

## PERSONALITY TRAITS AND EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT

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### ABSTRACT

*This study critically examines the relationship between personality traits which consist three dimensions: Extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism as independent variables; and employee commitment with three measures: Affective, Continuance and Normative commitment as measures of dependent variables of manufacturing firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. The examination shows that personality traits are a mirror to employee conduct and singular character that demonstrate the veracity of commitment in an organization. It is recommended that organizations should not only concentrate on job performance, they should consider employee emotions, relations with other employees in connection to management/supervisors.*

**Keywords:** Personality Traits, Employee Commitment, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Global economic changes and advancement in technology have dragged attention to increased research to explore and understand what organizational behaviour is all about. A total survival of any organization in an unpredicted competitive environment has it that, employees must possess the spirit of commitment in order to succeed.

Employee, the key to success and the most significant resource of an organization is the determinant of organization resources to arrive at an expected goal and objective. This can be accomplished through extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism and outright commitment to services. Employee behaviour or character towards assigned duty can be a source of success or failure to an organization, and if this character is exhibited negatively, can affect turnover.

Extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism are dimensions for encouragement. Attention is extremely needed in this aspect if positive and efficient work performance is to be achieved. According to Shamlou (2009), personality includes an organized and integrated collection of relatively unchanging feature that makes a person different from another person.

The five-factor model frequently named Big Five is broadly acknowledged and well-known model for typifying singular contrasts in character (Berghlund 2015). This research work will determine the degree to which personality traits relate to employee commitment.

## **PROBLEM SPECIFICATION**

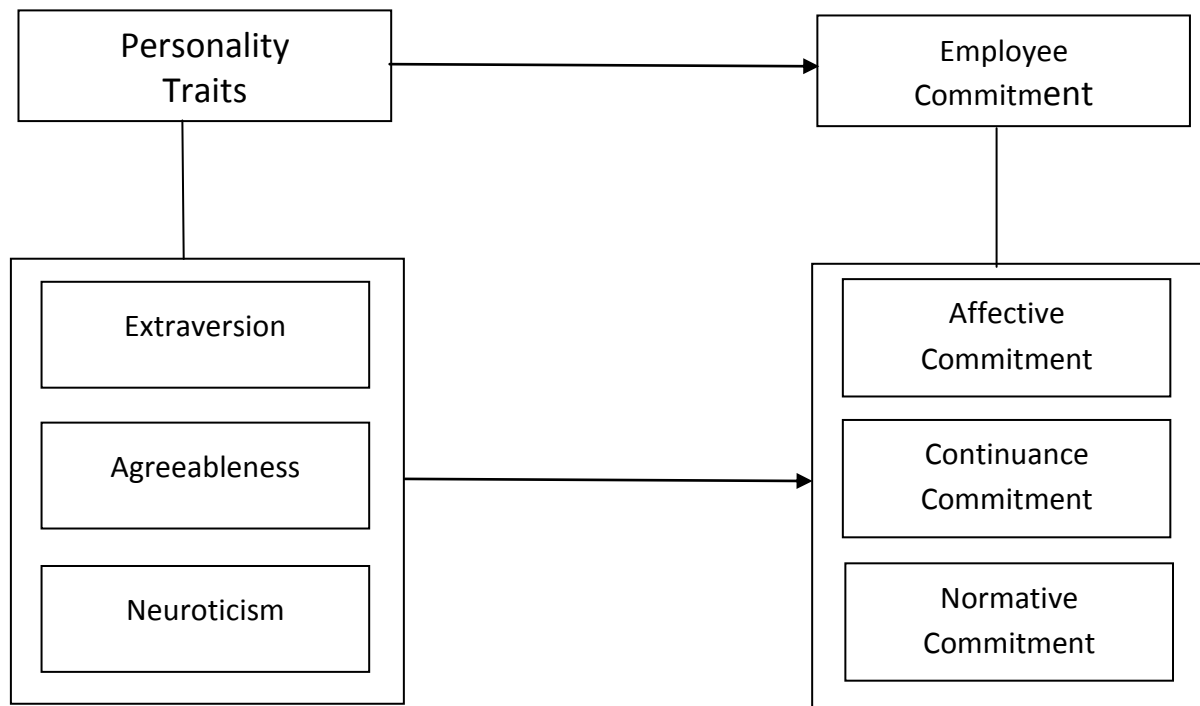
There is a controversy in employee behaviour that is observed by the researcher, this obvious character cripples businesses because enough attention is not given. Workers are dying in silence due to negligence towards how emotional they are.

Organizations ought to incorporate personality traits as a package for training in their system to enhance and train employees on way of behavior since every individual are from different backgrounds, there is need to thorough organizational training the character we exhibit at workplace.

## **PURPOSE/OBJECTIVES OF THE SUDY**

The purpose of this study is to examine the influence of personality traits on employee commitment. The objective is to assess how personality traits relate to employee commitment, ascertain how personality traits relate to employee commitment and to determine the effects of personality traits on employee commitment.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



**Fig. 1:** Conceptual framework of Personality Traits and Employee Commitment.

**Source:** Researcher (2020)

Personality Traits (independent variable) and Employee Commitment (dependent variable) are the variables used in this study. These variables and their dimensions are written out in Figure 1, which is the conceptual framework of the study. The dimensions of Personality Traits used for the study are Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism. For Employee Commitment, three measures are figured out: Affective Commitment, Continuance Commitment and Normative Commitment, the measures were adopted from Mayer & Allen (1960).

## CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

### PERSONALITY TRAITS

Character distinguishes every individual, simultaneously influences the way of thinking, attitude and feelings both in the workplace and outside work environment. Personality traits which constitute these characters are used to depict why individual acts the way they act, think, feel and behave the way they do. Personality influences individuals' behaviour and their approaches to others.

As per the Five Factor Model, which is an umbrella model for alternate points of view on character, the five main personality traits are neuroticism, extraversion, receptiveness to experience, conscientiousness, and agreeableness (Bacanlı, İlhan, & Aslan, 2009). Three of

its approaches are considered in this study, they are: extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism.

### **EXTRAVERSION**

Positive emotions, good moods and excellent feelings are all products embedded in extraversion approach of personality traits. Individual or personnel who is high on extraversion are regarded as 'extraverts', these sets of individuals are easy going, they are sociable and highly affectionate. However, individuals who are low on extraversion are termed 'introverts', these sets of individuals are not sociable, this affects their levels of social interaction and has negative effects on their entire performance. According to Band and Dalai (2014), extraversion represents assertiveness, sociability, energy and positive emotions.

### **AGREEABLENESS**

This is one of the personality traits of Big Five personality theory that manifests in individual's behaviour that tends to be cooperative, kind, tolerant, sensitive, considerate and sympathetic, this individual also works in consonance with the organization. Individual or personnel who possesses agreeableness as a character welcomes and cares about others. This category of persons develops close relationship both at workplace and outside. According to Camps, Stouten & Euwema (2016), this set of people has effort to build and keep harmony and prefer to use compromising strategies in dealing with conflict.

### **NEUROTICISM**

This refers to negative affectivity where individual feels so moody and experience negative emotions and critical of him/herself which leads to anger, dissatisfaction and complain. Those who are neurotic are unhappy and impulsive. Neuroticism is the degree to which an individual is forceful, on edge, fickle, crabby and cranky (Judge, Heller & Mount, 2002). Their states of mind will in general be eccentric, their practices are imprudent. Widiger (2009:129) as cited in Giluk and Postlethwaite (2015) states that neurotic persons are more susceptible to psychological stress, as they "*are likely to interpret ordinary situations as threatening, experience minor frustrations as hopelessly overwhelming*".

### **EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT**

Different researchers defined commitment in various ways. Scholl (1981) defined commitment as a balancing out power that demonstrates to keep up social course when anticipating and value conditions are not met. Brown (1996) defines commitment as an obliging power which necessitates that the individual respects the dedication, even despite fluctuating demeanors and impulses.

O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) refer commitment to a psychological connection felt by the individual for the organization, which will mirror how much the individual receives attributes or points of view of the organization. Porter and Schultz (1974) examine three significant components of organizational commitment as being 'a solid confidence in and acknowledgment of the association's objectives, an ability to apply extensive exertion for the organization, and a clear want to keep up hierarchical participation.'

Employee who is committed is possessed with the spirit of willingness, dedication, agreement, and understanding. A committed employee is married to his job, married in the sense that he or she is bind to his or her goal on-the-job.

Employee commitment has benefits such as increases in job satisfaction, job performance, sales, total return to shareholders, increased sales, decreased employee turnover, decreased intention to leave, decreased intention to search for alternative.

### **AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT**

Affective commitment refers to a sentimental relationship between employees with respect to the duration they want to remain in the organization. If employees are affectively dedicated to their organization, it implies they want to remain at their organization. At this point they identify with the organizational goals, feel fit into the organization and are happy with their work. Employees who are affectively committed feel esteemed, act as ambassadors for their organization and are incredible resource for organizations. According to Mowday (1982), affective commitment has four qualifications, they are personal characteristics, structural characteristics (organizational), job-related characteristics, and work experiences.

### **CONTINUANCE COMMITMENT**

Due to high cost of quitting and the advantages of staying, continuance commitment also refers to the willingness to remain within the organization. The readiness to stay is on the condition that other job alternatives are not desirable as it is now, but if they have a better job offer in future, they don't hesitate to give up their jobs. Emotional proportion is largely controversial and the employee perceives it to be very costly to lose organizational membership. Reasons might range from financial costs of salary and benefits to social costs of ties and reputation. Such an employee remains with the organization since he or she is tied.

### **NORMATIVE COMMITMENT**

Normatively committed employees feel that leaving their organization would have devastating consequences, and that it would create annul knowledge and skills. Such feelings negatively influence the performance of employees working in organizations thereby reflecting the feelings of obligation to continue employment.

Normative commitment has the power to develop when an organization provides employee with 'rewards in advance' such as paying college tuition, or acquires noteworthy expenses in providing employment with head-hunting charges or the expenses related with job training. Based on these investments, employees feel the need to respond by committing themselves to the organization until the obligations has been reimbursed (Scholl, 1981).

### **THEORETICAL REVIEW**

This study is anchored on Becker's (1960) side-bet theory of commitment. Suggestion by Becker (1960) is that commitments take place when an individual joins incidental interests with a consistent line of activity. He further stated that commitment, as a way of engaging in 'stable lines of activity' due to accrued 'side bets' that would be lost if there was a

termination in activity (Meyer 1984). Side bets boost the cost of neglecting to endure with a course of action of remaining with the organization (Powell & Meyer, 2004).

### **PERSONALITY TRAITS AND EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT**

Several studies record that there is significant relationship between personality dimensions and employee commitment. Niehoff (2006) posit that extroversion can be described as an individual who is comfortable with social relationships such as warm, outgoing, assertive, and active. This means that employee who possesses this trait makes new friends, assists others, embraces people and causes things to happen positively, by these positive characteristic behaviours exhibition they are highly committed to their organization. Agreeableness, the quality of trustworthiness and honesty, agreeable employee works in harmony with fellow employees, believes in good conducts and comportment, and values his commitment to his employer.

According to Leung and Bozionelos (2004), neuroticism could be characterized as being apprehensive, skeptical, and stressed with low certainty. Employees with certainty will more peculiarly create aspirations and it is hard to set an exhibition target. Neurotic individuals are quick to anger, depressed, fear, they seem to be mentally disturbed, though consciousness and intelligence are the benefits of this group of persons. As such there is a significant relationship with employee commitment.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

Personality traits and employee commitment are interested concepts, the three dimensions used in this study has positive significant relationship with the dependent variable. The study shows that there are employees who have excellent spirits and are ready to impact/transfer knowledge to their co-workers, there are also those who exhibit characters that damage oneself and discourage others.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Organizations should take Big Five personality traits into consideration.
2. Employees' emotion (neuroticism) should be assessed timely to avoid negative relationship with job performance.
3. Employer-employee relationship should be promoted.

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