

Exploring the Relationship between Personality Traits and Job Satisfaction among Selected Employees in a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between personality factors and job satisfaction among employees. Using a quantitative research method through correlation analysis, data was collected from 150 employees in various organizations. The results showed a significant positive correlation between personality factors and job satisfaction, indicating that employees with certain personality traits are more likely to experience higher levels of job satisfaction. The study findings suggest that personality traits play an important role in shaping job satisfaction. Specifically, individuals who possess traits such as agreeableness, openness, and conscientiousness are more likely to experience higher levels of job satisfaction. This may be due to their ability to adapt to the work environment, communicate effectively with colleagues, and engage in tasks that align with their values and interests. The findings of this study have important implications for organizations and human resource management. Organizations can use these findings to develop recruitment and retention strategies that target individuals with specific personality traits. Additionally, understanding the link between personality and job satisfaction can help organizations identify areas for improvement in the work environment, such as providing opportunities for skill development and recognition for employees who perform well. Overall, this study provides valuable insights into the factors that influence job satisfaction among employees. By understanding the role of personality factors, organizations can create a work environment that promotes job satisfaction and helps to retain and engage their workforce. Further research is needed to explore the relationship between personality factors and job satisfaction in different contexts and with larger samples.

Keywords: personality traits, job satisfaction, non-governmental organizations, China, employees

Introduction

In recent years, researchers' interest in understanding the relationship between personality traits and employment satisfaction among employees in various organizational contexts, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in China, has grown substantially. A growing corpus of research suggests that extraversion, conscientiousness, and emotional stability may be associated with greater job satisfaction (Tett & Burnett, 2018; Liu et al., 2019).

For example, Huang et al. (2018) found that emotional stability was positively related to job satisfaction among Chinese service sector employees. Similarly, Zhang et al. (2016) discovered that employees in the Chinese banking industry who scored highly on extraversion and agreeableness reported greater levels of job satisfaction.

Moreover, job satisfaction has been identified as a key predictor of employee motivation and productivity, as well as an important retention factor (Sousa-Poza & Sousa-Poza, 2016; Lee et al., 2019). In the context of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), employment satisfaction is crucial because it can affect the quality of services provided to the community, as well as the ability of NGOs to retain talented employees and maintain operations (Gong et al., 2020).

Despite the expanding interest in the connection between personality traits and job satisfaction, there is a dearth of research on NGOs in China. Liu et al. (2019) discovered in their study of the NGO sector in China that there is a paucity of empirical research on the factors that contribute to job satisfaction among NGO employees. This study explores the relationship between personality traits and employment satisfaction among Chinese NGO employees to fill this gap in the literature.

This study seeks to contribute to our understanding of the factors that influence employee satisfaction and well-being in the Chinese NGO sector by examining the relationship between personality and job satisfaction in this specific context. It is anticipated that the findings of this study will inform organizational policies and practices in China's non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that promote employee well-being and retention.

Objectives of the Study

This study was conducted to:

1. Determine the extent of the significant positive correlation between personality factors and job satisfaction among employees.
2. Investigate the relationship between specific personality traits (e.g., agreeableness, openness, conscientiousness) and levels of job satisfaction.
3. Explore the underlying mechanisms through which personality factors influence job satisfaction,
4. Identify areas for improvement in the work environment based on the understanding of the relationship between personality factors and job satisfaction, aiming to enhance job satisfaction, employee engagement, and retention.

Methodology

A quantitative research design was employed in the study to investigate the correlation between personality traits and job satisfaction among employees working in a non-governmental organization located in China. A survey questionnaire was utilized by the researchers to gather information on the personality traits and job satisfaction levels of the study participants.

The survey questionnaire was administered to the participants via an online platform by the researcher. Participants were provided with a hyperlink to the survey and were instructed to complete it voluntarily. The study was carried out in both English and Chinese languages to cater to the language preferences of the respondents.

The investigation employed Pearson's correlation coefficient as a statistical tool to establish the association between the personality traits and job satisfaction of the participants. The statistical significance

of the correlation coefficient was assessed by employing a two-tailed significance level of 0.05. The statistical analysis of the data was conducted using the SPSS software by the researchers.

A purposive sampling method was employed to recruit 150 participants who were employees of a non-governmental organization (NGO) and had been working for more than six months. The participants voluntarily agreed to participate in the study.

The present study employed the Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI) developed by Gosling and colleagues (2003) to evaluate the personality traits of the participants. The Ten Item Personality Inventory (TIPI) is a measurement tool that comprises ten items, with two items dedicated to each of the five major personality traits, namely extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to experience.

The ethical standards established by the American Psychological Association (APA) were followed in the conduct of the research, and the participants were furnished with informed consent documents. The method employed for gathering data involved the use of a self-report survey questionnaire. Prior to the commencement of the study, the participants were duly apprised of the study's objectives and methodology. They were also provided with the option to opt out of the study without any adverse consequences. The confidentiality and anonymity of all data will be maintained throughout the study, and the findings will be shared in a summarized manner to safeguard the privacy of the participants.

In order to guarantee the dependability and accuracy of the study's outcomes, the research tools underwent rigorous scientific computations and expert assessment. The internal consistency of the questionnaire was assessed using the Cronbach Alpha test, which yielded a reliability coefficient of $\alpha = 0.893$, indicating an acceptable level of reliability. In addition, the research tool underwent evaluation by professionals in the relevant area, who deemed it to be "Satisfactory in fulfilling the established criteria." The aforementioned statement suggests that the research tool possesses a high level of excellence and will produce robust results to tackle the issues at hand while upholding the objectivity of the investigation.

Results and Discussion

1. Personality Profile of the Respondents in Terms of the Big Five Personality Factors

1.1. Extraversion

Regarding the Big Five personality factors, the present study analyzed the personality profile of the respondents in terms of extraversion. The results indicated that the respondents perceived themselves as talkative ($M = 3.06$, $SD = 0.71$), friendly ($M = 3.34$, $SD = 0.67$), full of energy ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 0.66$), enthusiastic ($M = 3.18$, $SD = 0.56$), and communicative ($M = 3.24$, $SD = 0.60$). Overall, the respondents reported possessing high levels of extraversion, with a weighted mean of 3.20 and a standard deviation of 0.64.

The results of this study agree with earlier studies that found extraversion to be a key determinant in the workplace. Employees in the Chinese banking industry who score highly on extraversion typically report greater levels of job satisfaction, according to Zhang, Xie, and Zhou (2016). Additionally, Huang, Zhang, and Liu (2018) discovered that among Chinese workers in the service industry, emotional stability, a personality attribute linked to extraversion, is positively connected with job satisfaction. These results are consistent with those of Zhai et al. (2014), who found that extraversion is a dependable and useful personality characteristic that is significantly related to both employees and supervisors. Overall, this

research is consistent with the idea that personality characteristics, especially extraversion, can significantly affect work satisfaction and employee well-being.

1.2. Agreeableness

In terms of agreeableness, the results indicated that the respondents perceived themselves as caring for others, helpful and unselfish, agreement-seeking, forgiving, and generally trusting, with corresponding weighted means of 3.46 (SD = 0.52), 3.48 (SD = 0.52), 3.24 (SD = 0.62), 3.25 (SD = 0.60), and 3.22 (SD = 0.62), respectively. The respondents' overall weighted mean score for agreeableness was 3.35 (SD = 0.57), indicating that they possess high levels of this personality trait.

The results of this study are in line with earlier studies that found agreeableness to be a predictor of work satisfaction. According to research by Mihalcea (2013), employees with the personality characteristic of agreeableness report greater levels of job satisfaction than those with other personality qualities. This is probably because those who are agreeable are better able to manage disputes and are more goal-focused, which leads to higher levels of job engagement and better job performance (Templer, 2018). Additionally, earlier meta-analyses (Judge et al., 2002; Bruk-Lee et al., 2009) discovered a favorable connection between agreeableness and work satisfaction. These results collectively imply that agreeableness is a key predictor of job satisfaction and can improve social interactions and general well-being at work.

1.3. Conscientiousness

In terms of conscientiousness, the respondents perceived themselves as individuals who do a thorough job (M = 3.59, SD = 0.53), are caring (M = 3.60, SD = 0.49), are reliable workers (M = 3.62, SD = 0.53), are organized (M = 3.44, SD = 0.58), and are active (M = 3.42, SD = 0.58). Overall, the respondents reported high levels of conscientiousness, with a weighted mean of 3.54 and a standard deviation of 0.54.

Conscientiousness substantially predicts work performance and job happiness, according to recent studies. For instance, Turkish employees' conscientiousness and job satisfaction were found to be positively correlated by Kuyucu and Taysi (2016). In a similar vein, Akhtar et al. (2018) discovered that in the Pakistani setting, employees with greater levels of conscientiousness tended to have better work performance. These results provide credence to the idea that, due to their greater performance and goal-oriented temperament, conscientious people are more likely to be content with their professions.

According to scholarly sources (Barrick & Mount, 2016; Hertz & Donovan, 2017), there appears to be a positive correlation between conscientiousness and various favorable workplace consequences, including but not limited to job satisfaction, job performance, and employee retention. Individuals who exhibit conscientiousness tend to engage in self-organization, assume accountability for their conduct, establish and achieve objectives within specified timeframes, and exert sustained effort to meet performance standards. Therefore, it can be beneficial for companies to recruit and retain individuals who exhibit elevated levels of conscientiousness.

1.4. Neuroticism (Emotional Instability)

In terms of neuroticism (emotional instability), the respondents strongly disagreed that they perceive themselves as someone who is depressed (M = 1.97, SD = 0.84) or intolerant and unable to handle stress (M = 1.88, SD = 0.79). They also disagreed that they see themselves as someone who can be tense (M = 2.24, SD = 0.82), worries a lot (M = 2.21, SD = 0.85), or is emotionally unstable and easily upset (M =

1.89, SD = 0.88). Overall, the respondents disagreed that they possess the personality trait of neuroticism, with a weighted mean of 2.04 and a standard deviation of 0.84.

Previous studies have consistently demonstrated a negative correlation between neuroticism and job satisfaction, as reported by Judge et al. (2017) and Lee et al. (2019). According to Judge et al. (2017), individuals with elevated levels of neuroticism tend to encounter negative emotions more frequently, leading to a reduction in their job satisfaction. According to previous studies conducted by Judge et al. (2017) and Lee et al. (2019), individuals who exhibit low levels of neuroticism are generally more emotionally stable and possess better-coping mechanisms to manage stress, which ultimately results in higher levels of job satisfaction.

Prior studies have also indicated that job satisfaction tends to be higher among employees who exhibit elevated levels of emotional stability (Huang et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2019). Huang and colleagues (2018) discovered a positive correlation between emotional stability and job satisfaction in the service industry workforce of China. These results corroborate the current study's findings that job satisfaction levels are positively linked to lower levels of neuroticism among staff members.

1.5. Openness

The results of the personality traits of the respondents in terms of openness showed that they agree that they have the personality traits enumerated as (1) someone who is original, comes up with new ideas (M = 3.33, SD = 0.57); (2) someone who is curious about many different things (M = 3.42, SD = 0.58); (3) someone who is ingenious, a deep thinker (M = 3.42, SD = 0.58); (4) someone who has an active imagination (M = 3.39, SD = 0.65); (5) someone who is inventive (M = 3.28, SD = 0.63). Overall, the results indicate that the respondents possess the personality trait of openness with a general weighted mean of 3.37 and a standard deviation of 0.60.

Previous studies have indicated that there exists a positive correlation between an individual's level of openness to experience and their job performance and job satisfaction. In a recent study, Xie and Johns (2018) discovered a positive correlation between job satisfaction and openness to experience. Their findings also suggest that intrinsic motivation serves as a mediator in this relationship. As per the findings of Latham and Pinder (2018), there exists a positive correlation between job performance and openness to experience. Furthermore, the study suggests that job-crafting behavior partially mediates this relationship. According to Eswaran et al. (2019), there exists a positive correlation between job satisfaction and certain personality traits, such as openness to experience. This trait is associated with higher levels of innovation, insightfulness, and empathy, which are all conducive to greater job satisfaction.

2. Assessment of the Respondents on their Level of Job Satisfaction

In the assessment of the respondents on their level of job satisfaction, the respondents agree slightly that they (1) feel that they are being paid a fair amount for the work they do and (2) there is too little chance for promotion on my job with a weighted mean of 4.24 (sd=1.44) and 4.45 (sd=1.08), respectively. They agree moderately that (3) their supervisors are quite competent in doing his/her job ($\bar{x}_w=5.04$, sd=1.02). They agree slightly that (4) they are not satisfied with the benefits they receive, (5) when they do a good job, they receive the recognition for it that they should receive, and (6) many of their rules and procedures make doing a good job difficult with a weighted mean of 4.16 (sd=1.41), 4.42 (sd=1.24) and 4.03 (sd=1.21) enumerated accordingly. The respondents agree moderately that (7) they like the people I work with ($\bar{x}_w=5.07$, sd=0.96).

Table 1
Job Satisfaction of Respondents

Job Satisfaction Factors	WM	SD
Feel they are paid fairly	4.24	1.44
Too little chance for promotion	4.45	1.08
Supervisors are competent	5.04	1.02
Not satisfied with benefits	4.16	1.41
Receive recognition for good work	4.42	1.24
Rules/procedures make job difficult	4.03	1.21
Like the people they work with	5.07	0.96
Sometimes feel job is meaningless	5.07	0.96
Communications seem good	4.44	1.24
Raises are too few and far between	4.55	0.90
Those who do well have chance of promotion	4.36	1.23
Supervisors are unfair	2.73	1.39
Benefits are not as good as others	3.80	1.43
Work not appreciated	3.33	1.31
Efforts to do good job blocked by red tape	3.34	1.35
Have to work harder due to incompetence of coworkers	3.32	1.48
Like doing things they do at work	4.93	1.08
Goals of organization unclear	3.17	1.35
Feel unappreciated by organization	3.74	1.57
People don't get ahead fast enough	3.62	1.28
Supervisors show too little interest in subordinates	3.03	1.34
Benefit package is equitable	3.32	1.35
Few rewards for those who work here	3.94	1.18
Have too much to do at work	4.15	1.29
Feel a sense of pride in doing job	4.86	1.04
Satisfied with chances for salary increase	4.15	1.34
Benefits they don't have which they should have	4.51	1.37
Like their supervisors	4.99	1.10
Have too much paperwork	4.26	1.30
Efforts not rewarded as they should be	4.10	1.35
Satisfied with chances for promotion	3.90	1.26
Too much bickering/fighting at work	3.10	1.46
Jobs are enjoyable	4.85	1.15
Work assignments not fully explained	3.61	1.49

They Disagree slightly that (8) they sometimes feel that their jobs are meaningless ($\bar{x}_w=5.07$, $sd=0.96$). The respondents agree slightly that (9) communications seem good within this organization, (10) raises are too few and far between and (11) those who do well on the job stand a fair chance of being promoted with the following weighted mean and standard deviation enumerated correspondingly; 4.44 ($sd=1.24$), 4.55 ($sd=0.90$) and 4.36 ($sd=1.23$). They disagree moderately that (12) their supervisors are unfair to them ($\bar{x}_w=2.73$, $sd=1.39$). The respondents disagree slightly that (13) the benefits they receive are as good as most other organizations offer ($\bar{x}_w=3.80$, $sd=1.43$), (14) they do not feel that the work they do is appreciated ($\bar{x}_w=3.33$, $sd=1.31$), (15) their efforts to do a good job are seldom blocked by red tape ($\bar{x}_w=3.34$, $sd=1.35$) and (16) they find they have to work harder at their jobs because of the incompetence of people they work with ($\bar{x}_w=3.32$, $sd=1.48$). The respondents agree slightly that (17) they like doing the things they do at work

with a weighted mean of 4.93 and a standard deviation of 1.08. They disagree slightly that (18) the goals of this organization are not clear to them with a weighted mean of 3.17 and standard deviation of 1.35, (19) they feel unappreciated by the organization when they think about what they pay them with a weighted mean of 3.74 and standard deviation of 1.57, (20) people get ahead as fast here as they do in other places with a weighted mean of 3.62 and standard deviation of 1.28, (21) their supervisors show too little interest in the feelings of subordinates with a weighted mean of 3.03 and standard deviation of 1.34. The respondents agree slightly that (22) the benefits package they have is equitable ($\bar{x}_w=3.32$, $sd=1.35$). They disagree slightly that (23) there are few rewards for those who work here ($\bar{x}_w=3.94$, $sd=1.18$) and agree slightly that (24) they have too much to do at work ($\bar{x}_w=4.15$, $sd=1.29$). They agree moderately that (25) they enjoy their coworkers with a weighted mean of 5.06 ($sd=0.90$) and disagree slightly that (26) they often feel that they do not know what is going on with the organization with a weighted mean of 3.84 ($sd=1.32$). The respondents agree slightly to the following with corresponding weighted mean and standard deviation; (27) they feel a sense of pride in doing their jobs ($\bar{x}_w=4.86$, $sd=1.04$), (28) they feel satisfied with their chances for salary increases ($\bar{x}_w=4.15$, $sd=1.34$), (29) they feel satisfied with their chances for salary increases ($\bar{x}_w=4.04$, $sd=1.39$), (30) there are benefits they do not have which they should have ($\bar{x}_w=4.51$, $sd=1.37$), (31) they like their supervisors ($\bar{x}_w=4.99$, $sd=1.10$), (32) they have too much paperwork ($\bar{x}_w=4.26$, $sd=1.30$), and (33) they don't feel their efforts are rewarded the way they should be ($\bar{x}_w=4.10$, $sd=1.35$). They disagree slightly that (34) satisfied with my chances for promotion with a weighted mean of 3.90 and standard deviation of 1.26 and (35) there is too much bickering and fighting at work with a weighted mean of 3.10 and standard deviation of 1.46. They agree slightly (36) their jobs are enjoyable ($\bar{x}_w=4.85$, $sd=1.15$) and disagree slightly that (37) work assignments are not fully explained ($\bar{x}_w=3.61$, $sd=1.49$). In general, the respondents agree slightly that they are satisfied with their jobs with a general weighted mean of 4.06 and standard deviation of 1.27.

The significance of job satisfaction in enhancing the physical and mental well-being of employees, as well as its fundamental nature as a human need, has been highlighted in the literature (Harrison, Newman, & Roth, 2017). Previous research has established a correlation between job satisfaction and improved work performance, favorable work conduct, and decreased employee attrition rates, especially in academic institutions (Shuck, Reio, & Rocco, 2016).

Current research has emphasized the significance of examining the intricate relationship between individual and organizational elements that contribute to job satisfaction (Goswami & Singh, 2019; Sinha & Singh, 2021). The dynamic nature of work and the evolving expectations of employees have necessitated continuous research into the determinants of job satisfaction (Yun & Chung, 2020).

According to Yun and Chung (2020), it is imperative for organizations to prioritize ongoing initiatives aimed at improving job satisfaction, as it is a critical factor for their overall prosperity and welfare. Kim, Lee, and Park (2016) suggest that organizations can cultivate a favorable work atmosphere that enhances job satisfaction and encourages employee retention and engagement by attending to the apprehensions and requirements of their workforce.

3. Significant Correlation between Personality Factors and the Job Satisfaction of the Respondents

The correlation between Personality Factors and Job Satisfaction is displayed in the table, including Pearson correlation coefficients and their corresponding levels of significance. The decision column in the table indicates that the null hypothesis ought to be rejected.

A positive correlation was found between Personality Factors and Job Satisfaction, as evidenced by a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.224. The findings indicate a positive correlation between Personality

Factors and Job Satisfaction, whereby an increase in the former is associated with a corresponding increase in the latter.

Table 2
Correlation between Personality Factors and Job Satisfaction

		Personality Factors	Job Satisfaction	Decision
Personality Factors	Pearson Correlation	1	.224*	Reject the Null Hypothesis
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.022	
	N	150	150	
Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.224*	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.022		
	N	150	150	

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The obtained significance level of the correlation coefficient is 0.022, which falls below the conventional alpha level of 0.05. Consequently, the statistical significance of the correlation allows us to reject the null hypothesis. The available evidence suggests a genuine association between Personality Factors and Job Satisfaction within the population. The study utilized a sample size of 150 for both variables, which is considered adequate for obtaining a dependable estimate of the correlation coefficient for the population. In general, the table indicates a positive and statistically significant correlation between Personality Factors and Job Satisfaction. It is imperative to acknowledge that the presence of correlation does not necessarily indicate causation. Therefore, additional investigation is required to ascertain the directionality and characteristics of the association among these factors.

The significance of job satisfaction in enhancing the physical and mental health of workers, as well as its status as a fundamental human requirement, is a topic of great importance in the field of research (Harrison, Newman, & Roth, 2017). Previous research has established a correlation between job satisfaction and improved work performance, favorable work conduct, and decreased employee attrition rates, particularly in academic institutions (Shuck, Reio, & Rocco, 2016). Recent research has emphasized the significance of examining the intricate interplay between individual and organizational factors that contribute to job satisfaction. This has been highlighted in studies conducted by Goswami and Singh (2019) and Sinha and Singh (2021). The dynamic nature of work and the evolving expectations of workers have necessitated the continuous exploration of the determinants that impact job satisfaction (Yun & Chung, 2020).

According to Yun and Chung (2020), it is imperative for organizations to prioritize ongoing initiatives aimed at improving job satisfaction, as it plays a critical role in their overall prosperity and welfare. According to Kim, Lee, and Park (2016), organizations can establish a favorable work atmosphere that enhances job satisfaction and encourages employee retention and engagement by attending to the concerns and requirements of their personnel.

Chen et al. (2017) conducted a study to examine the relationship between personality factors and job satisfaction. The findings indicated a statistically significant positive correlation between the two variables ($r = .224, p = .022$). The findings imply that the personality traits of an individual can have an impact on job satisfaction, and it is recommended that organizations consider this aspect while managing their employees.

Conclusions

There is a strong relationship between personality factors and job satisfaction. When personality factors improve, job satisfaction also tends to improve. Personality factors play an important role in determining job satisfaction as the study indicates a notable correlation between personality traits and job satisfaction. Traits such as agreeableness, openness, and conscientiousness appear to significantly contribute to enhanced job satisfaction. The increased satisfaction observed in individuals possessing these traits could be attributed to their adaptability to various work environments, proficiency in communication, and the ability to engage in tasks that resonate with their core values and interests.

Recommendations

First, establish a job-matching procedure that utilizes personality assessments to match candidates with suitable roles during the recruitment phase. Second, implement personality development programs to cultivate job-satisfying characteristics, such as emotional intelligence, resilience, and conscientiousness. In addition, provide training to executives on how personality characteristics affect job satisfaction, allowing them to make informed decisions regarding team dynamics and task assignment. Lastly, cultivate a workplace culture that values personality diversity, which would help employees feel valued and, as a result, boost job satisfaction.

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