

Linking Personality Traits To Job Satisfaction In Teachers Of Private Universities, Pakistan: Psychological Empowerment As A Mediator

Dr. Muhammad Anees ul Husnain Shah¹, Dr Muhammad Danish², Dr. Mahreen Siddiqui³, Dr. Nazim Ali⁴, Dr. Altaf Hussain⁵, Muhammad Farooq Jan⁶

Abstract

The main objective of this study was to investigate the influence of personality traits on both job satisfaction (JS) and psychological empowerment (PE). This study also aims at testing the mediating effect of PE in the relationship between personality traits (PTs) and JS. In order to accomplish these goals, this study employed a quantitative approach for analysis. The target population of this study consisted of personnel working at public sector universities in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The adoption of a random sampling approach occurred. The study employed close-ended questions. 600 questionnaires were distributed to the faculty members. A total of 492 respondents, accounting for 82% of the sample, completed the questionnaires. Results indicate a Pearson correlation value ($r=0.583$, $p=0.000$) between PTs and JS, demonstrating a statistically significant positive link. The correlation coefficient ($r=0.538$, $p=0.000$) between PTs and PE indicates a highly significant and favourable association. The correlation analysis also reveals a strong positive association between PE and JS, with a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.469 and a p -value of 0.000. PE was also found to have a partial mediating role in the relationship between PTs and JS.

Keywords: Psychological Empowerment; Personality Traits; Job Satisfaction; Teachers; Pakistan.

Introduction

The significance of JS cannot be overstated in the current environment of competition, since they are essential for organisations to attain their objectives. In the past, tangible possessions held greater value in the perspective of an organisation. Organisations, however, have come to recognise that human resources hold greater value compared to other assets. Organisations prioritize human resources to enhance JS of employees in response to intense global competition and a rapidly changing business environment (Memon, Khahro, Memon, Memon, & Mustafa, 2023¹). Organisations may achieve social sustainability by fostering a harmonious

¹Associate Professor, Department of Education, University of Education Lahore, D.G Khan Campus.

²Lecturer, Institute of Management Sciences, University of Balochistan Quetta.

³Department of Psychology, University of Balochistan Quetta.

⁴Associate Professor, Department of Commerce and Management Sciences, University of Malakand.

⁵Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce and Management Sciences, University of Malakand.

⁶Assistant Professor, Abbottabad University of Science and Technology, Pakistan, (Corresponding Author)

and constructive connection with their workforce. An adept and driven employee is a very limited and not easily accessible asset in the market. As a result, contemporary firms strive to use sustainable human resources in order to get competitive advantages (Memon et al., 2023). Human development, encompassing aspects such as education, training, a conducive work environment, equitable remuneration, and a robust organisational culture, plays a pivotal role in attaining social sustainability (Wright, Cropanzano, & Bonett, 2007). Lately, organisations have prioritized the efficient management of their employees by promoting favourable attitudes like enhanced productivity, job contentment, and positive social conduct within the organisation. Conversely, they aim to discourage unfavorable employee attitudes such as frequent employee departures, absenteeism, and disruptive behaviour in the workplace. JS is significantly related to job performance (Davidescu, Apostu, Paul, & Casuneanu, 2020; Hartika, Fitridiani, & Asbari, 2023; Iaffaldano & Muchinsky, 1985; Judge, Thoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001; Katebi, HajiZadeh, Bordbar, & Salehi, 2022; Locke, 1970; Pushpakumari, 2008; Yang, Chen, Lee, & Liu, 2021; Ziegler, Hagen, & Diehl, 2012), turnover intention (Alam & Asim, 2019; Gebregziabher, Berhanie, Berihu, Belstie, & Teklay, 2020; Rahman, 2020), and counterproductive work behavior (Czarnota-Bojarska, 2015; Lan, Mao, Peng, & Wang, 2021; Mount, Ilies, & Johnson, 2006).

JS is a concept that is gaining more attention and generating persistent interest in the field of work and organisational psychology (Sessa & Bowling, 2020). JS is commonly perceived as an individual's attitude towards his or her job. Put simply, JS refers to the mental or emotional reaction one has towards different aspects of their job. An individual with a strong sense of JS possesses optimistic views towards their occupation, whilst an individual who is unsatisfied with their employment harbors pessimistic attitudes towards it. Comprising cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions (Eid & Larsen, 2008), JS may be described as “an evaluative state that expresses contentment with, and positive feelings about, one’s job” (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012).

The Big Five PTs, which have gained significant recognition in recent years, comprise “extraversion, neuroticism, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness to experiences” (McCrae & John, 1992). Extraversion measures the degree to which an individual is inclined towards being talkative, sociable, outgoing, and aggressive (Barrick, Mount, & Judge, 2001). Extraversion refers to the degree to which individuals display assertiveness, dominance, energy, activity, talkativeness, and enthusiasm (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Individuals that obtain high scores on the Extraversion trait have a propensity for being happy, displaying a like for socialising with others and participating in large gatherings, as well as actively seeking out experiences that are stimulating and thrilling. Individuals with low scores on the Extraversion trait exhibit a preference for solitude and are commonly described as introverted, taciturn, and self-reliant. Neuroticism is a measure of the degree to which an individual experiences anxiety, self-consciousness, moodiness, and insecurity (Barrick et al., 2001). Neuroticism refers to variations in an individual's capacity to adapt and maintain emotional equilibrium. Individuals with high levels of Neuroticism commonly feel many unpleasant emotions such as anxiety, aggression, despair, self-consciousness, impulsiveness, and vulnerability (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Individuals with low scores on the Neuroticism trait exhibit traits such as self-assurance, composure, equanimity, and a state of relaxation. Conscientiousness is a measure of how likely someone is to be reliable, responsible, obedient to rules, and focused on achieving goals (Barrick et al., 2001). Conscientiousness refers to the level of organisation, tenacity, diligence, and drive that an individual possesses in their efforts to achieve their goals. Individuals that possess conscientiousness traits are typically characterised by their strong organisational skills,

self-control, diligence, ambition, determination, and drive to achieve predetermined objectives (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Zhao & Seibert, 2006). Researchers have seen this construct as a measure of volition or the capacity to exert effort (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Agreeableness is a measure of one's tendency to be amiable, cooperative, helpful, compassionate, and considerate towards others (Barrick et al., 2001). Agreeableness evaluates an individual's inclination towards interpersonal interactions. Individuals with a high level of Agreeableness can be described as being trustworthy, forgiving, compassionate, selfless, and easily deceived. Individuals at the upper end of the Agreeableness spectrum possess cooperative principles and a predilection for favourable social connections. An individual situated at the lower end of the dimension might be described as exhibiting manipulative tendencies, being primarily concerned with their own interests, displaying a high level of suspicion, and demonstrating a lack of empathy or remorse (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Openness to experience is a measure of an individual's inclination towards curiosity, imagination, open-mindedness, and non-conformity (Barrick et al., 2001). Openness to Experience is a personality trait that describes an individual who possesses a strong intellectual curiosity and actively seeks out new experiences and innovative ideas. An individual with a high level of Openness may be characterised as possessing traits such as creativity, innovation, imagination, reflection, and nonconformity. An individual with low levels of Openness might be described as conventional, having limited interests, and lacking in critical thinking. PTs have a significant relationship with JS (Bui, 2017; Furnham, Petrides, Jackson, & Cotter, 2002; Paleksić, Narić, Vukotić, & Stanković, 2017; Walsh, Yang, Dahling, Schaarschmidt, & Takahashi, 2020; Wang & Lei, 2023), organizational commitment (Lee, Park, Back, Hyun, & Lee, 2020; Udin & YUNIAWAN, 2020; Utami et al., 2021), PE (Maan, Abid, Butt, Ashfaq, & Ahmed, 2020). PE and JS are also significantly related (Cruz, Frare, Accadrolli, & Horz, 2021; Ilyas, Abid, Ashfaq, Ali, & Ali, 2021; Mathew & Nair, 2022).

Aydogmus, Camgoz, Ergeneli, and Ekmekci (2018) conducted two studies to examine how PTs (specifically conscientiousness, extraversion, neuroticism and agreeableness) moderated the relationship between perceived transformational leadership and JS. They also explored the mediating role of PE in this relationship. Study 1 investigated whether personality factors influenced the impact of perceived transformational leadership on followers' JS. Study 1 findings revealed a positive correlation between perceived transformational leadership and JS among 221 R&D personnel working in information technology organisations. The strength of this association was shown to be directly proportional to the level of conscientiousness exhibited by the employees. Study 2 investigated whether the impact of perceived transformational leadership on followers' JS was mediated by PE. The findings of the study, which analysed data from 348 academics, confirmed that PE played a mediating role in JS. Specifically, when employees regarded their leader as transformative, they experience a greater sense of PE, leading to higher levels of JS.

In their study, Yazdi and Mustamil (2015) investigated the correlation between big-five PTs and PE in order to determine the individuals who possess empowerment. The primary sample comprised 384 frontline service-workers, from whom data was gathered by self-reported measures in their natural work environment. The findings demonstrated that individuals with extraverted personalities had a higher level of empowerment. This was attributed to their ability to derive more significance from their work and their strong belief in their skills as service professionals. Furthermore, diligent employees were discovered to possess a greater sense of empowerment, as they, similar to extroverts, had the belief in their own competence to effectively manage their job responsibilities. Agreeableness was positively associated with PE, and this relationship was mediated by leader-member interchange, customer supportiveness,

and affect-based trust. The study facilitated service organisations in identifying and selecting personnel with empowerment-related PTs, therefore enabling them to have a substantial impact on customer satisfaction levels.

A model was suggested by Aydogmus, Ergeneli, and Camgoz (2015) to examine the influence of employees' PE on the connection between their PTs and JS. The model underwent testing on a sample of 221 people employed in the education and IT industries. The study utilised the Big Five Model to assess individuals' PTs, including “extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, openness to experience, and neuroticism”. The findings indicated that there was a favourable relationship between PE and JS. Openness to experience, conscientiousness, and neuroticism have been identified as predictors of JS. The regression analyses indicated that PE served as the mediating mechanism in the association between personality and JS. To be more precise, the PE of followers, which encompassed their sense of “competence, impact, meaning, and self-determination”, had a partial mediating role in the association between followers' conscientiousness and JS. Additionally, it totally mediated the relationship between neuroticism and JS.

Karami, Zakiei, Dehghan, Karimi, and Atash Jameh (2015) conducted a study to examine the correlation between PTs and PE with job burnout. The sample consisted of 450 employees from Kermanshah Gas Company, chosen using the census sampling method. The data were gathered using questionnaires that assessed the five-factor model of personality, PE, and occupational burnout. Data analysis involved the use of correlation coefficients, regression analysis, and path analysis. The findings revealed a positive correlation between neuroticism and job burnout, whereas extraversion, agreeableness, and accountability were shown to have a negative correlation with job burnout. Additionally, PE was found to be adversely associated with job burnout. There was no substantial correlation between openness and job burnout. The findings indicated that there was no substantial impact of neuroticism and extraversion on job burnout through PE. Furthermore, agreeableness exerted a noteworthy impact on job burnout via means of PE. Keeping in account the above literature, we develop the hypotheses which are given below:

H1: PTs are associated with JS in Teachers of Private Universities of Pakistan (TPUP).

H2: PTs are associated with PE in TPUP.

H3: PE is associated with JS in TPUP.

H4: The relationship between PTs and JS in TPUP was mediated by PE.

Methods

Population and Sample

The main objective of this study was to investigate the influence of personality traits on both job satisfaction and psychological empowerment. In order to accomplish this goal and other sub-goals, this study employed a quantitative approach for analysis. The target population of this study consisted of personnel working at public sector universities in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The adoption of a random sampling approach occurred. The study employed close-ended questions. 600 questionnaires were distributed to the faculty members. A total of 492 respondents, accounting for 82% of the sample, completed the questionnaires. Consistent with established research ethics, participation in the completion of surveys was optional, and respondents were explicitly informed that their replies would be used exclusively for research purposes. We ensured the secrecy and identity of all the responses.

Measures

Personality Traits

The measurement of PTs and its various aspects was conducted using the personality traits scale adopted from John and Srivastava (1999). The dimensions of PTs are known as “extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism, openness to experience, and conscientiousness”. The personality traits: “extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism, openness to experience, and conscientiousness” were each measured with 8, 9, 8, 10, and 9 questions, respectively. Examples of PTs include “I see myself as someone who is original, comes up with new ideas” and “I see myself as someone who is ingenious, a deep thinker” (Openness to experience), “I see myself as someone who is talkative” and “I see myself as someone who is full of energy” (Extroversion), “I see myself as someone who is helpful and unselfish with others” and “I see myself as someone who has a forgiving nature” (Agreeableness), “I see myself as someone who is depressed, blue” and “I see myself as someone who can be tense” (Neuroticism), and “I see myself as someone who does a thorough job” and “I see myself as someone who is a reliable worker” (Conscientiousness). A 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 was utilised. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the personality traits of “extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism, openness to experience, and conscientiousness” were .93, .90, .85, .82, and .88, respectively.

Job satisfaction

The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, developed by Lawler, was utilised as a tool to evaluate several aspects of JS and overall JS. This study specifically examined three key aspects of job satisfaction, chosen for their major significance to the study. The dimensions being considered include satisfaction with compensation, satisfaction with security and satisfaction with promotion chances. Each dimension was measured using five items. Examples of job satisfaction include “On my present job, this is how I feel about the amount of pay for the work I do”, and “on my present job, this is how I feel about the chance to make as much money as my friends” (satisfaction with pay/compensation), “on my present job, this is how I feel about my job security” and “On my present job, this is how I feel about the way my job provides for a secure future” (satisfaction with job security), “On my present job, this is how I feel about the chances of getting ahead on this job” and “On my present job, this is how I feel about the way promotions are given out on this job” (satisfaction with promotion). A Likert scale with a range of five points, from 1 meaning strongly disagree to 5 meaning strongly agree was utilised to elicit responses on the questionnaire. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the JS dimensions of Pay, Security and Promotion were .86, .88 and .90 respectively.

Psychological Empowerment

The evaluation of PE was conducted using the PE questionnaire, which was adopted from the study conducted by Spreitzer in 1995. The questionnaire possesses four distinct characteristics, namely “Competence, meaning, Impact and Self-determination”. Examples of PE include “I am confident about my ability to do my job” and “The work that I do is important to me (Competence), “My impact on what happens in my department is large” and “My job activities are personally meaningful to me” (Meaning), “I can decide on my own how to go about doing my own work” and “I have considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do my job”, (self-determination) and “The work I do is meaningful to me” and “I have significant influence over what happens in my department” (Impact). A Likert scale with a range of five points, from 1 meaning strongly disagree to 5 meaning strongly agree was utilised

to elicit responses on the questionnaire. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the “Competence, Meaning, Impact and Self-determination” were .95, .91, .92 and .88 respectively.

Table 1: Correlation among Personality Traits, Psychological Empowerment and Job Satisfaction

	PTs	PE	JS
PTs	1	.538**	.583**
PE	.538**	1	.469**
JS	.583**	.469**	1

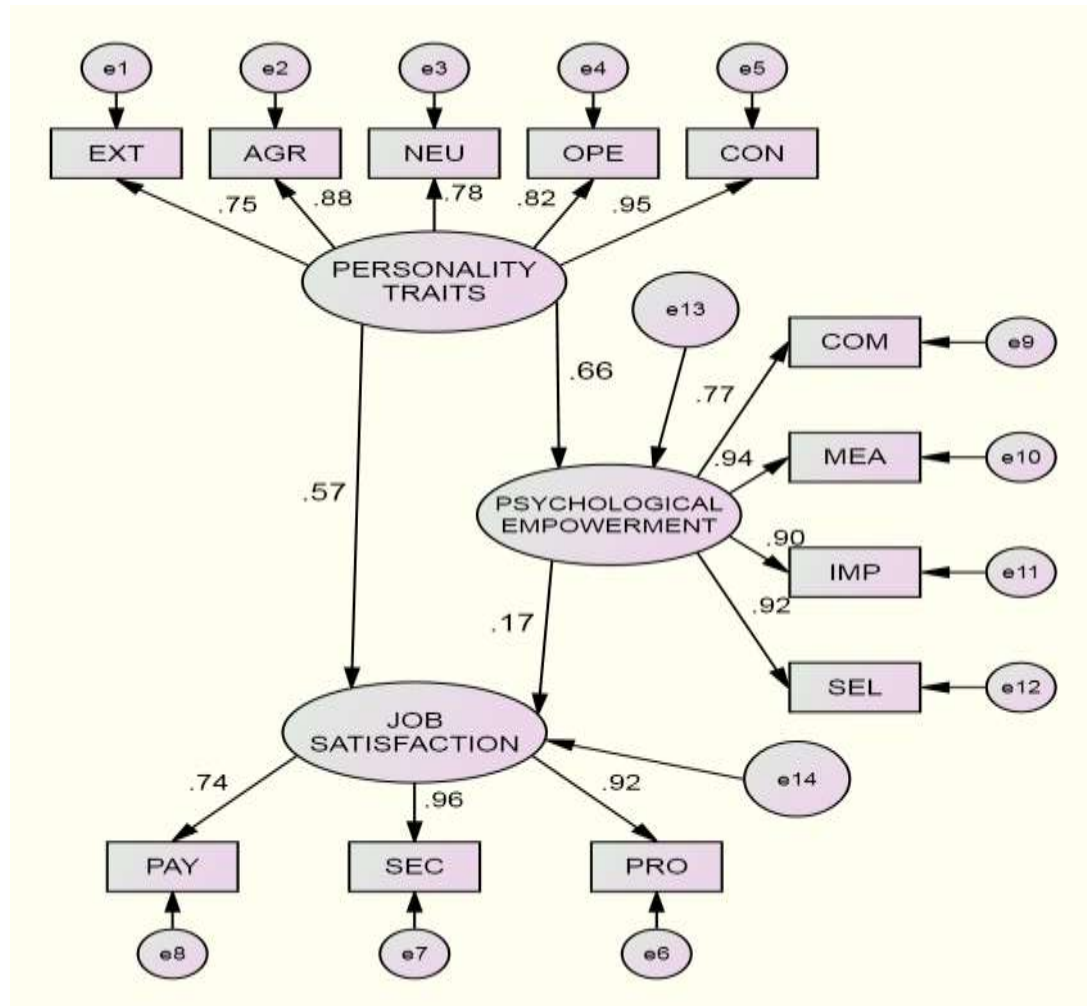
“**”. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).”

The data shown in table 1 indicates a Pearson correlation value ($r=0.583$, $p=0.000$) between PTs and JS, demonstrating a statistically significant positive link. The correlation coefficient ($r=0.538$, $p=0.000$) between PTs and PE indicates a highly significant and favourable association. The correlation analysis reveals a strong positive association between PE and JS, with a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.469 and a p -value of 0.000. Hence, we accept the following hypothesis in this study:

H1: PTs are associated with JS in Teachers of Private Universities of Pakistan (TPUP).

H2: PTs are associated with PE in TPUP.

H3: PE is associated with JS in TPUP.



This study utilised structural equation modelling to assess the validity of the three-factor model, consisting of PT, JS, and PE. The statistical analysis yielded the following results: Chi Square = 153.653, degrees of freedom = 51, CMIN/DF = 2.660, AGFI = .928, RMSEA = .058, CFI = .984, RMR = .085, p-value = .000, LO 90 = .047, HI 90 = .070, and GFI = 0.953. These values fit the data very well. The study demonstrated a significant impact of PT on JS, with a regression coefficient of .57. Furthermore, the correlation coefficient between PT and PE was 0.66, suggesting a significant influence of PT on PE. The regression coefficient of .17 indicates a positive relationship between the PE and JS. The regression coefficients of the PT, JS, and PE variables are within an acceptable range. The impact of PT on JS decreased when PE was included as a mediator, resulting in a decrease in the coefficient from 0.76 to 0.57. Therefore, the current study supports the following hypotheses:

H1: PTs are associated with JS in Teachers of Private Universities of Pakistan (TPUP).

H2: PTs are associated with PE in TPUP.

H3: PE is associated with JS in TPUP.

H4: The relationship between PTs and JS in TPUP was mediated by PE.

Table 2: Values of CFI, GFI, LO 90, HI 90, RMSEA, AGFI, CMIN and RMR

CMIN	135.653
DF	51
P	.000
RMSEA	.058
RMR	.085
AGFI	.928
CFI	.984
GFI	.953
CMIN/DF	2.660
LO 90	.047
HI 90	.070

Table 2 presents the values of Chi Square/CMIN, CFI, RMR, LO 90, HI 90, GFI, AGFI, probability, and RMSEA. The following values are considered acceptable: Chi Square = 153.653, DF = 51, CMIN/DF = 2.660, AGFI = .928, RMSEA = .058, CFI = .984, RMR = .085, p-value = .000, LO 90 = .047, HI 90 = .070, and GFI = 0.953. Consequently, we endorse the three-factor research model consisting of PTs, PE, and JS.

Conclusion

The main objective of this study was to investigate the influence of personality traits on both JS and PE. This study also aims at testing the mediating effect of PE in the relationship between PTs and JS. In order to accomplish these goals, this study employed a quantitative approach for analysis. The target population of this study consisted of personnel working at public sector universities in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The adoption of a random sampling approach occurred. The study employed close-ended questions. 600 questionnaires were distributed to the faculty members. A total of 492 respondents, accounting for 82% of the sample, completed the questionnaires. Results indicate a Pearson correlation value ($r=0.583$, $p=0.000$) between PTs and JS, demonstrating a statistically significant positive link. The correlation coefficient ($r=0.538$, $p=0.000$) between PTs and PE indicates a highly significant and favourable association. The correlation analysis also reveals a strong positive association between PE and JS, with a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.469 and a p-value of 0.000. PE was also found to have a partial mediating role in the relationship between PTs and JS.

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