factors that influence on job satisfaction and named as job content and job context. The job content knows as internal motivators that have exactly direct to self and drive within individual (Ahmed et al., 2010). Additionally, some theories such as Maslow's hierarchy (1954), McClelland (1961), Herzberg theory (1966) and Alderfer (1969) concentrated on human needs and explained based on needs and job content, self has great role in generating of satisfaction (Widiger, 2005). Generally, the Herzberg Theory explained internal factors such as personality factors motivate the level of this basic need and have great role in decreasing or increasing job satisfaction at workplace (Kumar & Singh, 2011).

## Method

### *Sample*

A quantitative and cross-sectional design was used to collect the study's data. In this study, the participants were academic staff of public research universities in Klang Valley, Malaysia. A total number of the participants were 440 academic staff that determined on Morgan and Krejcie's table and was selected by systematic random sampling (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970).

### *Measuring Instruments*

Job descriptive index inventory (JDI) that proposed by Brodke et al (2009) and The Big Five

Personality Test presented by John and Srivastava (1999) then updated by John, Naumann and Soto (2008) were used in current study. The JDI has 72 items that measures five facets of job satisfaction such as work (items 1-18), pay (items 19-27), supervision (items 28-45), promotion (items 46-54) and coworkers (items 55-72). In addition, the inventory comprised three parts, specifically: Yes = 3, No = 0 and I am not sure = 1 to answer the survey. Items 2, 4, 12, 13, 15, 16, 21, 22, 24, 27, 29, 30, 35, 36, 38, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 49, 51, 52, 56, 57, 60, 64, 65, 67, 69, 72 and 73 scoring in reverse (Yes = 0, No = 3 and I am not sure = 1).

The Big Five Personality Test included 44 items and measures five factors of personality as neuroticism (items 4, 9, 14, 19, 24, 29, 34, 39), extraversion (items 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26, 31, 36), openness (5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 41, 44), agreeableness (items 2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27, 32, 37, 42) and conscientiousness (items 3, 8, 13, 18, 23, 28, 33, 38, 43) (Althoff, 2010). The questionnaire measures items based on 5-point Likert scale (strongly disagree=1, disagree a little=2, neither agree or nor disagree=3, agree a little=4 and strongly agree=5) and the items 2, 6, 8, 9, 12, 18, 21, 23, 24, 27, 31, 34, 35, 37, 43 and 45 scoring in reverse (strongly disagree=5, disagree a little=4, neither agree or nor disagree=3, agree a little=2 and strongly agree=1) (Gurven et al, 2013).

The Cronbach's coefficient alpha of JDI based on data analyzing for each of items was: work (0.62), pay (0.88), promotion (0.88), supervision (0.86), and coworkers (0.77) and also the Cronbach's coefficient alpha of The Big Five Personality Test were: neuroticism (0.77), extraversion

(0.77), openness (0.72), agreeableness (0.70) and conscientiousness (0.75).

there is no significant relationship between job satisfaction and extraversion with  $p=.35$ .

### Data Analyzing

The collected data was analyzed by correlation coefficient and multiple regression for investigating the objective of study and providing information toward the impacts of independent variable on dependent variable. The correlation coefficient was applied to report the relation between personality factors and job satisfaction and also the multiple regression analysis was used to determine the factors of personality that predict the job satisfaction among academic staff at public research universities.

## Result

### Correlation

Results of present study illustrate the relationship between job satisfaction and personality factors of academic staff in public research universities and determine predictor factor. Table 1 shows the results of correlation between personality factors and job satisfaction. Actually, there is weak positive relationship between job satisfaction and conscientiousness with  $r(440) = .12, p < .05$ , there is weak positive relationship between job satisfaction and agreeableness with  $r(440) = .12, p < .05$ . There is weak negative relationship between job satisfaction and neuroticism with  $r(440) = -.20, p < .01$ . As a final point, there is weak positive relationship between job satisfaction and openness with  $r(440) = .11, p < .05$ . Conversely,

Table 1

*Correlation between Personality Factors and Job Satisfaction*

Variable	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
Conscientious	.12	$p < .05$
Extraversion	.04	.346
Agreeableness	.12	$p < .05$
Neuroticism	-.20	$p < .01$
Openness	.11	$p < .05$

### Regression

Table 2 illustrates the multiple regression analysis to predict academic staff job satisfaction. In current study used the enter method for controlling way of variables and determining the best subset of variables for clarifying a dependent variable. In actual fact, in the enter method all of variables entered in one stage and the amount of tolerance .0001 would be considerable (Chan, 2004).

The results generated by the SPSS specified that the overall model was statistically significant and personality factors are significant proportion of variance in job satisfaction scores,  $R^2 = .05, F(5, 434) = 4.51, p < .01$  and the hypothesis, which situations to total dependent variable as a function of the independent variables, was supported. The findings show that the neuroticism as one of main factors of personality predicts the amount of job satisfaction with ( $\beta = -.20, t(435) = -3.40, p < .01$ ).



Table 2  
*Results of Multiple Regression to Predict of Job Satisfaction*

Variable	B	SD	Beta	t	p
Conscientiousness	-.10	.10	-.10	-1.11	.265
Extraversion	-.10	.10	-.05	-1.10	.269
Agreeableness	.04	.10	.02	.50	.629
Neuroticism	-.30	.10	-.21	-3.80	.000
Openness	.05	.10	.03	.70	.485

\*Note:  $F(5, 435) = 4.51, p < .001, R = .22, R^2 = .05$

## Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between personality factors and job satisfaction of academic staff at public research universities in Kelang Valley, Malaysia. In addition, it focused on determines role of personality factors as predictor of job satisfaction. Based on findings, there are significant positive associations between agreeableness, openness and conscientiousness with job satisfaction and also there is significant negative association between neuroticism and job satisfaction. Amongst these factors just extraversion does not have any relationship with job satisfaction.

These results are in parallel with some previous studies that researchers considered on personality factors as main factors that impact on job satisfaction. In 2013, Naz et al. found that there are significantly relationship between factors of personality and job satisfaction. In their research all factors have relationship with job satisfaction while in present study there is no significant relationship between job satisfaction

and extraversion. Similarly, Cooper et al. (2014) explained that factors of personality have great contribution in changing the level of job satisfaction among staff at workplace.

Additionally, the neuroticism as one of the personality factors predicts the amount of academic staff job satisfaction in public research universities in Malaysia. It means that the neurotic staff have negative attitude toward their job and most of the time show insufficient behavior at university. Generally, this factor effects on the level of job satisfaction among staff and predict its level; this suggestion emphasized by previous studies.

According to Tesdimir, Zaheer Asghar and Saeed (2010) personality factors assumed as main predictors and related to feeling and attitude of staff. One of these principle factors that predicts job satisfaction and has relationship with this inner feeling is neuroticism. In reality, this factor of personality as internal motivator effects on staff feeling and conduct their behavior and reaction in negative way. Actually, based on impact of neuroticism on job satisfaction, there is negative relationship between these two factors , it means that with decreasing neuroticism the amount of job satisfaction will be increased and with increasing of neuroticism the level of job satisfaction will be decreased(Furnham & Christoforou, 2007). Indeed, in Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory referred to effective role of personality factors on job satisfaction and these factors are as supporter for recognizing and personal growth in private and social life (Herzberg, 1964).

## Conclusion

The conclusion of this study drives from the findings that obtained from data analyzing. Based on the correlation coefficient and multiple regression methods to finding the relation between personality factors and job satisfaction and determining predictor factors; the findings of the study clarify the essential role of job satisfaction among academic staff that influenced by various factors. Regarding to the importance presence of the public research universities which have great contribution in developing knowledge and science at society considering

to the job satisfaction is very valuable. In actual fact, presence and influence of different factors lead to emerging various levels of job satisfaction at university. In this study illustrated the effect of personality factors on job satisfaction. The neurotic staff demonstrate low levels of job satisfaction and most of the time show abnormal organizational reaction and behavior that lead to low level of university's outcomes. Generally, this study concentrated on personality factors as internal factors on job satisfaction and effect of neuroticism as negative factor that effect on satisfaction at public universities which should be attention and protect by staff and university.

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